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Examining the Role of Some Selected NGOs in Enhancing Food Security among Women in Refugee and Host Communities in the Ajumani District of Northern Uganda

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DECLARATION

I, Samira Sanni, declare that I am the author of this thesis and that I have used the listed sources. I also confirm that I have adhered to the Norwegian University of Life Sciences' guidelines regarding scientific integrity and research.

I confirm that I have included a list of bibliography that shows all sources that I have used in my research and that I have made sure to follow the specified guidelines for citation and referencing style.

Furthermore, I assure you that this thesis has not been previously published in its entirety or part and has not been submitted to any other institution seeking a degree or academic certificate.

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ABSTRACT

Food security is a fundamental human right that is described as the availability, accessibility, and usage of safe and nutritious food to suit dietary needs and preferences. However, achieving food security is a major problem for host and refugee communities around the world, with women being disproportionately impacted by several factors including sociocultural norms, restricted access to resources, and gender inequality. The thesis explored the crucial role NGOs play in empowering women in the refugee and host communities in the Adjumani District of Northern Uganda to enhance food security. The study explored three important theories, that is, the feminist theory, the resilient theory, and the resource base theory to comprehend the phenomena under study. It was conducted using primary data from the field interviews of 47 respondents, including women in the refugee settlements of Boroli I & II, Olua I, women in the host communities of Olua and Boroli, key informants from all the communities, and some selected NGO workers in the Adjumani District.

The results from the study show that most female-led households in the Olua and Boroli refugee and host communities experience food insecurity. This is a result of lack of access to food, inadequate utilization of food consumed, and instabilities associated with accessing food. The study critically analysed NGO programs and initiatives related to ensuring food security among women in refugee and host communities. It looks into how much NGO action against food insecurity supports women's decision-making towards their sustainable livelihoods. The findings have implications for enhancing NGO programming and advocacy efforts to better support women as active agents in achieving food security within their communities.

Keywords: Food security, gender, refugees, host communities, NGOs, Feminist theory, resource base theory, resilient theory, empowerment.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In recent times, the rate at which the number of forcefully displaced people has increased is alarming. Statistics from the UNHCR show that as of the end of 2022, there have been over 108.4 million forcibly displaced people worldwide of which 35.3 million are refugees (UNHCR, 2022). Many of them stay in refugee settlements and camps in neighboring countries. Refugees according to the UNHCR are “people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country” (UNHCR Viewpoint, 2015). They are forced to flee their countries with no property or with a single bag containing their clothing due to horrific conditions such as “conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order” (UNHCR, 2022). This presents several challenges including health, environmental, social, cultural, and economic for the refugees and their host communities. For example, research conducted by Mabiso et al (2014) and Nisbet et al (2022) confirms that a large influx of refugees puts strains on the food supply and resources of host countries, intensifying food insecurity for both refugee and local populations. Further reports from the UNHCR show that around 80 percent of the world’s displaced people are in places experiencing acute food insecurity (Nisbet et al., 2022).

At the continental level, Africa has experienced a string of massive refugee flows, internal displacement, and enormous repatriation movements. These have been attributed to the numerous man-made disasters that have forced many people out of their homes within the continent. These man-made disasters include violent conflicts which according to Blavo (2019) date to the partition of the continent and the struggle for independence. Reports from the Norwegian Refugee Council show there are over 37.1 million people who were forced to flee within the continent with the highest coming from South Sudan, DR Congo, Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea (NRC, 2023). Current data shows that the continent hosts over 30 percent of the World’s refugee population, representing 7.1 million refugees across the continent as of mid-2023 (Mbiyozo, 2023). Regionally, in East Africa, unstable conditions such as violent conflict, food crises, and a mix of climate shocks within most countries have triggered a massive flow of refugees over the years (IOM-UN Migration, 2013). The number of refugees in these areas has soared as the UNHCR (2022) report shows that by the end of 2022, the region hosted 4.9 million

refugees. Adepoju (2019) reiterates that East Africa has witnessed a stream of refugees from the Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan) and the Great Lakes Region to stable countries such as Uganda. Uganda's hospitality towards hosting refugees' dates to the 1950s. It became the third largest refugee-hosting country in the world and the largest in Africa (UNHCR, 2018: 3). The UNHCR's Annual Global Trend Report (2022) shows that the country hosted 1.4 million in 2017. The number continues to increase due to conflicts in its neighbouring countries including South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda, Kenya, and Eritrea.

Adversely, the rise in the number of refugees has implications for food security in the host communities and Uganda is not an exception. As such, the country over the years has implemented policies geared towards empowering refugees to attain a more sustainable livelihood. According to Clement et al. (2016), the three main pillars of refugee policy within Uganda include equality, dialogue, mutual support, sustainable livelihood support, and inclusion of refugees in local government-managed systems. Under these policies, refugees are given the right to work, attend school, and the right to move freely within the country. One notable component of the Uganda refugee policy is the Self Reliance Strategy (SRS). This is an inclusive program that allows refugees to support themselves by making use of a plot of land given to them to develop a sustainable livelihood through agriculture (Svedberg, 2014). Under the policy, many refugees received small pieces of land (Plot 150 x 100m per family of six) which aids them in growing different crops such as rice, coffee, banana, beans cassava, millet, sorghum, vegetables, and potatoes (Turyamureeba, 2017). These crops are grown for both household consumption as well as for commercial purposes. Aside from the SRS policy, the Government of Uganda also initiated the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) program in 2001 which was aimed at providing rural farmers with useful farming advice including better farming technologies and further distributing improved seeds to farmers. Moreover, in 2009, the Nsamizi Training Institute for Social Development was funded by the UNHCR and the Government of Uganda to transform the mindset of both refugees and asylum seekers to participate in socio-economic development through a participatory approach to meaning community development (Nsamizi-UNHCR Project, 2019). The program according to Turyamureeba (2017) focused on four main components: livelihoods, environment, sanitation, and access to cooking and lighting energy. It also provided non-agricultural

support including facilitating activities such as carpentry, tailoring, salon operation, and movie production.

Efforts to address the issues refugees faced have faced criticism over the years. Many scholars have argued that many refugees still face issues of food insecurity, lack of sustainable livelihood, and high levels of illiteracy. The above-discussed refugee situation around the world and specifically in Uganda triggers the importance of investigating the activities of NGOs and how they are invested in addressing food insecurity issues.

1.2 Problem Statement

The Right to Food is a basic human right recognised under the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as part of the right to an adequate standard of living and is enshrined in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (UNHCR, 2014). Since 2015, the mission of the UN to achieve Zero Hunger through the promotion of food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture are directed towards the right to food. Several other treaties maintain this right in most countries; however, it remains a pressing and multifaceted challenge, particularly among women in regions experiencing conflict and hosting large refugee populations. The World Food Summit of 1996 affirms that conflicts resulting in major refugee movements can cause food insecurity among refugees and their host communities.

Turyamureeba (2017) explains that many developing countries, including Uganda, were already incapable of feeding their nationals satisfactorily, and the inflow of refugees worsened the situation. Although Uganda is ranked among the ten top refugee-hosting countries worldwide, the country's capacity to provide security and other essential needs to refugees is questionable (Kalyango, 2006). Guli et al (2023) reiterate that out of 1.36 million refugees in Uganda as of June 2018, 1.1 million were receiving food assistance in the settlements either in kind or through cash transfers. Moreover, in research conducted by UNHCR in Uganda, they reported that Sixty-seven percent of refugee households reported insufficient access to food for all the members of the household vulnerable groups, such as women and unaccompanied minors, normally suffer the brunt of food insecurity; refugee children often miss school to look for food and other essentials (Bagenda et al. 2003). Due to the increasing lack of economic opportunities for refugees in the host countries, many refugee households cannot avoid food shortages.

Furthermore, with the high fatality rate among adult males involved in or targeted during the war, female-headed families have become more prevalent in war-affected populations (Zuckerman and Green, 2004). For instance, in northern Uganda where most refugee camps are located, about thirty-five percent of households are headed by women (Ugandan Bureau of Statistics, 2014). However, women are frequently denied access to land although it is the most significant resource and other productive resources due to ingrained cultural biases against them (The World Bank Group, 2016; Marshak et al., 2017 as cited in Malual et al., 2022). As a result, the likelihood that they will experience poverty and food insecurity rises. As such it is not surprising that women who contribute more than average crop labour and food produce according to Ali et al (2015), are affected by food insecurity.

Despite the presence of numerous NGOs dedicated to addressing the issue, a substantial gap persists in understanding their effectiveness in dealing with the issue. The extent to which their programs effectively address these challenges and improve food security outcomes for women remains poorly understood. Women continue to face issues such as limited access to nutritious food, inadequate income-generating opportunities, gender-based discrimination, and uncertain impacts from NGOs. To address these challenges comprehensively and promote sustainable livelihood through food security among women, it is imperative to investigate the specific roles and impact of selected NGOs operating in Uganda's refugees and host communities. To this extent, the research seeks to fill existing gaps by conducting an in-depth examination of the roles played by some selected NGOs in enhancing food security among women in refugee and host communities in Northern Uganda.

1.3 Research Objectives

The core objective of this study is to analyse the role of some selected NGOs in Northern Uganda and how they enhance food security among women residing in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani.

Specifically, the research seeks to

- i. Ascertain the livelihood strategies associated with food security of women residing in both refugee and host communities in the Pakele Sub County of Northern Uganda.

- ii. Investigate the programs and strategies employed by selected NGOs to enhance food security among women in both refugee and host communities.
- iii. To identify the challenges and constraints faced by selected NGOs in their effort to improve food security among women in refugee and host communities.

1.4 Research Questions

The research question corresponding to the objectives of the study is: What are the strategic roles some selected NGOs in Uganda plan empowering women towards the enhancement of food security in both refugee and host communities?

The specific research question include.

- i. What are the livelihood strategies associated with food security of women residing in both refugee and host communities in the Pakele Sub County in Northern region of Uganda?
- ii. What are the programs and strategies employed by selected NGOs in enhancing food security among women in both refugee and host communities in Pakele Sub County in Northern Uganda?
- iii. What are the challenges and constraints faced by the selected NGOs in their effort to improve food security among women in refugee and host communities in Pakele Sub County in Northern Uganda?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The main purpose of this research is to ascertain the main roles of non-governmental organisations in promoting food security in refugee settlements and host communities in the Pakele Sub County in the Adjumani District of Northern Uganda. The study examines the role of NGOs in empowering women in both refugee and host communities to enhance food security. The study holds significance at various levels: First, the lack of scholarly information on the role of the numerous NGOs in these communities was a significant factor that led to the research topic and the research area. The numerous available literature points to the reception and relationship of host communities, land access, humanitarian assistance during protracted emergencies, and protection rights among other social, cultural, and ethnic topics related to refugees and their host communities (Vogelsang, 2017; Puglia, 2019; Miriam, 2023). Unfortunately, there is limited empirical

research done on the role NGOs play in enhancing food security specifically among women in Refugee and host communities. As a result, this research and its findings contribute to filling the gaps in literature on the topic.

Also, the findings of the study contribute to policy development on the ways of ensuring food security among women in both refugee settlements and host communities. NGOs, governmental organizations, and other stakeholders engaged in food security interventions may find use for the findings and conclusions of this research. The information acquired can be used to improve food security and resilience among women in Ugandan host and refugee communities through program design, implementation, and assessment. That is, the findings will inform policymakers and NGOs on applicable approaches for enhancing food security among the vulnerable population.

Moreover, in practice, the research may aid in promoting the evaluation of food security initiatives,' their effectiveness as well as the promotion of cooperation amongst humanitarian agencies. It can also aid in the creation of more efficient and comprehensive methods to alleviate food insecurity in these communities by highlighting the gaps in research and intervention techniques. Finally, both the host communities and the refugees' present levels of food security and resilience can be comprehensively assessed with the help of this research. This is crucial for comprehending the unique requirements and difficulties encountered by these groups and for creating focused, long-lasting support systems.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

The conceptual scope of the research focused on the role of NGOs in promoting food security among women in refugee settlements and host communities. It examined the livelihood strategies most women use to ensure they are food secure. However, before this, it was relevant to understand the food security situation in the selected areas. Comprehending this aided in ascertaining the programs and initiatives NGOs implement towards the alleviation of food insecurity. Despite literature highlighting the role of NGOs in giving humanitarian assistance in emergencies and crisis management (Aliga, 2023), there is a lack of empirical research on the role of NGOs in promoting food security in the Adjumani District. This resulted in the formulation of the research topic. The geographical scope of the research is the Pakele Sub County of the Adjumani District in Northern Uganda. It was chosen due to its urgency in responding to the ongoing civil

conflict in South Sudan. The Adjumani refugee settlement was created to provide a haven for displaced individuals and people, thus offering them basic services including food.

A significant limitation of this research was the language barrier. Although English is the official and common language many people speak, Uganda is a diverse country with different ethnic groups who speak different local languages. In the Adjumani District, the majority of the people speak Acholi and Madi. However, in the refugee settlements, there are over forty (40) ethnic groups from South Sudan and other neighbouring countries meaning there are over forty different languages spoken in this region.

1.7 Organization of Study

This research is organised into six chapters. Chapter one focuses on the background of the study, the problem statement, the research objectives and their corresponding requestion, the purpose of the research, its justification, and significance, and lastly the scope and limitation. Chapter two focuses on the literature review which includes the theoretical foundations, the conceptual framework, and other research conducted in this field. Chapter three is the methodological structure of the research consisting of the sample and sampling methods, research design, study area, and data collection instruments. The next two chapters comprises of the presentation of the results and a discussion of the findings from the field. The last chapter which is the chapter six is concluding and recommendation section.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the relevant conceptual and empirical literature on the role nongovernmental organisations play in enhancing food security among women in host and refugee communities. This section is divided into sub-sections where it examines the concept of food security among refugees. The first sections explore the historical context and the current state of food security in Uganda. The chapter also examines the definition and dimensions of food security in connection with the current food security situation in Uganda. The second section examines the theoretical foundation of the research. The significance of this review is to contribute to the assessment of gender dynamics and food security, refugee and host relations, and the collaborative and intervention efficacy regarding food security. The review seeks to determine the most successful tactics and interventions used by NGOs to enhance food security in vulnerable groups by synthesizing the findings from various sources.

2.2. Historical Context of Food Insecurity in Northern Uganda

Research has found that there are several nations, particularly those in the developing world, that are unable to fulfil all the necessary conditions to guarantee food security for their populations (Sheraz, 2022). Countries such as Uganda are not exempt from experiencing significant levels of food insecurity among their people, as is common among developing nations. This section explores the historical backdrop of food insecurity in Uganda, with a special focus on northern Uganda. Uganda, a country in sub-Saharan Africa, has seen a significant number of violent conflicts and has struggled with high poverty rates. As a result, the country has also had considerable challenges in ensuring food security. Consequently, several nations, including Uganda, have redirected their attention from ensuring sufficient food for the whole country to a more refined approach that emphasizes the availability of food at the family and individual levels (The World Bank, n.d.). The food security situation in Uganda, both historically and now, is characterized by a combination of improvement and chronic issues. In a study done by Bahiigwa (1999), it was shown that from July 1997 to December 1997, 48% of families in Uganda were able to meet their food needs, while 52% had sufficient food reserves. However, in the second part of his investigation, conducted from January 1998 to June 1998, he discovered that 59% of the population was food secure, while 41% were food

insecure (Bahiigwa, 1999). Data from the Ugandan household survey in 2005/2006 revealed that the average daily caloric intake per person was 1970 calories, which was much lower than the recommended minimum needs of 2,200 calories per day (UBoS, 2006). In 2006, a significant percentage of Ugandans, namely over 17.5 million individuals in 3.1 million households, did not consume enough calories to fulfil their minimal needs (Ssewanyana & Kasirye, 2010). This indicates a substantial level of food insecurity at the household level. Turyahabwe et. al. (2013) research demonstrated that around eighty-three percent of the families included in the study encountered food insecurity.

2.3. Food Security

The notion of food security, which originated around fifty years ago, has undergone a substantial transformation, now encompassing not only the presence and consistency of food resources but also the ability of susceptible populations to obtain secure, nourishing, and culturally suitable food (FAO, 1996). This enhanced understanding of food security acknowledges the need to tackle the varied requirements and difficulties encountered by different groups and people. There were four fundamental aspects of food security - availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability, however, it is important to note that recent research argues for expanding this framework to include two additional dimensions: agency and sustainability. According to Clapp et al. (2021), the ability of individuals and groups to exert some control over their circumstances and to meaningfully participate in governance processes is referred to as agency. The sustainability dimension on the other hand is characterized by food system practices that support the long-term use of natural, social, and economic systems, guaranteeing the current generation's food needs without jeopardizing those of future generations (HLPE, 2020). The introduction of these dimensions seeks to better capture the complexities of food security. Of particular importance are the roles that empowerment, cultural sensitivity, and long-term environmental sustainability play in ensuring that everyone has consistent access to enough food that is safe, nourishing, and sufficient. The dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for examining and comprehending the complex network of variables that contribute to food insecurity in Uganda (Berry et al., 2015). This approach recognizes that food security encompasses more than just the production of adequate amounts of food. It also involves ensuring that individuals have the resources to acquire, consume, and get nutritional benefits from a healthy diet regularly.

Food supply in Uganda is often hindered by climate change, land degradation, and restricted access to agricultural inputs and technologies (Ssewanyana & Kasirye, 2010). Poverty, economic inequality, and poor infrastructure impede accessibility, hence restricting individuals' capacity to acquire or produce sufficient food to fulfil their dietary requirements (Mukiibi et al., 2018). Poor health and sanitary conditions, low awareness of optimal nutrition, and cultural attitudes may all impact utilization (Kikafunda et al., 1998). Political instability, economic shocks, and natural catastrophes pose a danger to stability since they have the potential to disrupt food supply systems and livelihoods (FAO, 2008). To effectively tackle food insecurity in Uganda, it is necessary to adopt a comprehensive strategy that considers the distinct obstacles encountered by various areas and communities in the nation. This includes allocating resources towards the implementation of sustainable farming methods, enhancing the quality of infrastructure and facilitating market entry, advocating for education on nutrition, and fortifying social protection initiatives (FAO, 2010). Uganda can strive to guarantee that all its citizens have access to safe, nutritious, and culturally suitable food necessary for leading healthy and productive lives by acknowledging the intricate interplay of factors that affect food security and implementing a comprehensive strategy based on the four pillars.

2.3.1 Food Availability in Uganda

Food availability, a component of the supply side of food security, is determined by factors such as net trade, stock levels, and food production levels (FAO). It pertains to the tangible presence and adequacy of sustenance. As to USAID's definition of food security, if there is a constant and sufficient supply of food for all persons in a nation, then food availability is guaranteed (as referenced in Riely et al., 1999). Food availability may be achieved via two primary means: indigenous production or imports (Gibson, 2012). Therefore, for a nation to fulfil the need for food security, namely in terms of availability, it must possess the capability to produce its food or have established mechanisms for importing food. The issue of food supply in Uganda remains a significant worry, despite the country's advantageous agricultural circumstances. The increase in population and the effects of climate change have posed challenges to domestic food production, resulting in a significant problem of food insecurity (Ssewanyana & Kasirye, 2010; Turyahabwe et al., 2013). Various reasons contribute to the restricted supply of food, such as the poor productivity of smallholder farmers who do not have access to better inputs and contemporary farming practices (Salami et al., 2010). Moreover, the escalating

occurrence and intensity of severe weather phenomena, such as droughts and floods, have hurt the productivity of crops and cattle (Mwaura & Okoboi, 2014). Insufficient infrastructure, such as bad roads and lack of storage facilities, also obstructs farmers' capacity to transport their crops to markets, resulting in post-harvest losses and reduced revenue (Salami et al., 2010).

2.3.2 Food Accessibility in Uganda

Riely et al. (1999) state that when homes and the persons residing in them have sufficient resources, such as money, to acquire suitable foods for a nourishing diet, it guarantees food availability. The authors elaborate that the ability to get food is contingent upon variables such as family income, the distribution of household income, and the cost of food (Riely et al., 1999). Food access may be categorized into two main aspects: physical access, which involves cultivating, purchasing, receiving as a gift, bartering, or exchanging for food; and financial access, which pertains to the ability to afford food. Access to food refers to the many methods by which people get the necessary food to fulfil their dietary and nutritional requirements. Food accessibility is a crucial component of food security in Uganda, especially in rural regions characterized by high poverty rates and restricted economic opportunities (Ssewanyana & Kasirye, 2010). Households with high poverty rates have constraints in terms of their buying power and capacity to acquire healthy diets (World Bank, 2016). Income disparity among homes might result in some individuals, especially women and children, facing restricted availability of food (Ssewanyana & Kasirye, 2010). Moreover, the unpredictable changes in food costs, which are often influenced by seasonal shifts and market forces, might provide challenges for impoverished families in continuously obtaining an adequate food supply (Benson et al., 2008).

2.3.3 Food Utilization in Uganda

This is the biological side of food security where the nutritional benefits people get from consuming the available food are assessed. According to Gibson (2012), utilization is simply the ability of a person to absorb the food optimally or efficiently they eat. The practical guides from the Food Security Information for Action mention that "sufficient energy and nutrient intake by individuals is the result of good care and feeding practices, food preparation, diversity of the diet and intra-household distribution of food. Combined with good biological utilization of food consumed, this determines the nutritional status of individuals" (FAO, 2008a; p.1). This concept of utilization goes beyond the nutritional

content of food however according to research, it necessitates the need for proper health and childcare, clean water, sanitation services, sufficient knowledge on nutrition, and the proper application of the knowledge acquired (as cited in Gibson, 2012). Food utilization, which refers to the body's ability to efficiently use nutrients for a healthy life, is affected by various factors in Uganda, such as poor health and childcare practices, limited access to clean water and sanitation, and inadequate nutrition knowledge (Gibson, 2012; Kikafunda et al., 1998). Inadequate breastfeeding, inappropriate complementary feeding, and limited access to healthcare services can negatively impact children's nutritional status (Kikafunda et al., 1998). Poor hygiene and sanitation practices, coupled with limited access to safe drinking water, can lead to diarrheal diseases and other illnesses that impair nutrient absorption (Kibuuka et al., 2014). Additionally, Ssewanyana & Kasirye (2010) reiterated that a limited understanding of proper nutrition and healthy eating habits can result in suboptimal food choices and preparation methods.

2.3.4 Food Stability in Uganda

Food stability refers to the reliable and continuous supply and accessibility of food across time. The 2006 Policy Brief of the FAO states that to achieve food security, a population, family, or person must have constant access to food. The FAO (2006) clarifies that abrupt disturbances and recurring incidents should not lead to persons being deprived of food. This suggests that climatic conditions, such as extreme droughts and floods, should not lead to vulnerabilities in terms of the ability of households to get food. The idea of stability encompasses two primary characteristics of food security, namely availability and access. Food stability in Uganda is at risk due to climatic change, political instability, and economic volatility (FAO, 2006; Ssewanyana & Kasirye, 2010). The heightened frequency and intensity of droughts, floods, and other severe weather phenomena may result in crop failures, animal casualties, and reduced food accessibility (Mwaura & Okoboi, 2014). Other factors such as conflict and political turmoil, particularly in Northern Uganda, have resulted in the forced relocation of communities, interruption of farming operations, and diminished food stability (Muyinda et al., 2016). Moreover, variations in food costs, currency exchange rates, and other economic variables might provide challenges for families in maintaining steady access to food (Benson et al., 2008).

In summary, the concept of food security significantly entails the implementation of strategies to guarantee that a nation or its inhabitants have access to an adequate and reliable food supply. To guarantee this, it is advisable to verify that all four dimensions

are fulfilled. Therefore, the entire population has access to and may get food that is sufficient to satisfy their nutritional requirements. There must also be a guarantee of food stability, meaning that abrupt shocks and unanticipated situations should not jeopardize the supply and access to food for the people.

2.4. Causes of Food Insecurity among Women

Gender is particularly significant to food security, given that men and women have varied responsibilities and resources when it comes to food production. They have distinct functions in terms of nutrition and food consumption, as well as distinct coping mechanisms in the event of an emergency (Ashagidigbi et al., 2017). Women play a crucial role in ensuring food security for their household however, they often face challenges. These challenges according to Ch (2022) include limited access to resources, and gender disparities which restrict their access to education, employment opportunities, and decision-making processes. There are several other causes of food insecurity among women. Some common causes are:

2.4.1. Poverty

Women experience food insecurity mostly due to poverty. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2017), the poverty rate in the Northern region is 32.5%, which is much higher than the national average of 21.4%. Women have a higher degree of poverty compared to males because they have restricted access to resources, education, and career prospects (Oyewole & Ahmadu, 2019). Insufficient financial resources impede women's capacity to acquire sufficient and nourishing food, resulting in food insecurity (Mukembo et al., 2021).

2.4.2 Climate Change

The phenomenon of climate change has worsened the issue of inadequate access to food for women residing in Northern Uganda. The area has seen a rise in the occurrence and intensity of droughts, floods, and other forms of severe weather events (USAID, 2017). These occurrences hurt agricultural productivity, which serves as the main source of living for several women in the area. Climate change exacerbates food poverty among women by causing crop failures and animal losses (Onzima et al., 2019). Women's susceptibility to food insecurity is heightened by their incapacity to effectively manage climatic shocks and adjust to fluctuating weather patterns (Acosta et al., 2019).

2.4.3 Limited access to resources/limited economic opportunities

Access to productive resources, such as land, financing, and agricultural inputs, is restricted for women in Northern Uganda (FAO, 2019). The limited access to resources hampers their capacity to participate in activities that generate revenue and enhance their food security status. Moreover, women often encounter prejudice in the labour market, which subsequently restricts their economic prospects (Dolan, 2004). Insufficient access to resources and restricted economic prospects a recurring pattern of poverty and food insecurity among women in the area (Mukembo et al., 2021).

2.4.4 Inadequate infrastructure

Inadequate infrastructure, such as substandard roads, inadequate storage facilities, and limited access to markets, significantly impairs food security in Northern Uganda (USAID, 2017). Insufficient infrastructure disproportionately impacts women, who often bear the responsibility of transporting and selling agricultural products. Inadequate storage facilities contribute to post-harvest losses, while inadequate road networks impede market access, leading to decreased revenue and adversely affecting women's food security (Onzima et al., 2019). The insufficient infrastructure also hampers women's ability to get necessary services like healthcare and education, which are vital for their general welfare and food security (Acosta et al., 2019).

2.4.5 Gender inequality

Gender disparity is a major contributing factor to the issue of inadequate access to food among women in Northern Uganda. Women have restricted decision-making authority in both homes and communities, resulting in a diminished capacity to obtain and manage resources (Dolan, 2004). The existing disparity in power obstructs women's ability to exercise agency in matters related to food production, distribution, and consumption, thereby affecting their food security (Mukembo et al., 2021). Moreover, women often shoulder the responsibility of unpaid care duties, so restricting their availability and vitality for activities that generate revenue (FAO, 2019). The inequitable allocation of work and resources within families contributes to the ongoing susceptibility of women to food insecurity (Acosta et al., 2019).

2.4.6 Conflicts and Displacement

The northern part of Uganda has had protracted wars, namely due to the insurgency of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), resulting in the relocation of a significant number of people (Baines & Rosenoff Gauvin, 2014). Displaced women often have difficulties

obtaining land, resources, and support services, hence increasing their susceptibility to food insecurity (FAO, 2019). Conflict and displacement worsen women's food insecurity by disrupting their livelihoods, social networks, and support systems (Mukembo et al., 2021). The psychological repercussions and trauma resulting from violence exacerbate the difficulties that women have in guaranteeing food security for both them and their families (Acosta et al., 2019).

2.4.7 Social and cultural norms

Women in Northern Uganda face pervasive social and cultural norms that result in discrimination, which hinders their ability to get education, resources, and decision-making authority (Oyewole & Ahmadu, 2019). These social standards may also result in behaviours like marrying at a young age and having many children, which worsen women's susceptibility to food insecurity (FAO, 2019). Women's access to education is restricted, which impedes their capacity to gain the knowledge and skills required to enhance their livelihoods and ensure food security (Mukembo et al., 2021). The cultural norms and societal expectations that assign the responsibility of providing food for the home to women, together with their restricted access to resources and limited authority in decision-making, sustain a continuous cycle of food insecurity (Acosta et al., 2019).

2.5 Response to Food Insecurity

Socioeconomic and cultural factors have been attributed to the causes of food insecurity among women. However, addressing food insecurity among women requires a multi-faceted approach that tackles the root causes of gender inequality, poverty, and lack of access to resources and opportunities. Coordinated efforts across sectors are needed to empower women economically and socially. These efforts are discussed in the following sub-sections.

2.5.1 Access to Resources, Training, and Capacity Building

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Northern Uganda have used many measures to enhance the empowerment of women and enhance their food security. Access to resources is a crucial element of women's empowerment. NGOs like ActionAid have assisted women in obtaining land titles and creating community land banks. These initiatives have enhanced women's authority over land and enhanced their food security (ActionAid, 2012). NGOs such as BRAC have offered training and capacity-building initiatives that have empowered women with the essential knowledge and skills to improve their agricultural output, income, and food security (BRAC, 2016).

2.5.2 Financial Inclusion and Market Access

NGOs like CARE have pushed financial inclusion efforts, such as village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) and microfinance programs, to empower women to save money, get loans, and participate in income-generating businesses. This, in turn, enhances their food security (CARE, 2014). NGOs have assisted women in gaining access to markets for their agricultural products by facilitating collective marketing, enhancing the value of their output, and establishing connections with potential purchasers. ACDI/VOCA has successfully established connections between female farmers and customers, leading to a rise in earnings and enhanced food stability (ACDI/VOCA, 2019).

2.5.3 Technology Adoption and Gender Mainstreaming

NGOs like Lutheran World Relief have encouraged the use of suitable technologies, such as better seed varieties, irrigation systems, and storage facilities, to improve agricultural productivity and decrease post-harvest losses among female farmers in Northern Uganda (Lutheran World Relief, 2018). NGO programs and policies have included gender mainstreaming to tackle gender inequity and advance women's empowerment. Oxfam has successfully implemented gender mainstreaming programs, resulting in a rise in women's involvement in community leadership and enhanced food security (Oxfam, 2015).

2.5.4 Nutrition Education and Policy Advocacy

The provision of nutrition education by NGOs like World Vision has enhanced women's understanding and implementation of good dietary habits, child feeding practices, and sanitation, hence leading to enhanced maternal and child nutrition as well as food security (World Vision, 2017). The policy advocacy efforts of NGOs such as the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) have had a significant impact on government policies and programs concerning food security and women's empowerment. As a result, there has been a notable rise in official support for women farmers (UWONET, 2019).

The multifaceted techniques used by NGOs have played a significant role in empowering women in Northern Uganda and enhancing their food security. NGOs have significantly contributed to the promotion of sustainable food security and women's empowerment in the area by tackling the obstacles encountered by women, including restricted access to resources, insufficient skills and knowledge, financial marginalization, and gender inequity.

2.6. Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of NGOs' Interventions

The efficacy of an intervention is significantly influenced by several factors, including the embeddedness, reputation, and long-term commitment of NGOs in the community as well as sufficient funding, partner involvement, and capacity. However, several key factors affect the effectiveness of interventions implemented by NGOs:

2.6.1 Institutional Factors

Various institutional variables impact the efficacy of NGO efforts in enhancing food security among women in Northern Uganda. These factors include the NGOs' ability to organize and manage their operations, their financial assets, their collaborations with other entities, and their systems for ensuring transparency and responsibility (USAID, 2017). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that possess a high level of organizational capability, sufficient financial resources, productive collaborations, and reliable accountability procedures are more inclined to conduct successful interventions.

2.6.2 Socioeconomic Factors

The success of NGOs' activities in Northern Uganda is also influenced by socioeconomic issues such as poverty, gender inequity, cultural norms, and political instability (FAO, 2019). These characteristics have the potential to restrict the involvement of women in NGO programs, impede the acceptance of new technology and practices, and weaken the long-term effectiveness of initiatives. NGOs must tackle these socioeconomic problems by using comprehensive and tailored strategies.

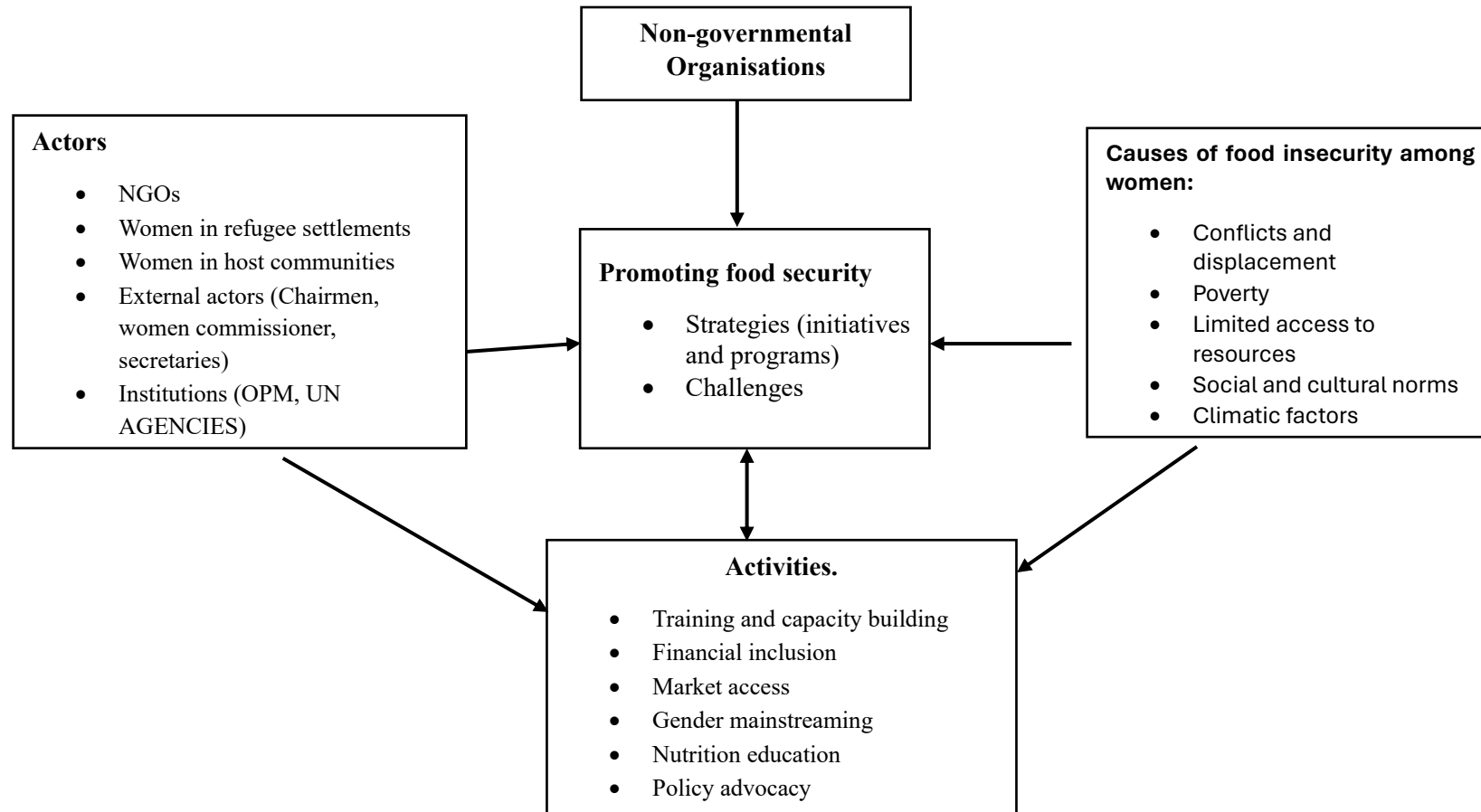
2.7 Role of NGOs in Promoting Food Security

NGOs are crucial in advancing food security, particularly among vulnerable groups like women in refugee and host communities. According to Vakil (1997, p. 2060), NGOs are private, self-governing, non-profit organizations that aim to enhance the well-being of underprivileged individuals. These organizations function autonomously from governments and often prioritize the resolution of humanitarian, social, or environmental concerns (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). NGOs play a crucial role in ensuring food security by implementing diverse programs such as providing agricultural assistance, promoting livelihood development, and delivering nutrition education (FAO, 2003). They collaborate extensively with nearby communities to determine their requirements and devise treatments that are tailored to their circumstances. These interventions aim to tackle the root causes of food insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and limited access to resources (Bebbington, 2004).

NGOs excel in their capacity to access marginalized and underserved communities, especially in distant or conflict-ridden regions where government provisions may be scarce (Banks & Hulme, 2012). NGOs often possess robust networks and collaborations with local organizations, allowing them to effectively gather resources and specialized knowledge to bolster food security efforts (Brass, 2012). Nevertheless, NGOs encounter obstacles in their efforts to advance food security. These factors include restricted financial resources, brief project durations, and reliance on the preferences of donors (Edwards & Hulme, 1996). In complex and changing ecosystems, NGOs may have challenges in achieving long-term sustainability and expanding effective initiatives (Fowler, 2000). Notwithstanding these difficulties, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) continue to be crucial participants in the battle against food insecurity, augmenting the efforts of governments and international organizations. Through cooperative efforts with local communities and many stakeholders, NGOs may actively contribute to the development of food systems that are both resilient and fair. These systems should prioritize the needs and rights of vulnerable people, such as women in refugee and host communities.

2.8. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. The conceptual Framework.



Source: Author's construct (based on literature: Banyen et al., 2015)

2.8.1 Narrative to Conceptual Framework

The study's conceptual framework revolves around the notion of food security and the involvement of NGOs in advancing it among women in Northern Uganda. This framework is guided by the research objectives. It highlights the key actors involved in promoting food security initiatives among refugees. Although NGOs play a significant role in this, their work cannot be complete without cooperation from others including the community leaders, governmental institutions like the OPM, UN Agencies, and the women in these communities. The framework also shows that NGOs enhance food security through various activities which include training and capacity building, financial literacy, market access, gender mainstreaming, education on nutrition, and last but not least, policy Advocacy. These initiatives address the various challenges women face in accessing food.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

There are several theories on the underlying factors that contribute to food security and insecurity among women in refugee and host communities. Given the nature of food insecurities in Northern Uganda and the role NGOs play in promoting food security among women, the study is guided by the feminist theory, the theory of resilience, and the resource base theory which provides a useful insight into gender factors that contributes to food insecurity, the ability of women to be and the resource available to NGOs to ensure women in Northern Uganda are food secured. This section explains these theories, specifically focusing on how they are analytically suitable for addressing the study's objectives.

2.9.1 The Feminist Theory

Feminist theory is an analytical framework that scrutinizes the societal, financial, and governmental aspects of gender disparity and promotes the empowerment and emancipation of women (Tong, 2009). The idea has developed several viewpoints including liberal feminism, radical feminism, socialist feminism, and postcolonial feminism (Lorber, 2010). These viewpoints have a shared objective of questioning patriarchal systems and advocating for gender equality, but they vary in their examination of the underlying causes of oppression and the methods for bringing about change. Within the realm of food security, feminist theory offers a crucial perspective for comprehending the gender-related aspects of hunger and malnutrition. Women play a vital role in the production, processing, and distribution of food. However, they often encounter

considerable obstacles when it comes to accessing resources, markets, and decision-making authority (FAO, 2011). Feminist theory acknowledges that these obstacles are based on systematic gender disparity and that resolving them requires a radical strategy that questions the fundamental power dynamics (Quisumbing et al., 2015).

Feminist theory highlights the significance of women's ability to act and engage in development initiatives, especially those on food security. This entails beyond the mere focus on women as recipients and instead actively engaging them in the process of designing, implementing, and assessing programs (Cornwall & Rivas, 2015). Feminist methods prioritize the perspectives and experiences of women to develop solutions that effectively and sustainably fulfil their specific needs and goals. Feminist theory may provide valuable insights into the relationship between gender inequality and women's susceptibility to hunger and malnutrition, as well as the approaches used by NGOs to enhance women's empowerment in the context of NGOs and food security in Northern Uganda. Feminist theory may provide valuable insights into the obstacles and possibilities for achieving gender-transformative change by examining the power relations within homes, communities, and institutions. Furthermore, feminist theory may enhance the development of NGO interventions that are better attuned to women's needs and interests, and more successful in ensuring long-lasting food security, by highlighting the significance of women's agency and involvement.

2.9.2 The Resource-based theory (RBT)

Resource-based theory (RBT) is a strategic management paradigm that elucidates how organizations may attain and maintain a competitive edge by harnessing their distinctive assortment of resources and skills (Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984). The idea emerged throughout the 1980s and 1990s as a reaction to the constraints of the industrial organization perspective, which emphasized the significance of external market forces in on the other hand, emphasizes the intrinsic qualities of organizations and suggests that success depends on effectively using valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources (Barney, 1991). Resource-based theory offers a valuable framework for comprehending how NGOs might efficiently use their resources to accomplish their objectives in the context of ensuring food security among women in Northern Uganda. NGOs depend on a range of resources, such as financial capital, human capital (knowledge and skills), social capital (networks and collaborations), and organizational capital (structures and procedures), to develop and conduct interventions (USAID, 2017).

As per the Resource-Based Theory (RBT), the effectiveness of these interventions relies not only on the number of resources accessible but also on their calibre and distinctiveness.

For instance, an NGO that has established a solid reputation for actively involving the community and using participatory methods may have a greater advantage in obtaining financial support and forming partnerships compared to an organization that does not possess similar qualities. Similarly, an NGO equipped with a team of proficient and seasoned staff members may have the capacity to devise and execute initiatives that are more efficient than those carried out by an organisation with fewer competent workers. Resource-based theory (RBT) also proposes that NGOs should strive to cultivate and safeguard their distinct resources and competencies, since they may provide a lasting competitive edge over other organizations (Grant, 1991). Resource-based theory may provide valuable insights into the aspects that lead to organisational success and impact in the study of NGOs and food security in Northern Uganda. Through the analysis of the resources and capacities of various non-governmental organisations (NGOs), researchers can determine the primary factors that contribute to success and the possible obstacles that may hinder the expansion of interventions. Furthermore, by an analysis of how non-governmental organisations obtain, distribute, and use their resources, researchers may get valuable knowledge on the tactics and methods that allow organisations to accomplish their objectives in an intricate and demanding setting. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that RBT has some constraints when used in the nonprofit industry. NGOs, in contrast to for-profit companies, are driven by social and environmental goals rather than by the desire for economic advantage. Therefore, the VRIN paradigm may not comprehensively include the distinct difficulties and advantages encountered by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in advancing food security and women's empowerment. However, RBT continues to be a useful instrument for comprehending the structural aspects of development interventions and for guiding the creation and administration of efficient NGO programs.

2.9.3 The Resilience Theory

Resilience theory is a comprehensive framework that investigates the response and recovery of many systems, such as people, families, communities, and ecosystems, to shocks and stressors (Folke, 2006). The term "resilience" originated in the field of ecology, specifically to refer to the capacity of ecosystems to withstand disruptions and

sustain their fundamental operations (Holling, 1973). Resilience theory has been used in several disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, and development studies, to comprehend how human systems effectively deal with and adjust to challenging circumstances (Masten, 2014). Resilience theory is useful for examining how people, families, and communities can endure and bounce back from various disruptions, such as droughts, floods, wars, and economic crises, in the context of food security (Béné et al., 2012). Resilience is commonly understood as a blend of three abilities: absorptive capacity (the skill to reduce vulnerability to shocks), adaptive capacity (the skill to adapt to changing situations), and transformative capacity (the skill to bring about fundamental changes to the system) (Béné et al., 2016). Resilience theory proposes that developing these abilities requires a comprehensive strategy that tackles not just the immediate causes of food insecurity but also the fundamental issues that render people and families susceptible. This encompasses the resolution of problems such as poverty, gender disparity, limited availability of resources, and inadequate institutions (FAO, 2019). NGOs can enhance the capacity of people, families, and communities to withstand and bounce back from the negative impacts of food insecurity by bolstering their resilience.

Resilience theory may be used to comprehend how interventions in the research of NGOs and food security in Northern Uganda might enhance the resilience of women and their families. NGOs that provide instruction in sustainable farming methods, expand opportunities for earning a living, and encourage the use of savings and credit systems may assist women in developing their ability to endure and adapt to adverse events like droughts and floods. NGOs that promote gender-responsive policies and challenge discriminatory societal norms may play a significant role in bringing about transformational change that tackles the root reasons for women's susceptibility to food insecurity.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that developing resilience is an intricate and enduring procedure that necessitates consistent commitment and assistance. The idea of resilience emphasizes the significance of adopting a systems perspective that acknowledges the interrelationships among many levels (individual, home, community) and domains (ecological, economic, social) (Folke, 2006). Therefore, NGOs must collaborate with governments, communities, and other stakeholders to provide a favourable atmosphere for the development of resilience. Resilience theory may be used to guide the development and execution of NGO interventions in Northern Uganda, where

women are confronted several interconnected obstacles associated with poverty, war, and gender inequality. This approach ensures that the interventions are more suited to addressing the specific needs and priorities of the local community. NGOs can enhance the sustainability and resilience of food systems in the area by prioritizing the development of women's and families' abilities to handle and adjust to unexpected events and pressures.

The underlying theories provide a framework for the study. The feminist theory sheds light on the gendered dimensions of food insecurity and the specific challenges faced by women. It draws attention to the ways that gender inequality, patriarchal norms, and unequal power dynamics make women susceptible to food insecurity. The theory further aids in analysing how NGO programs tackle or combat the lack of economic empowerment, household duties, and gender inequality that exacerbate food insecurity for women. The resource base theory which focuses on how access to and control over resources influence food security outcomes also guides the assessment of NGOs' capacity, resources, and strategic approaches in implementing food security interventions for women in refugee and host communities. Moreover, it aids in examining how NGOs contribute to the development of social capital, networks, and community involvement to support the mobilization of resources to enhance food security. Additionally, the resilient theory explores the ability of individuals, households, and communities to withstand shocks and stresses that jeopardize food security. This study uses the theory to investigate how NGO interventions improve the social capital and diversity of sources of income for women in host and refugee households.

2.10. Summary of the Chapter

This literature review has examined the idea of food security, the factors contributing to food insecurity among women in Northern Uganda, and the involvement of NGOs in advancing food security via diverse methods and interventions. The evaluation has emphasized the intricate and multifaceted character of food security, which includes the aspects of availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability (FAO, 1996). The highlighted factors contributing to food insecurity among women in Northern Uganda include poverty, climate change, restricted resource access, gender inequality, conflicts, and societal norms (FAO, 2019; USAID, 2017). The review has analysed the strategies employed by NGOs to enhance food security for women in Northern Uganda. These strategies include enhancing resource accessibility, offering training and capacity

building, promoting financial inclusion, facilitating market access, introducing suitable technologies, integrating gender considerations, providing nutrition education, and engaging in policy advocacy (FAO, 2019; USAID, 2017). NGOs must consider institutional and socioeconomic aspects that impact the success of these interventions when designing and implementing their programs (USAID, 2017; FAO, 2019).

The study's conceptual framework has been examined, emphasizing the relationships between food security, the factors contributing to food insecurity among women in Northern Uganda, and the involvement of NGOs in advancing food security (Camp, 2001; Akintoye, 2015). The paper has introduced a theoretical framework that incorporates feminist theory, resource-based theory, and resilience theory. This framework aims to offer a thorough comprehension of the gender aspects of food security, the significance of resources and capabilities for NGOs, and the necessity to enhance resilience among women and their households. The sources cited for this framework are Quisumbing et al. (2015), Barney (1991), and Béné et al. (2012). This literature review has established a strong basis for comprehending the role of NGOs in advancing food security among women in Northern Uganda, as well as the elements that impact the efficacy of their interventions. The knowledge acquired from this review will influence the approach, data interpretation, and conversation of the research, eventually adding to the wider debate on food security and women's empowerment in sub-Saharan Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

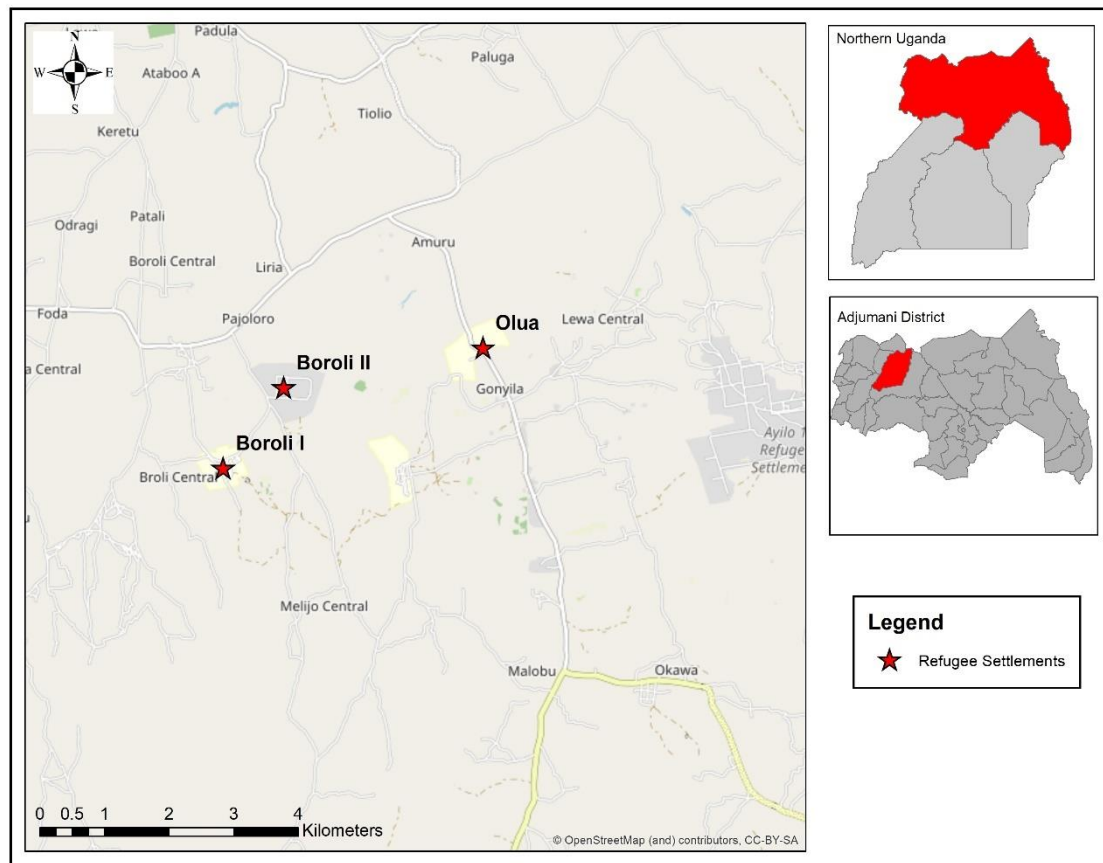
3.1 Introduction

The study's methodological approach is presented in this chapter. This consists of the techniques and approaches used in identifying and collecting information on the topic. It begins with the study area, research design, and research approach. It also includes the sources of data, data collection techniques, sampling strategy, sample size, and data analysis techniques. The appropriate guidelines on research ethics which the study will adhere to are presented in this section. The last part of the section provides context on the study setting. The following sub-sections of this chapter continue in that order.

3.2 Study area

The study was carried out in the Pakele sub-county of the Adjumani District in the Northwestern side of Uganda. The sub-county saw significant levels of displacement, as a large number of its inhabitants were compelled to evacuate to internally displaced persons (IDP) settlements during the insurgency (Mergelsberg, 2012). Pakele housed one of the biggest IDP camps in the area at the peak of the war, with a population exceeding 60,000 individuals (Dolan, 2009). These included the Boroli I, Boroli II, and Olua refugee settlements presented in this study. The current statistics of the population in these settlements according to the Office of the Prime Minister, Boroli, shows that the total population in Boroli I is 9383 with 1320 households. Boroli II also house a total population of 4531 with 669 households. Lastly, Olua I refugee settlement also have a total population of 5072 in 609 households.

Figure 2. Map of the selected refugee settlements.



Source: University of Ghana, RS/GIS LAB, 2024.

The settlements within the Pakele sub-county were marked by excessive population density, substandard living circumstances, and a deficiency of fundamental amenities, such as healthcare and education (Mergelsberg, 2012). The violence caused a disturbance in the customary means of making a living, such as agriculture, and resulted in the collapse of social systems and connections (Baines & Rosenoff Gauvin, 2014). The relocation of individuals to settlements also presented other difficulties, including the deprivation of land access and the degradation of customary coping strategies (Mergelsberg, 2012). Women in these parts had significant negative impacts as a result of the war, including heightened vulnerability to gender-based violence and exploitation. Additionally, they faced the added responsibility of supporting their families in the absence of males (Ahikire et al., 2012). Following the cessation of hostilities, the inhabitants have been diligently engaged in the process of reconstructing their lives and communities. Nevertheless, the aftermath of the battle has posed substantial obstacles to the endeavours of rehabilitation and development. A significant number of individuals have had difficulties in returning to their original property, reconstructing their means of

living, and obtaining essential amenities (Spitzer & Twikirize, 2013). Women still encounter obstacles such as restricted economic prospects, inequitable access to resources, and the responsibility of unpaid caregiving (Ahikire et al., 2012). It is essential to tackle these difficulties and support the empowerment of women to construct a stronger and moderate future in and throughout Northern Uganda.

3.3 Research Approach

The study adopted the qualitative research approach. A qualitative research approach according to Clark et al. (2021, p.350), aims to generate insights concerning topics through considered engagement with places and social actors. It is the collection and analysis of non-numerical data to comprehend the opinions, concepts, and experiences of people. The use of the qualitative research approach has gained popularity over time due to its ability to help understand social phenomena. Creswell (2009) mentions that the qualitative research approach is an efficient model that occurs in a natural setting and enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from high involvement in the actual experiences. It aids in exploring meanings and insights into a social phenomenon or any given situation (Strauss & Corbin, 2008 cited in Mohajan, 2018).

The qualitative research approach can describe and explain intangible elements which include social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion (Mack et al., 2005; p.2). This is in line with this research which seeks to focus on the above-mentioned elements including gender roles, socioeconomic status, and social norms. Moreover, Punch (2013) asserts qualitative research is a type of social science research that uses non-numerical data to help understand social life through the study's targeted populations or places. In this case, the research is based on a more vulnerable population which is refugees and their host communities. The research employs qualitative approaches to examine and explore an in-depth understanding of the social and non-numerical conditions associated with livelihood strategies and food security among women. Moreover, the use of this approach is convenient because issues of food are complex and dynamic, and an important topic among refugees that involves actors with certain criteria, principles, rules and regulations on the need to assist or empower people.

3.4 Research Design

A research design according to Bryman (2012) is a framework for the collection and analysis of data. This study adopted a case study design. A case study is an intensive study of a single unit to generalize across a larger set of units (Gerring, 2004). Yin (2014: p16)

states that the use of case study designs in research makes it feasible to study existing issues in an in-depth manner. It is useful for answering the why, how, and what questions which are typical in qualitative research. As such, this design was adopted in this study due to its attempt to gain in-depth knowledge from key informants including women, NGO workers, and prominent local actors on the food security challenges within the host and refugee communities in the Adjumani District as well as the roles NGOs play in empowering women to deal with such challenges.

3.5 Sources of Data

The research contains data from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data was gathered from archives and online platforms. Archives according to Clark et al (2021, p.500) are simply a collective of documents, items, or objects that relate to a specific topic, usually a person, an organisation, or an event. In this case, secondary data was gathered from online documents including those from mass media, online search platforms including Google Scholar, websites, and blogs. Also, the researcher gathered information from primary sources which included data from some selected NGOs on their food security policies and programs. Examples of these selected NGOs included the Action Against Hunger, Food for the Hungry, Self-Help Africa, AFRA, and NURI which have supported and implemented programs to enhance food security within the Adjumani district. Moreover, it also gathered information from some key informants including the VC from the Office of the Prime Minister, Community leaders (Chairman, Head of Women committees, and General Secretaries), and other stakeholders.

3.6 Data Collection Techniques

The main data collection method for this qualitative research study was interviews. Interviews allow the collection of in-depth information from respondents and institutions considered to have relevant knowledge on a topic of investigation (Bryman, 2016, p.466). Bryman further explains that interviewing helps in building a much greater interest in the interviewee's point of view (Bryman, 2016, p.466). Employing this method ensured detailed information was gathered from respondents which included local leaders, NGO workers, and women in both host and refugee communities in Adjumani District. A semi-structured interview guide was created to ensure that all relevant data needed for the research will be collected. Likewise, Clark et al (2021) mention that semi-structured interviews ensure a form of flexibility that allows the respondents to freely express themselves with a clear focus. Using the semi-structured interview question, respondents

were allowed to respondents to freely express themselves in matters that slightly deviated from the research topic. This was also to ensure the respondents were comfortable during the research.

A face-to-face interview was conducted in the field with several respondents. Before starting the interview, respondents were duly informed of the purpose of the study, and oral consent was obtained before recording and taking notes. During the interview sessions, it was also relevant to record the attitude and behaviour of respondents towards the topic being discussed. Every single interview was not the same and the researcher made a conscious effort to revisit the questions and add follow-up questions, remove, or rephrase certain questions to achieve a better result. The duration for each interview differed from individual to individual. Some took one to two hours; others took less than twenty to thirty minutes. The venue for the interviews was mostly in the homes of the respondents (house to house), under trees, in offices, and in restaurants. In some situations, some people gathered to be interviewed because they felt the need to be part of the research. On the part of the researcher, the interviews were conducted in English, but in cases where the respondents did not speak English, the services of translators were employed especially in the refugee and host communities.

3.7 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The research comprised a total sample size of forty-seven participants. This includes participants from three refugee communities and two host communities. The participants from the refugee settlements comprised seven (7) women from Boroli I, six (6) from Boroli II, and seven (7) from Olua I. There were ten (10) participants from the Boroli community and six (6) from the Olua community. The sample also consisted of six (6) key informants (Local Leaders) and five (5) NGO workers.

The research made use of three non-probability sampling techniques which include purposive sampling, snowball sampling, and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling according to Bryman (2016) is a strategic sampling technique used to sample cases or research participants so that those samples are relevant to the posed research questions. As such, this study strategically sampled key informants which consisted of six (6) local leaders and five (5) NGO workers to comprehend the role they play in bridging the gap between women and food security. The goal of using this sampling method was to strategically sample participants based on information they could provide, usually because they are experts in a certain field, where these participants then suggested others

(Clark et al., 2021; p.378). This sampling technique also ensured that there was a good amount of variety in the resulting sample, so that the sample members were different from each other in terms of gender, age, and status in society, among other key characteristics.

Snowball sampling was also used in collaboration with the purposive sampling technique. Snowball sampling is a technique in which the researcher initially samples a small group of people who are relevant to the research questions and those sampled then recommend other participants who have experiences or characteristics that are relevant to the research (Clark et al., 2021; p.384). In this research which was conducted in an environment the researcher was not familiar with, it was relevant to identify experts and people with knowledge on this and use the snowball sampling method to identify more informants as the research proceeds. Lastly, convenience nonprobability sampling was used to sample respondents from the refugee settlements and the host communities. A convenience sample is a non-probability sampling sample that involves a group of elements that is easily accessible to a researcher (Clark, 2017). As such, this was employed to gather data from women who were available and willing to discuss their experiences regarding their means of livelihood, food availability, food access, and the benefits they derive from the presence of NGOs. The researcher used this method to identify and get information from women in both refugee and host communities who were easy to access.

3.8 Data Analysis

The data analysis strategy for this research is examined in this section. The research used a thematic approach in analyzing the data. A thematic analysis involves examining data to extract core themes that could be distinguished both between and within transcripts (Bryman, 2016: p.11). The data gathered through interviews were analysed through the creation of themes that have been described by Clark et al (2021. P. 537) as categories of interest identified by the researcher. First, the data was recorded using a standardized recording device. The researcher also made use of notetaking which was relevant for jotting important topics which came up during the interviews. Braun and Clarke's stages of thematic analysis were also used to analyse the data gathered from the field trip. This included the six-stage processes which comprised familiarization, initial coding, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, and evidencing themes.

In practice, the researcher transferred all the interview documents into an electronic document. The recorded interviews were also transcribed using Word document. The transcripts from the interviews were edited and examined and the researcher familiarized

herself with the data. In doing this, the researcher was able to begin the coding of the data collected which also, helped in identifying themes. The various themes created according to the data collected are presented in chapter 4 of this research. A maximum amount of time was also spent on reviewing, defining, and evidencing the themes. However, after identifying the themes, it was relevant to connect the identified theories and concepts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the information gathered. In the end, the analysis seemed like a narrative, which tells the stories of individuals. The stories of refugees who struggle through their daily lives in refugee settlements due to diverse reasons. It reflects the stories of people who out of their love for humanity accept people in need and must either benefit or struggle alongside. The analysis is typically the stories that respondents relate to during the interviews.

3.9 Ethical consideration

As stated by Bjorkhaug (2021, p.57), “It can be quite overwhelming to conduct research in a vulnerable context, where suffering seems endemic and solutions to the problems seem elusive”. This presents an enormous challenge to the researcher as she must deal with the highest expectations from the research. Respondents may expect to get some sought after benefits from being part of the research which may or may not affect the responses given when their expectations are not met. However, as Jennings (2020) mentions it is relevant to be critical and have critical empathy to address the balance. To overcome this ordeal, it is important to consider the ethical considerations that lie in the processes of conducting research and its outcome.

Ethical considerations are important because they relate to the integrity of a piece of research and the discipline that is involved (Bryman, 2016). There are four main ethical concerns when it comes to this research. These include not causing harm to participants, respecting the privacy of respondents, upholding anonymity, and obtaining consent before the interviews begin. With regards to not harming or causing harm to participants, research that is likely to harm participants is regarded by most people as unacceptable (Bryman, 2016: p.126). Anonymity and privacy are closely tied to harm to study participants. The researcher ensured that personal information from respondents was kept anonymous. Widely, the personal information that may lead to identifying individual respondents including names, address among others were not collected or were kept in private. That is, the research did not reveal any information that the respondents prefer to be kept in private. According to Bryman (2016, p.129), the principle of informed consent

means that prospective research participants were given detailed information as needed to make an informed decision about whether they wish to participate in the study. This was followed precisely to educate the respondents and, ensure they fully understood their rights and responsibilities. A verbal consent was also, required from the respondents before conducting the interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The study's findings are presented in this chapter. Data was gathered from participants including NGOs, local leaders (Local chairman, Women leaders, general secretaries), other stakeholders (Office of the Prime Minister Representative), women in both refugee and host communities in the host and refugee communities in the Pakele Sub County of the Adjumani District. The data was primarily collected in three refugee settlements and their host communities which included Boroli I, Boroli II, Olua I, and Boroli and Olua. The results are based on a thorough four-week data collection process that involved these communities. The structuring of the data collection tools, and the field engagements were carried out in connection to the research questions, theoretical underpinnings, and already existing literature on the subject matter. This chapter is divided into four parts. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in the first part of this chapter. The remaining three parts focus on addressing the three main research questions of this study. The second part presents data on the livelihood strategies of women within the refugee and host communities. The third part presents data on the specific ways through which the selected NGOs promote food security among women in these regions while the last section presents data on the challenges associated with implementing the programs and initiatives presented in the third part. The final part is also dedicated to reviewing the study's findings, which are presented considering existing research as well as theoretical discussions on the role of NGOs in promoting food security among women in refugee and host communities in various contexts.

Part 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The background information on the NGOs and women in both refugee and host communities is presented in this section. This is significant because it provides readers with information on the distinct categories of respondents from which the study's primary data was gathered. The individual demographic of women is significant because it helps in understanding their different backgrounds, situations, and experiences and how these affect their livelihoods and their ability to be food secure. The demographic characteristics of this study are age group, ethnicity, marital status, type of family, household size, length of stay, and the ratio category under the Re-prioritization Plan.

The study’s focus is on enhancing food security among women in both refugee and host communities. This is why the respondents were limited to women-led households in these regions. A total of 20 women in the refugee communities of Boroli I, Boroli II, and Olua I were interviewed. The demographic of the sampled women is presented in the preceding sub-sections.

4.2.1 Age group

This study examined the age distribution of the respondents. It took into consideration the perspective of the youth, middle-aged, and the elderly in these communities. It is to ensure a balance in the representation of the data presented. The information gathered in this respect is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Age of respondents

Age group (Years)	Boroli I	Boroli II	Olua I	Total (N)	Percentage (%)
18-27	1	1	2	4	20.0
28-37	2	2	2	6	30.0
38-47	1	2	1	4	20.0
48-57	1	1	-	2	10.0
58 and above	2	-	2	4	20.0
Total	7	6	7	20	100%

Source: Field Data, 2024

The results show an age distribution where the majority of the respondents fell under the ages of 28 and 37. According to Uganda’s National Youth Action Plan (2016), a youth is someone who falls between the ages of 18 and 30. This shows that most women in this study slightly fall within the youthful age. That is, women who fall between the ages of 18 and 27 can be classified as youth. Respondents between 28 and 37 can also be described as in the late youthful age but in this context, we will classify them as a youth. Although the majority falls within the youthful age, there is a significant number which falls within the middle age and elderly (10% and 20% respectively). These respondents play a key role in this research as they are less likely to farm and engage in agricultural or commercial services to improve their livelihood which makes them more vulnerable and food insecure.

4.2.2. Ethnic Background

The ethnic background of respondents in this study is to assist in understanding the origin and livelihood strategies of the refugees in these areas. Certain tribes are known to be good farmers while others are also known to be good at other things including animal

husbandry or trade. This significantly affects their sustainable livelihoods and their food security.

Table 2 Ethnic Background of respondents

Ethnicity	Boroli I	Boroli II	Olua I	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Dinka	-	-	7	7	35.0
Bari	1	5	-	6	30.0
Lokoya		1	-	1	5.0
Kukua	1	-	-	1	5.0
Madi	4	-	-	4	20.0
Kuku	1	-	-	1	5.0
Total	7	6	7	20	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

There are over forty ethnic groups present in these refugee settlements, that is, Boroli I, Boroli II, and Olua I settlements. These ethnic groups are primarily from South Sudan and Sudanese origin. They include tribes like Dinka, Bari, Lokoya, Kukua, Madi, Kuku, Mundu-Mundu, Jurchol, Mundari, Buya, Pojulu, Nyamgbara, Sukuria, Kerko, Masalt, Fur, Burun, Sakirinya (Abas), Kinana, Makarko, Kenet, Kachipo, Langarim, Bolo, Dajo, Balanda, Lotugo, Kalico, Acholi, Lokoro, Lolubo, Peri, Murle, Shiluk, Hausa, Baka and so forth (Data from OPM, Boroli). However, the majority of the ethnic groups present at the time of the research are from the Dinka, Bari, Lokoya Kukua, and Madi ethnic groups of South Sudan. Olua I is significantly occupied by the Dinka (35% of the respondents) people who are primarily known for their animal husbandry activities. Boroli II on the other hand is diversified, that is, although the majority of the people are from the Bari (30% of the respondents) ethnic group there are other groups present including the Lokoya people. Boroli I is more diversified with the majority being the Madi, representing 20% of the respondents of the people, with minority tribes like Bari, Kuku, and Kukua.

4.2.3. Marital Status

In most African societies, marriages, and family institutions are held in high esteem, especially in their patriarchal nature. It is believed that most married women and families with both husband-and-wife present are less likely to be food insecure. Correspondently, research conducted by Lee et al. (2020) showed that marital status that is, divorced, widowed, or separated was strongly associated with perceived recession associated with food security. As such it is important to examine the marital status of the respondents from the refugee settlements.

Table 3. Marital status of respondents

Marital Status	Boroli I	Boroli II	Olua I	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Never Married	-	-	-	0	0.0
Married	2	1	3	6	30.0
Divorced	-	2	-	2	10.0
Widow	5	1	4	10	50.0
Separated	-	2	-	2	10.0
Total	7	6	7	20	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

The frequency distribution shows that the majority of the respondents for the study were widowed (representing 50% of the respondents), with a few being married (30%), separated (10%), or divorced (10%). In most refugee settlements across Northern Uganda, it is common to find the majority of households without their husbands. This is because most men end up losing their lives during civil wars and the women automatically become the head of the households. Most of the respondents who were widows mentioned they either lost their husbands to the war or sickness after the war. One respondent mentioned that the husband brought them to the settlement for safety and returned to do his business back home, only for them to find out he died upon return. Although some women mentioned they were married, some mentioned they had not seen their husbands in years. For example, one of the respondents mentioned that the husband ran away after finding out she was pregnant, leaving her alone to take care of their now six-month-old baby (Personal Interview: 27 Jan 2024). Thus, although she is traditionally and legally married, the husband cannot be accounted for.

4.2.4. Type of Family

The family type among the refugees is two, namely the nuclear family and the extended family. The type of family can shape the level of food security within the household. In the refugee settlements, the extended family is the most common as many households do not just comprise the parents and their children (including adopted children of dead relatives), but some comprise of nieces and nephews, grandchildren, and grandparents. The table below represents the family type distribution.

Table 4 Type of family of respondents

Family Type	Boroli I	Boroli II	Olua I	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Nuclear	3	2	1	6	30.0
Extended	4	4	6	14	70.0
Total	7	6	7	20	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

The results show that 70% of the households were extended family. This is usually not an uncommon family institution as most homes in Africa are often built this way. Although it is not rare for many families to be nuclear, the extended family system is predominant among many African societies. Therefore, it is not unusual to find the type of family system in the refugee settlements in this study.

4.2.5 Household size

Information regarding household size is relevant in this study because it gives a clear picture of the food distribution ratio within the family. Also, it helps understand the implication of the number of people in the household food availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability. Most scholars have mentioned one of the main challenges of food security among households in Sub-Saharan Africa is the sharing of limited food among family members. For instance, Oluwatayo (2009) mentions that the size of the household is a determinant of food insecurity especially since a large family size is more likely to be food insecure as it puts more burden on food consumption. However, it can also be argued that the higher the number of people in the family, the more likely a family would be food secured so long as some members of the family can contribute to the total family income.

Table 5 Household size of respondents

Household size	Boroli I	Boroli II	Olua II	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1-5	-	-	1	1	5.0
6-10	6	4	4	14	70.0
11-15	1	2	2	5	25.0
16 Above	-	-	-	-	0.0
Total	7	6	7	20	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

The data from the field shows that the majority of the respondents, that is, 70% of the respondents, fall within the ratio of 6 to 10 members in the family. The second largest household has family members in the range of 11-15. This shows that the majority of the

respondents from the refugee settlements have larger families which can be a contributory factor to the food insecurity levels particularly especially in scenarios where the majority of the members are not able to contribute to household income.

4.2.6 Duration of stay

The length of stay helps in ascertaining the transitions and effects of budget cuts on adaptability or resilience in refugee settlements. Most of the settlements are affected by the recent budget cuts therefore it is relevant to understand the food security status of people before and after the budget cuts.

Table 6 Duration of stay of respondents.

Duration of Stay	Boroli I	Boroli II	Olua I	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1-5	-		2	2	10.0
6-10	6	6	3	15	75.0
11-15	1		2	3	15.0
Total	7	6	7	20	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

The results represented in Table 6 suggest that the majority of the respondents have stayed in the settlements long enough to compare situations before and after the budget cuts. The refugee settlements were established in 2014 and the majority of the respondents mentioned that they have lived in the settlements since then. It makes it easy to obtain information on situations before and after various budget cuts especially before and after the introduction of the “ration-categorization” which has significantly affected many households.

4.2.7. “Ratio Categorization” under the Re-prioritization Plan

This section represents data gathered on the Re-prioritization Plan by the WFP within the refugee settlements in the selected refugee settlements. This plan was introduced in the entire Uganda in July 2023. All the refugee settlements across the country suffered a budget cut which in turn affected their access to food and other forms of support. According to reports from the WFP, 82 percent of the refugee population will receive monthly rations that only meet 30% of their minimum daily kilocalorie need and 4 percent will no longer receive assistance and the “highly vulnerable” which makes up 14 percent of the households will receive rations that cover 60 percent of their minimum kilocalorie need (FEWS NET, 2023). Hence, refugees were grouped into three based on their level of need. Refugees in group one (14%), which is considered highly vulnerable receive 28,

000UGX per head monthly while the second group (82%) receives 14,000UGX per head monthly. Group three (4%) on the other hand does not receive any form of support either financial or food support.

Table 7. Ration Categorisation of respondents

Ratio category	Boroli I	Boroli II	Olua I	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Group 1	-	-	-	0	10.0
Group 2	5	6	7	18	80.0
Group 3	2	-	-	2	10.0
Total	7	6	7	20	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2024

According to the information gathered during the fieldwork, the majority of people, that is, 80%, fall within the second group which means they receive 14,000ugx per head monthly. This amount supports their daily livelihoods. It takes care of the feeding, school fees, and other expenses they incur in their daily lives. Unfortunately, individuals within group one was not interviewed. According to the respondents, a need assessment was done and based on many factors including assess to remittance, the likelihood of finding a job, income contribution of family members among others, they were grouped.

4.3. Demographic profile of the host communities

A total of sixteen (16) people from the host communities of Boroli (10) and Olua (6) in the Pakele Sub County of the Adjumani district were interviewed. All of which were a combination of male and female-headed households. Although the research focus was on female-headed households, it was impractical to get the required number in the host communities. The data gathered on the demographic characteristics of the households sampled for the interviews is presented in this section. This includes the sex distribution, age group, marital status, type of family, household size, household income, and length of stay in the community.

4.3.1. Sex Distribution

The study gathered information on the sex of the respondents. Although the study's focus is on female headed households however in the host communities around the refugee communities, it was relevant to obtain information from both genders. This is because households within these communities are male headed.

Table 8. Sex distribution of respondents

Sex	Boroli	Olua	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	4	5	9	56.25
Female	6	1	7	43.75
Total	10	6	16	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

Findings from this research shows that in Boroli and Olua, majority of the respondents were Female headed representing 56% of the respondent while the remaining were male headed households.

4.3.2. Age group

The table below represents the age data distribution of respondents in the host communities. Based on the data above, it can be deduced that majority of the respondents were in the age range between 18 to 27 and 28 to 37. This represents a more youthful population in this region.

Table 9. Age distribution of respondents

Age group (years)	Boroli	Olua	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-27	5	-	5	31.25
28-37	3	2	5	31.25
38-47	1	3	4	25.0
48-57	1	-	1	6.25
58-above	-	1	1	6.25
Total	10	6	16	100.0%

Source: Field data, 2024

4.3.3. Marital status

The study also established the marital status of the respondents. This is important because the marital status of individuals may help provide information on household strength and income. The result indicates that majority of the respondents representing 69% are married whilst the 25% were never married and only 6% were widowed.

Table 10. Marital status of respondents

Marital Status	Boroli	Olua	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Never Married	-	4	4	25.0
Married	9	2	11	68.75
Widowed	1	-	1	6.25
Total	10	6	16	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

4.3.4. Household size

The size of a household is represented in the section. It has been argued that the number of people in a household can influence its food security levels. That is, when more people in the family contribute to household income, the family has a possibility of being food secured. However, it also has a detrimental impact especially when sharing food among a large household which consist of minors or elderly in the family who cannot contribute to the household income. The results shows that majority of the respondents falls within the family size between 6 and 10, representing 37% of the respondents and the second highest falling within 1 - 5 and 11 – 15.

Table 11. Household size of respondents

Family Size	Boroli	Olua	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
0	-	4	4	25.0
1-5	2	1	3	18.75
6-10	6	-	6	37.5
11-15	2	1	3	18.75
16-above	-	-	-	0.0
Total	10	6	16	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

4.3.5. Level of education

The study gathered information on the level of education of the respondents. The results show all the respondents have had some form of education. About 50% of the respondents have had primary education while 44% had completed secondary education and only 6% had completed a tertiary education. This information is to help comprehend the relationship between educational levels and food security.

Table 12. Level of education of respondents

Level of education	Boroli	Olua	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
No formal education	-	-	-	0.0
Primary	4	4	8	50.0
Secondary	5	2	7	43.75
Tertiary	1	-	1	6.25
Total	10	6	16	100.0%

Source: Field data, 2024.

4.3.6. Duration of stay

The study collected data on the duration of stay among the respondents in the host communities. This was to gather evidence on the situations before and after the establishment of the refugee settlements and, to examine the relationship between the refugee and host community over time. The greater number of respondents mentioned they were born in these communities and have lived there all their lives. About 56% of the respondents mentioned they have lived here all their lives. The rest, that is, 25% and 19% of the respondents mentioned they have stayed in the community for about 1 to 10 and 11 to 20 years, respectively.

Table 13. Duration of stay of respondents.

Duration of stay (Years)	Boroli	Olua	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1-10	2	2	4	25.0
11-20	2	1	3	18.75
21-30 (Born here)	4	2	6	37.5
31-above (Born Here)	2	1	3	18.75
Total	10	6	16	100.0%

Source: Field Data, 2024

4.4. Summary of NGOs

The aim of the research is to ascertain the role of NGOs in promoting food security among refugees therefore was relevant to engage the key actors. Major actors in the humanitarian field including Heads of Livelihoods Department, Field Officers and Project Coordinators were interviewed. The table below represents data on the respondents, the role they play, their department and most important they NGO they represented.

Table 14 Respondents from selected NGOs

Role of respondent	Department	NGO
Program Officer	Department of Livelihood	Action Against Hunger
Sector Lead	Department of Sustainable Livelihood	Food for the Hungry
Project Coordinator	Agriculture and Market support	Self Help Africa
Administrative Officer	AFRA	Action for Resilience and Agriculture (AFRA)
Field Officer	Training and Distribution	Northern Uganda Resilience Initiative (NURI)

Source: Field Data, 2024.

Part 2: Food Security Situation and livelihood strategies

4.5. Food security situation among Refugees and their Host

This section presents data gathered on the food security situation in the refugee and host communities in Boroli and Olua in the Pakele Sub County. The food security situation information was gathered based on the four main dimensions of food security which are availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability.

4.5.1. Food Availability

Food availability in this context focuses on the ability to produce, share, and store food. In a simpler term, it looked at how much food is enough or sufficient, breaking it down to the number of times people eat in a day. The results show that the eating patterns of many of the respondents have been affected over the years. In the refugee settlements, the majority of the respondents mentioned that they can feed their families once or twice a day. In an interview with a 26-year-old woman from the Boroli Settlement, she mentioned that they do not have enough food to feed the fifteen people in her family (Personal Interview: 25 Jan 2024). Another respondent also mentioned that she believes the average person should be able to feed three times a day but she and her family, can only afford to

eat once a day around three in the afternoon, so it covers breakfast, Lunch, and supper. Although this was common among the respondents, few respondents mentioned they are able to eat more than once a day. In an interview with a 45-year-old respondent from Boroli, she mentioned she had enough food in her house, and it is enough to feed her family twice a day and is also able to store food for future use (Personal interview: 25 Jan 2024). On the other hand, respondents from the Host communities mentioned that food is available to them. The reasons they mentioned fall on the fact that they are the custodians of the lands in this area, and this makes it easy for them to produce large quantities of food which they sell and store some for future purposes (Personal Interview: 32-year-Old Woman, Boroli).

2.5.2. Accessibility

Food accessibility was measured in connection to the means through which people obtain food. The means may include having the financial capacity to buy food or engage in a barter trade or any means to access food. The majority of the respondents mentioned that the main issue they face the access to food. They do not have the financial capability to access food whenever the need arises. In an interview with the Program Officer at Action Against Hunger, he mentioned that:

“I can say the food situation is more of an access problem. Access because food might be available but if they do not have the funds to buy then access may not be possible. This is because most refugees are not financially stable” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

2.5.3. Utilization

The findings from the field also show refugees in this area do not get the required calories or nutrients from their daily consumption. Although most respondents understand the concept of a balanced diet and nutrient-filled meals, they lack such in their meals. In an interview with a 74-year-old woman in Olua, she tries to change her diet, but it is not frequent as she usually has to make do with what she has in the house. Probing further, it was revealed that when the refugees receive the monthly ration, they buy foodstuff like maize, they process it and that becomes the main food for the entire month. Buying meat and other protein-filled foods or vegetables is the least of their worries. The findings were corroborated during interviews with Sectors Leads and Field Officers who work hand in hand with the refugee and their host communities. According to the Administrative Officer of AFRA:

“The nutritional side of it is also a problem because if you visit most of the villages and settlements, people either eat once or twice a day, it is mostly the carbohydrates and then the protein side of it is the beans. Getting access to vegetables is a once in a while thing specifically during the dry season when vegetables become almost non-existent and expensive” (Personal Interview: 3 Feb 2024).

Specifically in an interview with the Sector Lead for Livelihoods at Food for the Hungry, he mentioned that due to the numerous reports of malnutrition in the area, they conduct cooking demos for instance how to make porridge for kids based on their age and teach the appropriate cooking techniques. Furthermore, the Program Officer from Action Against Hunger narrated that:

Nutrition is also another issue here, but we try to train them. For instance, we have chronological order when it comes to training refugees and their host communities. First, we empower them to produce food with higher nutritional content, then we bring in the nutrition officers on board to train them on the utilization. How to balance their meals and so forth (Personal Interview: 3 Feb 2024).

2.5.4. Stability

This was based on the possibility of having constant access, availability, and utilization of food. The stability of food was somehow questionable as the majority of people were heavily dependent on the ratio given by the government. That is, if there is a sudden cut in funds supporting the refugees, they might no longer get access to food. For those who can farm to supplement the government ratio, they allegedly mentioned issues of exploitation which affects their access to land, and loss of land fertility over time among other factors that significantly affect their food stability. Although many respondents mentioned there is available food, its stability is not guaranteed. Moreover, issues of the impact of climate change were raised by many in host communities. Flooding and drought have resulted in them losing their produce which in turn affects the stability of food in the region.

From the findings, it can be deduced that several causes of food insecurity among the people in this area. The causes include financial limitations, lack of access to Land, and Climate Change. Although food available to them, the access, its utilization, and stability is a problem. Their access to food is limited by not having the adequate means (money) to acquire the food they need, and this is the same for utilization purposes. The availability

of food and its stability is also affected by issues of climate change and lack of access to land.

4.6 Livelihood strategies among refugees and host communities

This section presents the results of the study on the livelihood strategies of women in both refugee and host communities in the Pakele Sub County of the Adjumani District. A useful background on the strategies through which women in refugee and host communities in this district significantly contribute to understanding the food security level in this region. It also provides an explanation of the means through which these women overcome food insecurity. According to the field responses, it is relevant to categorize the strategies into four. This includes agricultural production, Wage Labour, Self-employment, Gathering and foraging, and Non-Farm Activities. The following section presents the findings based on the criteria listed above.

4.5.1. Agricultural production

The results show that the majority of the residents in Boroli I and II are farmers. During the interviews, the majority of the respondents mentioned being involved in one or more forms of agricultural activities. In accordance with the status of being a refugee, the 30*30 land given to refugees for settlement and other activities, most people preferred to use for farming (Garden). They produce different kinds of crops including potatoes, maize, and sorghum among others. A 45-year-old respondent from Boroli I mentioned that with the land given she produces crops such as Potatoes for the family. She went ahead to show her farm and what she had produced at the time of the interview. According to her,

“My husband and I were farmers back in South Sudan. We had a big land where we cultivated different kinds of crops including our traditional sorghum crop. You should know it is a bit different from the one here. With the land given to us here, I plant potatoes and sometimes Sorghum depending on the season. Although my husband is not here to support me, I have children who support me” (Personal Interview: 25 Jan 2024).

Similarly, the majority of the respondents continue to share their grievances on the situation concerning the size of land they are given, some women can use it to produce food for the family. Although the food produced is not enough, it contributes to the overall food of the household. In the interview, a 50-year-old respondent from Boroli I mentioned that.

“Although the land is not enough and is losing its fertility, I am able to produce potatoes and some other crops on the land. I just harvested my potatoes, which I am cutting and will dry for future use” (Personal Interview: 23 Jan 2024).

Figure 3. Women from the Boroli Refugee settlement with a pile of harvested potatoes.



Source: Photo by Author

It was also common for most women to compare their access to land in South Sudan to the lands they were given when they moved to these settlements. To many, although it is not safe in South Sudan, they are the land to farm, and this enabled them to produce enough food for the household and for commercial purposes. According to a 32-year-old respondent.

“I had my own land when I was in South Sudan. I cultivated the crops I wanted according to the season. I had no issue with land but over here am forced to cultivate this land which is gradually losing its fertility. I am forced to think of moving back to South Sudan where I have enough land to do all that I want” (Personal Interview: 27 Jan 2024).

Other respondents mentioned that the 30*30m land given to them is not sometimes suitable for farming, therefore resulting in renting land from the host community. This is

a common practice among the majority of the refugees in Boroli I, Boroli II, and Olua I. In the personal interviews, one respondent mentioned that,

“I rent one acre of land for 150,000ugandan shilling from the host community. I only do this occasionally when I have saved enough money to rent and pay for certain services including people who will help me dig. This helps me to grow my own food for my household and to sell it in the market. This comes with its own challenges sometimes, but it is good when you can save enough to do it” (Personal Interview: 27 Jan 2024).

To further examine the challenges associated with farming as a source of livelihood, many respondents showed that aside from the limited access to land, they are faced with challenges including being extorted of their money when it comes to renting land among other challenges. According to the RWC 1 of Boroli II.

“You rent for only one year. You pay 120,000 for one year. And apart from digging, you know, if you rent one acre, you need to also to get money. And you bring Palau to dig. Palau is digging for one acre is also 100,000. You compare now if I am a single person in the settlement, I am getting 14,000 thousand. How much will I save to afford this? That is, to pay rent and pay for other services. Also, for example, I rent a land this year and if I am not able to pay for the land the next year, the owner will give it to another person which means we will be rotating the same acre of land. The land will eventually lose its fertility. It is exceedingly difficult” (Personal Interview: 30 Jan 2024).

In Olua I, about half of the respondents mentioned they are into some form of agriculture. Common in the area is gardening and commercial farming. One of the respondents, a 29-year-old married woman, mentioned having access to enough land to cultivate for commercial purposes. When asked if they rent land from the host community to do the farming, she mentioned that,

“When we came here, they gave us a land to stay and a land to farm. There are two different lands. The NGO, I do not know the name, allocated land in the forest for us to farm. So, my husband does the farming and that supplements our income” (Personal Interview: 31 Jan 2024).

Although this may seem to be the case in Olua, other respondents expressed their inability to engage in any form of agricultural activities due to old age, sickness, and lack of resources including capital. The 74-year-old widow with a family size of eight mentioned

that she is not able to do any form of gardening on the land given to her due to old age and sickness, making them heavily dependent on the ratio.

However, the situation with the host community is completely different. They are the custodians of the land and farmers. The majority of the residents in the host communities own the land they live on. Many of the residents being farmers have access to land for large-scale farming, and most times do not need to rent. In an interview with a 32-year-old woman residing in the Boroli community, she showed that access to land is not a challenge to most of the residents here. According to her:

“My family and I plant groundnut, vegetables, maize, and other crops. We make about 510,000 Uganda Shilling from this, and other activities and it helps us take care of the family” (Personal Interview; 2 Feb 2024).

Likewise, a 55-year-old man mentioned that he is into large-scale farming and helps him support his family.

“We plant cassava, Simsim (also known as Sesame), and groundnut, and we make enough money from this to support the family. I can earn over 100,000 Ugandan Shilling a month from the produce” (Personal Interview, 30 Jan 2024).

These findings from the study suggest that agriculture is the major livelihood strategy for most people living in this region. However, the refugee communities are limited by the lack of resources such as land and capital which hinder their ability to sustain their livelihoods. Unlike the refugees who have limited access to land, most residents in the host communities are able to sustain their livelihood through farming. Unfortunately, climatic conditions such as floods, drought, and pest infestation have had a negative impact on their source of livelihoods.

4.5.2. Wage Labour

The findings show that this is also a common form of livelihood support for most people living on this side of the Pakele Sub County. Many who do not have the means (capital or land) to go into farming or any form of trade, result to this method. In the refugee settlements of Boroli I & II and Olua I, it is common for people to work for others in exchange for money or goods. During the fieldwork, many of the respondents admitted to doing this to supplement their livelihoods. This kind of work is popularly known as “Lege Lege.” According to a 31-year-old woman in Boroli I”

“In the farming seasons, I do “lege lege,” that is, I dig people’s farms and in turn they pay me. I am completely cut off any food or monetary support, so this is what I use to take care of myself and my children” (Personal Interview; 25 Jan 2024).

Also, in an interview with a 72-year-old woman from the settlement, she mentioned that although is old and has back pain, sometimes she is able to do Lege lege to support her children and grandchildren. However, according to the finding most people in the host communities do not engage in such activities. During the interviews, only one respondent mentioned she does this to support her family sometimes, but it is not a common thing to do. The 24-year-old woman further mentioned that she is a farmer but sometimes when things get tough, she does Lege Lege to prevent her family from going hungry. The findings show that this is a strategic method of supplementing household income specifically in the host community. This is the same among the refugee settlements but people who are completely cut off from all forms of financial or food support result to this as their main source of income to sustain their livelihoods.

4.5.3. Self-Employment

Operating small businesses such as running transport services, providing services such as tailoring, or selling goods such as food stuff, is also a common livelihood strategy for most respondents. The results show that most households supplement their income with such activities. In an interview with a 45-year-old woman who is a trader, she mentioned that trading is her main occupation. She buys food from the markets in the main town sometimes in Adjumani and she sells them at the local market in the settlement.

A 25-year-old woman from Olua also mentioned that:

“I am a trained hair stylist, but I do not have the capital or the resources to start my own business, so I make our traditional clothes to supplement the household income. It is not sustainable because it takes more than one month to make one” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

According to some participants, they received training on tailoring and bread making which enabled them to contribute to the household income. In an interview with a 21 year old woman mentioned that:

“My mother received training on how to make bread. She used to make braid and sell within the settlement, and it was extremely helpful as she was able to make money to

support us. However, it collapsed when there was a ration cut and people could no longer afford to buy braid daily” (Personal Interview: 25 Jan 2024).

The findings also show that people owned convenience stores where they sold basic food items including various kinds of drinks, toffees, oil, rice, and water among others. These were common in both the settlements and the communities around them. There were other forms of activities recorded which included brewing alcohol, selling charcoal, and making traditional clothing for sale, among others.

Figure 4. Refugee Women in Olua I embroider the South Sudanese traditional cloth.



Source: Photo taken by Author.

4.5.4. Gathering and Foraging

The findings showed that gathering and foraging is a common strategy for most people in the refugee settlements. To supplement the dietary needs of the households, most children would go into the forest to pick wild plants or fruits for consumption or sale. According to 39-year-old widow,

“When we wake up in the morning on days that there is no school, the children would go into the bush to gather greens and fruits. That is what they eat till around two in the

afternoon then I prepare potatoes or any food we have for them which is usually the main meal for the day” (Personal Interview; 27 Jan 2024).

A few of the respondents also mentioned that they participated in some form of gathering for economic purposes. For instance, some respondents also mentioned that they gather bamboo, charcoal, and firewood among others, sell them, and use the income to support the household. In the words of a 50-year-old widow living in Boroli I:

“I collect firewood and charcoal from the bush for sale but sometimes we are chased out from the bush. At first, we could go and gather them in peace but nowadays we are being chased from the bush by the people from the host community. So now I buy the charcoal from the charcoal traders who sometimes end up cheating us” (Personal Interview: 25 Jan 2024).

The above narratives show that the majority of the respondents do not rely on one livelihood strategy but multiple means. For the refugees, although the majority receive support from the WFP through the LWF and other organizations, they engage in other activities such as trading, wage labour (Lege Lege), buying and selling of charcoal, and gathering firewood to support their livelihoods.

4.7. Refugee and host community relationship.

This section presents data on the relationship between residents of the refugee settlements and their host communities. This is to understand their relationship when it comes to sustaining their livelihoods and assessing factors that may affect their levels of food security. The findings from the fieldwork show that there is a reciprocal relationship between these two groups. This ensured that both sides had access to markets and labour. On the side of the refugees, findings from the field showed that most refugees can rent land from the host community to engage in agricultural activities. According to a key informant, it is common for refugees in Boroli I & II to rent land from the host community to farm. In his words:

“.....most of the refugees do not have money for cultivation however, they go to the host community to rent land for instance. They sometimes rent one acre of land for 120,000 Ugandan shilling for one year.....” (Personal Interview: 27 Jan 2024).

A 60-year-old woman from Boroli I also confirmed renting land from the host community to plant different crops. She stated that:

“.....It is a usual thing to do here. People try and save money from the monthly ration they get. When they have enough money, they rent land from the host community. Although it has its own challenges, it is sometimes a good thing to do to earn extra cash...”
(Personal Interview: 25 Jan 2024).

In an interview with the Program officer at Action Against Hunger, he also stated that:

“They may sometimes rent the land for 50,000UGX per year per acre. However, it varies, as in other places, it might be 80,000ugx or more. It started from 50,000UGX but because they have also seen the refugees are making a lot, they also decided to hike the prices.
(Personal Interview: 3 Feb 2024).

Adversely, some of the respondents alleged that there have been scenarios where the renting of land has been problematic. According to an interview with one of the key informants, He mentioned that there has been a situation where the same land was sold to more than one person in the refugee settlement, and this resulted in a disagreement between the two involved. To confirm this, the authority in charge of the two settlements admitted to settling issues like that. In her words:

“.....we get to know when the incident has already happened. Remember these landlords are in extended families, and a child of the landlord may sell or rent the land to you. By the time you give the money to them, he has disappeared. Now the real owner will come and there is an issue. See, under OPM, the land in the Western Nile belongs to the landlords. So, when the refugees came, OPM came to the local leadership and through the then parliament and lobbied for land. They agreed to give them the land on which they could settle. It is 25 by 25 metres small, and it is only for settlement and not agriculture..... how this was not enough as the refugees cannot stay without doing anything. So, we try to talk to the landlords to seek their help, that is, for them to try and support us. First, they were supporting, of course, free of charge. Then time went on and they also became vulnerable. The situation has changed. Because the land is the source of everything for them, it is like gold to the landlords. That is when those land issues began. So, to solve the problem, we told them that when getting land there should be an agreement between the refugee, and the landlord and this must be witnessed by the Office of the Prime Minister and the LC1 of the settlement so that we can prevent these issues from repeating themselves...” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

Moreover, in an interview with the Program Officer at Action Against Hunger, he corroborated this issue of cheating the refugees off their monies when it comes to renting land and how Officials have been managing the issues. According to him:

“Issues have been there, though there are also measures that have been put in place to reduce them. One example is since they do not have land, some of them go and bargain with the neighbours, and sometimes they get the land, sometimes they do not. The host community can give them the land and, take it back without any prior notice. This has been happening, but it has reduced in recent years. This is because we now have a committee for Land Acquisitions which is available in all refugee settlements across the country. This ensures that if a refugee is going to rent land, or use any land owned by someone else, they need to sign an agreement with the landlord. The agreement may include the landlord receiving 20% of the profit from the field” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024)

A few respondents also mentioned scenarios where they have been chased out from the nearby bushes by residents of the host communities when trying to gather charcoal, firewood, and fruits. Others also raised the issue of social vices such as stealing and fighting. Although these concerns were raised, the majority maintain that they peacefully coexist with the host community. They share basic amenities such as schools, hospitals, and markets. A 32-year-old woman from the Boroli Community mentioned that in as much as they have their differences, the presence of the refugee community has increased their market. She can sell most of her farm produce without many struggles.

However, to foster a peaceful coexistence between the refugees and their host communities, many NGOs incorporate the two sides into the majority of the programs they initiate. The sector lead for the livelihood department at Food for the Hungry mentioned that:

“We promote cohesion among the refugees and their host communities through our programs. For instance, we create groups for most of our training programs thirty households and it comprises of people from both the refugees and host communities. Because in the groups, they must sit together and plan together, they end up building relationships. So, we have come to realize that it also enhances refugee access to land and friendships. Since they work together, save together, they get to know each other and build trust” (Personal Interview: 25 Jan 2024).

From the findings, it can be deduced that there is a peaceful co-existence between the refugees and their host communities. Even though they may have their differences, their interactions are marked by collaboration, cooperation, and interdependence.

4.7. Factors that determine the selection and Implementation of Programs

The findings from the field indicate that there are several factors that go into the formulation and implementation of the programs that aim at empowering women in both refugee and host communities to enhance food security. These factors are gender dynamics associated with program formulation and implementation, the selection criteria for deciding who benefits from what and the assessment criteria involved in selecting a program.

4.7.1. Gender Dynamics

Gender plays a significant role in this research as it focuses on women's empowerment. It was relevant to understand the role gender dynamics play in the formulation and implementation of programs geared toward empowering women to enhance food security. Based on input received from the NGOs selected for this study, there are some programs that target women specifically however majority of the programs on sustainable livelihoods and food security do not target women but in the end, it is usually women who benefit. According to the interview transcript, the Livelihood sector lead at Food for the Hungry elaborated that:

“When you get the refugee settlements, you find that there are more women there and you do not see a lot of men. Most of the programs have more women than men. We do have specific programs for women but not men. Programs like kitchen gardening target mothers, also women-specific programs we have include, maternal healthcare, and cooking demos. Moreover, in terms of our program's target, we end up with more women than men. It is always women in the groups we form. In the groups I supervise, you find that in a group of twenty, you find just two or three or six men” (Personal Interview: 30 Jan 2024).

The program lead at ACF mentioned that:

“It easier to have women join in most of the trainings. An example is farming, we tend to see women actively participate. Leaving out the men who may accept but not take action towards being part of the training. Hence for the success of the project, we take a greater percentage of women” (Personal Interview: 5 Feb 2024).

The project coordinator at Self Help Africa also confirms that the majority of the programs are dominated by women as most of them have always been more than 60 percent women although that is usually not the target. Further discussions with the Program lead at ACF showed that sometimes donors determine the gender specifics of a program. In his words:

“Yeah, in our programming, we always have this portion that we give to women. For instance, we can say we need about 60% of our beneficiaries to be women. This is because sometimes our donors decide on the men to women percentage. We normally put 65% for women and the rest for men” (Personal Interview: 5 Feb 2024).

4.7.2. Assessments

According to several literature on the measures through which NGOs formulate and implement policies, needs assessment and other forms of assessments are always conducted. This study ascertains the practicalities involved in conducting an assessment of implementation of a program and the evaluation of the effectiveness of a program. In the narrative provided by a program lead at ACF, an assessment within their organization is done through the survey methods where they conduct a baseline survey to determine the status or conditions before implementing their programs in a new area. He also mentioned that they conduct a mid-term evaluation to see if their current practices are gaining the impact it is set to achieve and this assists them to make changes if needed. Lastly, they conduct an ‘end line’ survey to check the impact of the program. In concluding on this discussion, he mentioned that they also gather success stories which helps them draw up statistics on food security. Furthermore, according to an interview with the project coordinator at Self Help Africa, she expressed that:

“Different projects demand different assessments to find out the impact of the project, but most times for us in this project, WFP does the assessment, because they sponsor some of our projects, therefore, they do the assessments and give us feedback. However, we also have our daily monitoring where we do the daily monitoring we observe, we get feedback, success stories work and to find out how our programs are doing in the field” (Personal Interview: 5 Feb 2024).

During the interview, the Livelihood sector Lead at Food for the Hungry also expressed that they mostly conduct a community dialogue, and, in those dialogues, they can do a needs assessment to produce programs that interest the community. This ensures the

prioritization of programs that is, also to ensure that any program introduced to a community is of high priority to them. He continues that,

“Sometimes we do an assessment, ask them what they want to do, and as soon as we get funding for a particular training, we onboard these people” (Personal Interview: 5 Feb 2024).

2.7.3. Selection criteria

The selection criteria through which women are chosen by NGOs to participate in the training programs are highlighted in this section. In an interview with the Livelihood Sector Lead for Food for the Hungry, he narrates that the selection criteria are self-driven. He emphasizes that the program is explained to the people in the refugee and host communities and then they welcome people who show interest. Moreover, he continues that:

“You see the settlements are big but divided into blocks, so when we know that in our proposal our target is for example 20, we will divide it into blocks. In these refugee settlements, there are already existing groups. So, when you do sessions, most times willing people either join those groups or form their own groups. It is easy to pick already existing groups because the people are already bonded. We do not go and scatter those groups and form new ones” (Personal Interview: 5 Feb 2024).

The OPM at Boroli corroborated this by confirming that the selection of participants is solely self-driven. This means that all the refugees and community members have the free will to partake in any organized program.

4.8. Programs and initiatives by NGOs

This section presents the results of the study on the projects that have been initiated by NGOs to address food insecurity issues among women in both refugee and host communities in the Pakele sub-county. The study examines this through interviews with NGOs who are present or have been present in the region, community leaders and women, and other people who are directly affected. Based on the information gathered during the field trip, the projects and initiatives are grouped under sub-section including agricultural programs, financial literacy, life skill training, and market-strengthening support systems.

4.8.1. Agricultural Training and Capacity Building

The results indicate that numerous numbers of programs have been geared towards promoting agriculture and making it more sustainable for the refugee and host

communities. Since agriculture is the main livelihood support for the majority of the residents in this region, it attracts more support. In an interview with the Program Officer, of Food Security and Livelihood, of Action Against Hunger (ACF), he mentioned that:

“..... through our motive of creating resilience and ensuring sustainable food security, we have created a three-level system for the refugees using three approaches. Level one includes people who do not have knowledge of sustainable agriculture. We train them to do gardening, which is backyard gardening. So, we empower them to our best and maximize agriculture using our Optimised Land Use Model. That is how we train them and after a year they graduate to level 2 which we use the Farmer Field School Approach. Level two ensures food sustainability, that is, since now they know how to produce food and always have food at home to eat, we employ them to start commercial production, we give them the goods and incorporate them with the host communities. The third level is for value addition purposes. Once they have established themselves, we put them into farmers producers’ association. Whereby they come together, they empower other farmers, and support the market” (Personal interview; 2 Feb 2024).

Some of the respondents from the refugee settlements also mentioned receiving training from NGOs. They indicated that they have attended one or more trainings on sustainable farming. In an interview with a 32-year-old widow from Boroli I, she stated that:

“I received training on how to plant groundnuts from an organization called Nuri. The training was successful because I will be able to grow that crop if I have the means and resources to do it. However, after the training we did not receive any groundnut seedlings to plant” (Personal Interview; 25 Jan 2024).

A 37-year-old woman from Boroli II also mentioned she joined in a training session where they were taught basic farming techniques. She further mentioned that the training included how to plant groundnuts, maize, and tomatoes. It did not just comprise the planting sessions but the harvesting, drying, and storing of produce. This is the same in the host communities of Boroli and Olua. There were respondents who mentioned they joined groups where they were taught how to grow crops like groundnuts and maize. A 32-year-old woman from Boroli also mentioned that after the training, they were given groundnuts and vegetables to plant. Further probing showed that women in these areas form groups where each group is given seedlings and crops or sometimes loaned, they plant as a crop as an individual. However, if they must pay back, they do so as a group.

This was corroborated through an interview with the Livelihoods sector lead for Food for the Hungry. In his words:

“We have this modality of eighty to twenty percent contributions, so when we are procuring seeds for them, we give a hundred and you pay twenty percent back. We do this so people can take it seriously” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

In an interview with the program officer at Action Against Hunger, he stated that because the majority of the refugees’ settlements in the area do not have access to land, they ease that burden by providing them with land for agriculture. In his words:

“We have the farm that we engage the refugees to do cash for work. For instance, now we have 200 acres of land that they are harvesting. We train them to farm and while they are being trained to farm, they also earn money from selling the produce. If they are not able to produce food at home due to insufficient land and other climatic changes, the money they get from these farms will enable them to access the food in the market” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

Moreover, because of lack of access to land, most refugees tend to backyard farming, hence other NGOs also support residents on this. The sector lead for the Livelihoods department for Food for the Hungry pointed out that:

“As head of the livelihood department, I produce technical approaches on how we can increase food production. By this, we do capacity building of the households. For example, we train them in backyard/kitchen gardening which helps them produce vegetables (Personal Interviews: 2 Feb 2024)

He further mentions that to combat the impact of climate change and create more sustainable agriculture, the organization has put in measures to educate people in the refugee and host communities.

“We train the refugees and their host communities on climate-smart agriculture. We give them post-harvest handling equipment. Some of these is to ensure that when they harvest their crops, the quality is high and meets the market standard for them to maximize profits” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024)

Also, he stated that.

“The programs are season based. That is, when we talk about farming, we follow the production calendar but if you talk about the interventions in schools, we follow the periods like the terms. However, in areas of capacity building, those trainings run throughout the year. But if it is in line with the production, even we sequence our training to suit the season. If it is the season of planting, we train farmers in agroecology, climate, and smart agriculture. And at the right times specifically during harvesting, we train them on the best management of post-harvest handling and market afterwards” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

The findings determine that since agriculture is one of the major livelihood strategies for women in both refugee and host communities, many NGOs invest in these. These training programs have been effective as both sides have benefited from some of the training however, concerns have been raised regarding the full potential of these programs. For instance, some respondents mentioned that after the training they did not receive any resources that would enable them to make sure of the training they received.

4.8.2. Financial Literacy

The findings from the study also found that some respondents from the refugee and host communities have received some form of financial literacy training. In an interview with the female respondents from the refugee settlements of Boroli I, Boroli II, and Olua I, they mentioned that they have acquired some training on how to manage their finances. Others stated that they created groups, thus, Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA), where they can save money either daily or monthly basis. They can also get loans from these associations. Some organizations also took it upon themselves to support and create their own VSLA groups. The Chairperson of Boroli I & II stated that:

“NURI gave people loans and taught them how to make effective use of it. They created the Village Saving and Loans Association groups (VSLA), through which they give out loans, seedlings for crops and vegetables such as tomatoes, onions, cabbage” (Personal interview: 25 Jan 2024).

The VSLA groups have proven to be effective however there are a few challenges associated with this. According to the information gathered some members of the group might take loans from the group savings and refuse to pay them back. There are other cases where the treasurers have been attacked and the boxes, they keep the money are taken with people’s millions in them. According to a 35-year-old respondent, there was

an issue where some treasurer or loaners hurt themselves just to take the money or avoid paying back the loans, they took from the VSLA. In an interview with the Project coordinator at Self Help Africa, she confirmed that these do happen in the various settlements. She further gave a scenario she encountered. In her words:

“.....but it was a household member. The son of the treasurer who connived with his colleagues, came, and picked up the money in the mum's house, and they took off. They bought motorcycles, they were enjoying life, sleeping in hotels. But they arrested them of course. They recovered the motorcycles some valuables they could sell.” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

Most of the financial training comes after people have received their monthly ration. They are taught how to budget effectively to avoid wastage. These are relevant, especially with the recent budget cuts, refugees receive less, and it is important they know how to budget effectively. A 39-year-old from Boroli II reiterated that she received financial training from GIZ, and it helped her budget her money to last a while. Information from the NGOs also showed that there is a connection between financial literacy education and the various training refugees, and their host communities receive. The Livelihoods Sector lead at Food for the Hungry cited that:

“After every training, we also train them on financial literacy. We call it tailored financial literacy because now when we train them, they set up their business, and they start to make money, they must understand the value of money. So, we put together a team to talk to them about the financial part and, connect them to banks. One thing we ensure is that they can create bank accounts. So, they can save the little money they get in the bank. Eventually, the bank has a system of supporting the refugees and loaning them money when the need arises..... We track their savings weekly as well. We provide training on keeping records and give them stationaries and passbooks. They write down their daily earnings. So, at the end of the week, we check their individual savings and how much they have saved cumulatively as a group. We track their loan borrowing as well as their investments to make sure they are making effective use of their monies” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024)

In the interactions with the Project coordinator at Self Help Africa, she also stated that:

“We monitor the monthly savings of the groups we work with. We are always there to monitor them, to tell them not to share or spend everything they make. The usual

traditional savings in these areas are more like, saving for a cycle and sharing the money at the end of the month or at the end of the cycle. Usually, at the end of the year, they share their savings and then use the money to celebrate festive seasons and everything. We tell them to make sure they do not spend all during the festivities.... We check certain things which include: Do they have all the necessary documents? Are they saving well? Is there a record keeping so good and everything until they reach a level at which the financial institutions are ready to support them? We also link them to other financial institutions, especially the banks, who offer them financial literacy by creating awareness and sometimes assist them in getting loans” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

The data suggest a correlation between financial literacy programs and the other forms of training many refugees and their host communities receive. Most of the NGOs offer financial training to many of its participants after training them in basic agricultural techniques, and other life skill trainings.

4.8.3. Life skill training

This section provides a detailed breakdown of the collected data, highlighting the programs aimed at supporting refugees and their host communities with relevant life skills. These include tailoring, bakery, carpentry, and mechanics. When asked about the topic, the livelihood sector lead for Food for the Hungry remarked,

“Majority of the youth there are out of school, hence we give them vocational training. These are life skills. In life skill sets, some of them engage in carpentry, tailoring, and basic mechanics of doing repairs. We give them some capital and sometimes buy them some kits. However, in most of our training, we engage local artisans. Local artisans who are people who are willing to teach within the settlements and communities because we do not take them to those other schools outside the settlement” (Personal Interview: 3 Feb 2024).

He further explained that they have other training programs geared towards improving the livelihoods of the refugees and their host communities. In his words:

“Other skill training includes bakery, liquid, and bar soap making, and shoe making. We target children when it comes to some of these programs. But also, it has a cascading effect as most of the children end up training their parents” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

During the interview with the Livelihood Project Coordinator of Self-Help Africa, she mentioned that many refugees have lost interest in skill training. This is because they usually do not receive the necessary resources to start their own businesses after they have completed the trainings. However, to do things differently, She, explained that they have introduced innovative measures to ensure the promotion and also enhance the value chain of agricultural produce. These include teaching how to make Palettes for stacking maize.

Figure 5. A group of women from the Olua I refugee settlement learning how to sew.



Source: Photo by Author

4.8.4. Market system strengthening

Market system strengthening was also highlighted as one of the ways through which NGOs strengthen livelihood strategies toward promoting food security among refugees. According to the sector lead for Livelihoods at Food for the Hungry,

“One of the most important things we do is the market system strengthening. With this, we do more market linkage where we promote food production from all sides. For example, we have maize from the host community that we are promoting. They also grow soyabean which is genuinely nice for feeding children, especially when you grind it. Now

that they grow various kinds of crops, we train them on the collective marketing. So that, this one produces their own food, we gather them and then link them to the market. We sometimes organize buyers, and they buy them at the appropriate price. On the other hand, we ensure that these people also produce the best quality grains which are at the required standard” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024)

Also, when discussing the topic with the Project Coordinator at the Self-Help Africa, she expressed that:

“We have the agriculture and market support program whose main goal is to have a sustainable increase in nutrition, income, and of course food security assistance. One of the specific objectives of the program is to improve the demand and supply of Agro inputs. To improve on marketing among smallholder farmers and then also strengthen the national and the sub-national institutions” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024)

She explains that they have set up agricultural and market support projects which that majorly focus on postproduction techniques which is post-harvest management. She demonstrated that they investigate aspects of financial literacy, storage, market access, and value addition from harvesting and all the other processes after this. One important strategy they employ to strengthen the markets is to connect small-scale farmers to other stakeholders including private corporation who are invested in this field. In her words:

“And we used to connect our farmers to benefit from that to enhance their production and productivity like our farmers to benefit from that to enhance their production and productivity. It works this way; we have smallholder farmers here and then these smallholder farmers. Of course, they come from a farmer groups. These groups are subscribed to a cooperative or farming organization, so we have this kind of structure, so we also work within this project. Currently, we have like 10 groups in practice and of which some core practises are being supported by the government. For example, we have those that were supported with tractors. So those smallholder farmers subscribing under that cooperative can be supported in terms of land opening by their bigger organisation, yes. And then also we have continued to link them to other private sector who also have support them. They give them upfront seeds or inputs or subsidised their agro inputs like fertilisers, and seeds, and then a farmer pays at a later stage” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024)

When asked about other value addition programs on the NGOs list, the Project Coordinator at Self Help Africa remarked that:

“There are those specific few groups that we have supported in value addition training, for example in the making of blended flour. Maybe adding value to cassava where they can make cassava chips and market, they have also been supported, for example some are taught how to peanut paste or peanut butter. We have seen those groups as well. The women we have trained have been positioned to carry it forward and they really earn more income. And then also of course, some have used it for nutrition purposes at the household level. For example, when you look at the soya milk” (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

Based on the input received from the key actors, it was evident that many efforts were put into enhancing the market for most refugees and residents of the host communities. These include measures that ensure that farmers get access to the right markets for their produce, creating a suitable environment for growth.

4.9. Challenges associated with program implementation.

NGOs face various challenges when implementing programs which can hinder their effectiveness and impact. The challenges NGOs face in a bid to empower women to alleviate food insecurity are discussed in this section. One of the notable challenges highlighted here is the lack of improved farming technologies. The program lead at ACF mentioned that because of recent climatic conditions that have affected farming in this area, it is important to get access to improved technologies that can help enhance the production of food in the area. In his words:

“You know with change in climatic conditions, you require also improved technologies. Sometimes, these include irrigation to improve the planting of seeds. And they usually cannot afford this. So, most crops they plant have an elevated level of failure. Sometimes they do not have the means to buy quality seeds to plans which affects the over productivity. (Personal Interview: 5 Feb 2024).

Still on agriculture, the Livelihood Sector Lead at Food for the Hungry emphasized that:

“There are two types of refugees present in these areas. Some, naturally from their country are animals’ farmers. The thing is these people are much reluctant when it comes to crop farming. So, for them, they do not take the initiative seriously. They feel the little

land the OPM allocates to them is enough, so they produce beans and other crops. They do not grow a lot of food crops". (Personal Interview: 4 Feb 2024)

Acceptance of the programs is sometimes slow depending on the group you present it to. This shows that although a program can be relevant to the enhancement of food security, its relevance can be determined by socioeconomic factors. According to the program lead at ACF, adaptation is a serious challenge as most people usually stick to the norms and activities they are used to, and it becomes difficult for them to adopt innovative ideas. The Livelihood sector lead at Food for the Hungry further explained that:

"Another thing is refugees are a bit reserved. They do not believe quickly until they see it happen. For instance, talking about things like climate change, in the direction of innovation, they do not really accept, even when introducing a new variety of crops. Okay, they know this is maize, but this time we are bringing you a new variety of maize that yields well. For them to accept it, you must demonstrate to them and be convincing enough for them to accept" (Personal Interview: 2 Jan 2024).

In an interview with the project coordinator at Self-help Africa, she mentioned that the constant expectations from some members of the refugee and host communities make it challenging for them to grow. she stated that:

"..... a general challenge I have seen is the mindset change of people. Especially when they always want to be supported all the time. For example, the VSLA we have, if we support them with the first kit to start with, they will always expect that, even when their passbooks are done, you must give them. They forget that they now have the means to be on their own. There are those who feel like every season you must give them crops to plant on their farms forgetting that they can now reinvest. (Personal Interview: 5 Feb 2024).

The livelihood sector lead of Food for the Hungry also mentioned that the constant expectation is a challenge. In his words:

"There is a constant expectation from them. If you start giving them something, they want it to continue forever and they keep on requesting. They expect that right after they see you, they think that now you are there, you are going to solve all their problem" (Personal Interview: 2 Feb 2024).

Issues associated with the constant mobility of refugees were also raised. The livelihood sector lead at Food for the Hungry mentioned that given the fact that South Sudan is close

to the Adjumani District, and its neighbouring communities, it is not impossible for the refugees to commute frequently between the borders of the two countries. He explains that this affects their database and gives an example “*you go to the settlement today, you find people to form a group of let’s say thirty people in a group, you get back with maybe food for the thirty people, and you release you have less or more than*”. This according to him distracts the effectiveness of their programs. The OPM’s Office at Boroli confirmed that:

“These people (the refugees), they move a lot. They are never stable; they never sit in one place. So yes, that is where the challenge is. Now it creates gaps in capacity building. If I have a group of 30 people. And then repeatedly, when I go for capacity building, you get 5 who have travelled back to South Sudan, and five are in another settlement. You know they have relatives in different settlements, and they keep moving.” (Personal Interview: 30 Jan 2024).

Lastly, one major challenge that NGOs face that affects the effectiveness of the formulation and implementation of programs geared towards ensuring food security among women in the refugee and host communities in this region is budget cuts. In recent times, less and less resources have been invested into the welfare of refugees and their host communities. The program office with ACF stated that:

“The reduction of donor funding on a yearly basis is also a challenge. The level of support reduces which affects the number of people who benefit from it” (Personal Interview: 5 Jan 2024).

Further research and interviews showed that there have been severe budget cuts which have resulted in the cut in aid and support for the refugee settlements in Northern Uganda. This has affected the formulation and implementation of programs that can be directed towards food security.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of the study. This is done in relation to contemporary literature on the role of NGOs in promoting food security among women in the selected refugee and host communities in the Pakele Sub County. The discussion is further guided by the theories used in this study. The discussion proceeds accordingly under the following sub-sections.

5.2. The livelihood strategies of women in refugee and host communities

The findings from the present study show that the majority of the people in the refugee settlements of Boroli and Olua are food insecure. Although food might be available to them, the access to it is always a challenge. This is due to the lack of means to attain the required food for the household. Also, the utilization of food and its stability is also problematic as many households lack the necessary means to afford the required nutrients in their daily meals. The study further examines the livelihood strategies of refugees and their host communities to ascertain their ability to be food insecure, which includes having the means to access available food, getting the required calories from the food consumed, and ensuring the stability of food. It was identified that there are several strategies through which women in this region negotiate their livelihood. Structures within the refugee settlements have taught refugees to find diverse methods to cope. Most refugees make use of the plot of land given to them by the Government of Uganda to cultivate different kinds of crops. However, in recent times the lack of land/fertile land and capital makes it almost impossible for them to engage in any sought of farming. Many result to kitchen or backyard farming which can barely contribute to household income.

Also, wage labour is one of the strategies through which many refugees in the area contribute to the household income. For instance, they render their services for money or in exchange for the things they lack. Moreover, there are other strategies through which women in the refugee and host communities sustain their livelihoods and these include, gathering and foraging and self-employment.

The findings from the field show that the livelihood strategies through which refugees and their host communities contribute to their household income are consistent with the literature on the livelihood strategies of refugees. There are works of literatures that

confirm the findings from the field, and these include Che (2011) and Frank (2013). Similar to the present study's findings, Che (2011) mentions that refugees are dynamically adopting survival strategies such as petty trading, farming, and labour assistance to the locals, among others. However, these are met with challenges as Frank (2013) reiterated that there is a constant struggle over land between the refugees and their host communities. These were recorded as one of the key issues that affect the ability of refugees to engage in farming specifically commercial farming in Boroli I, Boroli II, and Olua I. Other issues include exploitation from the host community, and lack of fertile land. However, through the assistance of some NGOs in the area, refugees are resilient to combating issues that limit their access to land. For instance, the findings from the field show that NGOs like Action Against Hunger use their resources to acquire acres of land for refugees to farm on. Through the activities of NGOs like Self Help Africa, Food for the Hungry, Action Against Hunger, and AFRA, and their host communities can build resilience towards enhancing food security.

From a theoretical perspective, the significance of enabling women to make autonomous decisions regarding their livelihoods is emphasized by the feminist theory. Women in refugee and host communities exhibit agency in the face of structural obstacles by engaging in income-generating activities, accessing education, training, and participating in community decision-making. The resource-based theory can significantly be used to explain the relationship between refugees and their host communities. RBT emphasizes the relevance of resource exchange within communities and social networks. Women in both refugee and host communities have mutually beneficial relationships with one another, sharing resources, expertise, and support. Community-based initiatives such as savings organizations including VSLA promote resource sharing and increase women's ability to withstand economic shocks and disruption such as financial setbacks which affects their accessibility, utilization, and stability to food.

5. 3. Programs and initiatives by NGOs towards food security

Findings from the field show that there are several NGOs which has invested many resources into making sure refugees are food secure. Data gathered shows that several people have benefited from the initiatives and programs implemented including agricultural training and capacity building programs, market system strengthening, and life skill training programs. Many respondents admitted to participating in agricultural training especially in Groundnut, Maize, sorghum, and tomatoes. However, these

programs have been criticized for being one-sided. Thus, after the training, participants do not receive the necessary resources to build upon the skills they have acquired. On the other hand, major programs such as life skills and financial literacy have supported women in both refugee and host communities to create livelihoods towards ensuring food security. They are able to create and manage their own business and also control their finances through the financial education they receive. During the interview, it was evident that women play a significant role in the development initiatives in these areas. For instance, the majority of the NGOs selected for the study mentioned that although the majority of their programs and initiatives including agricultural programs do not specifically target women, they always dominate. They are the major beneficiaries.

From a theoretical standpoint, the feminist theory offers a theoretical insight into the participation levels of programs in refugee and host communities. The role that women play in refugee settlements is shaped by traditional gender norms and expectations, as highlighted by the feminist theory. Women are typically in charge of taking care of others and taking care of the household, which may entail making use of family-oriented programs and services. Consequently, women might be more inclined to engage in programs in the refugee settlements as they manage their caregiving duties for their families. Consistent with findings from the refugee settlements prove that most women participate in programs more than the male gender who sees participation in these programs as a women's affair. On the other hand, the resilience theory which promotes a strengths-based approach proves that women's involvement in programs is an indication of their tenacity and resourcefulness in looking for opportunities for development and empowerment. Research by Devaki (2021) and MacDonnell et al (2012) shows that to overcome their traumatic experiences, women frequently show a strong will, persistence, and survival abilities. As a result, they are able to take part in empowerment programs, identify problems they encounter which include food insecurity in this case, frame them, and act at individual and communal levels. According to Barney (1991), the resource-based theory emphasizes that the success of organisations is based on their ability to effectively use their resources. In this case, their ability to use their resources to empower women in both refugee and host communities to overcome food insecurities. Consequently, many NGOs have not effectively used their resources to eliminate the food insecurities within the region, but efforts put in place through their programs and

initiatives have the ability to strengthen women's resilience toward attaining sustainable food security.

Overall, the goal of empowerment-oriented programs is to increase women's financial self-sufficiency and agency in making decisions that affect their access to food. Significantly, through a variety of programs and efforts that address both immediate needs and underlying structural constraints, NGOs play a significant role in addressing food security among women in refugee and host communities. They work together to support women's economic empowerment and make communities more resilient and sustainable for women and their households.

5.4. The challenges associated with program implementation.

The results show that there are several challenges NGOs face in the implementation of programs and initiatives towards the enhancement of food security strategies among women in refugee and host communities. Notable challenges recorded include budget cuts, lack of improved farming technologies, adaptation issues, and unrealistic expectations and dependency. With constant budget cuts in the humanitarian field, NGOs often operate with limited financial resources which makes it difficult for them to scale up food security programs to meet the needs of large populations in refugee and host communities. Limited funding also hinders the implementation of long-term and sustainable interventions, forcing the prioritization of certain programs over others. Less funding results in fewer resources to fight the impact of climate change and other factors that may affect agricultural production. For instance, findings from the field showed that the recent climatic changes have massively affected agricultural production in these areas. However, the NGOs lack the necessary resources to assist in combating the problem. Theoretically, according to the resource-based theory, one essential resource that NGOs need in order to conduct their programs successfully is access to sufficient funding (Nanthagopan et al., 2016). The resilient theory on the other hand emphasizes the relevance of developing the capacity to anticipate, absorb, adapt, and recover from any type of shocks (Mehvar, 2021). However, with a lack of resources and constant budget cuts, it is not possible for many NGOs to adapt or recover from shocks or assist refugees and their host communities to do the same.

Empirically, Bakewell (2008) explains that people who have been refugees for a long time lose their ability to cope and become dependent on agencies that can provide aid to meet their daily requirements. They do not take the lead or accept the responsibility to care for

the poorest within their households or communities. It also results in unrealistic expectations. Findings from the field show that many refugees rely solely on the Ration they receive from the WFP which due to budget cuts has become little to nothing. However, it is common to find refugees who do not have any means of supplementing their income and tend to expect more from people and NGOs who visit them.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Concluding Thoughts.

In the complex weave of the humanitarian and development landscape, non-governmental organization plays a crucial role in the effort to provide food security for women living in both refugee and host communities. Their comprehensive interventions have a profound impact on the lives of marginalized groups particularly women who are disproportionately affected by food insecurity in these settings. Most NGOs acknowledge the structural impediments and systematic inequalities that sustain hunger and malnutrition of the women in both the refugee and host communities in Boroli and Olua in Pakele Sub County in the Adjumani District.

NGOs work at the intersection of local and global demands, employing a wide range of approaches to tackle the complex range of obstacles that women encounter in accessing adequate and nutritious food for themselves and people within their households. Organizations that work in the food distribution sector give women and their families a lifeline by supplying necessary food items to alleviate immediate hunger and malnutrition. By guaranteeing that women can satisfy their fundamental dietary needs even in the face of crisis and uncertainty, these programs function as an essential safety net. However, by incorporating a more sustainable approach into their programming, NGOs ensure women adapt to changing phenomena and improve their household food security over the long term. They have come to recognize the transformative power of empowerment which addresses the root causes of food insecurity. For example, women who participate in agricultural training programs get the knowledge and abilities to grow their own food, increasing their food sufficiency and external shock resistance. Moreover, through livelihood support programs, NGOs play a critical role in promoting women's economic empowerment. They help women to create income, diversify their livelihood options, and enhance their purchasing power by giving them access to microfinance opportunities, life skill training, and support for small business development. Women who possess economic resources have the capability of contributing to the welfare of their families.

Most importantly, NGOs understand that ensuring food security is a multifaceted responsibility that can be political and social. They raise the voices of women in host and refugee communities by engaging policymakers and lobbying for policies and programs

that prioritize their need for food security. They play a crucial role in increasing food security for women in both host and their host communities. The unwavering efforts of NGOs shine a light on roads towards a future where every woman can enjoy the fundamental right to food security.

6.2. The way forward

The study's findings and conclusions lead to the following suggestions.

- i. NGOs should make sure that their initiatives are gender-responsive and address the unique needs and priorities of women. Its programs must entail a system that encourages women's involvement in food security decision-making processes, thus incorporating gender analysis into program design and implementation.
- ii. The study recommends that more emphasis is placed on livelihood diversification in both refugee and host communities of Boroli and Olua which can facilitate a diverse revenue generation for people here.
- iii. It also suggests that the Government of Uganda in collaboration with other stakeholders assist in addressing the issues of budget cuts which has resulted in a decrease in the efficacy of the food security initiative NGOs implement.
- iv. Finally, findings from the study show that there is a lack of advocacy among the NGOs operating in these areas. Therefore, the study recommends that NGOs take part in advocacy campaigns to support changes in local, national, and international policies that improve food security in refugee and host communities of Boroli and Olua and its neighbouring communities.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

A. FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

The interview guide seeks to examine the role of non-governmental organisations in enhancing food security through the empowerment of women. It aims to understand the effectiveness of the activities and programs of NGOs in dealing with food security specific among the most vulnerable in refugee and host communities. This study does not aim to stir your emotions or make you uncomfortable. If at any point you feel uncomfortable, feel free to pull out of the study. Kindly note that this study is completely for academic purposes and any response given will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Demographics Features of Respondents

1. Age group of the respondent
(a) 18-27 years {} (b) 28-37 years {} (c) 38-47 years {} (d) 48-57 years {} (e) Above 58 {}
2. Marital Status
(a) Never married {} (b) Married {} (c) Divorced {} (d) widowed {} (e) Separated {}
3. Type of family (a) single {} (b) Nuclear family {} (c) Extended family {}
4. Number of people in the Household.....
5. Level of education (a) No formal education {} (b) Primary education {} (c) secondary education {} (d) tertiary education {} (e) Non-formal education {}
6. Occupation
7. Duration of stay in host community/refugee camp (a) less than a year (b) 1-10 years (c) 11-20 years (d) above 20 years.
8. According to the Ration which Category are you in.....
9. Nationality.....
10. Ethnicity.....

RQ.1. What are the livelihood strategies associated with food security of women residing in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani in Northern Uganda?

11. Explain what food security is to them. Ask the following questions?
 - A. Are you able to produce, share food among your family and store some? (Availability)
 - b. Do you think you have the means (money or resources) to get food whenever they need it? (Access)
 - c. Are you able to change diet within the week? (Utilization)
 - d. Do you think in the long run you will continue to have access to food that meets your nutritional and daily needs? (Stability)
12. What is the primary livelihood strategy employed by you in refugee communities in this settlement to ensure you have food?

13. How is the relationship between women in the host and refugee community?
14. What are the challenges you face as a woman living in the refugee or host communities in accessing food through your livelihood strategies?
15. How does the status of being a refugee impact your livelihood strategies in terms of accessing and ensuring food security?
16. How are the challenges you face in a refugee or host community as a woman different from the challenges men in these regions face? Does men and women carry the same burden of providing food for the household?
17. Do you consider farming/agriculture an effective way of ensuring food security?
18. How does the Ratio categorization affect you?

RQ.2. What are the programs and strategies employed by some selected NGOs in enhancing food security among women in both refugee and host communities in Northern Uganda?

19. Which NGOs are currently working to enhance food security in both refugee and host community in Adjumani?
20. What are some of the specific programs and strategies these NGOs employ to enhance your ability to get food for your household?
21. In your opinion do you think NGOs consider women when implementing programs to ensure they are food secured?
22. Do you think most NGOs collaborate with each other, the community, and other stakeholders to effectively address the issue of food security among women in both host and refugee communities?
23. How effective has these programs and strategies been in enhancing food security among women in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani? (discuss failures and successes of the programs).

RQ.3. What are the challenges and constraints faced by the selected NGOs in their effort to improve food security among women in refugee and host communities.

24. In your opinion, does the NGOs take measures to assess the impact of its programs towards the enhancement of food security among women?
25. Are there any cultural or traditional rule which prevents NGOs from assisting women in this settlement?
26. Has there been a situation where an NGO was not able to assist people? In connection to the leadership of the community or
27. What are the potential opportunities and interventions to overcome these challenges and constraints in improving food security among women in both the refugee and host communities?
28. Other comments

B. COMMUNITY LEADERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Demographics Features of Respondents

1. Sex of respondent
(a) Male {} (b) Female {}

2. Age group of the respondent
 - (a) 18-27 years {} (b) 28-37 years {} (c) 38-47 years {} (d) 48-57 years {} (e) Above 58 {}
3. Marital Status
 - (a) Never married {} (b) Married {} (c) Divorced {} (d) widowed {} (e) Separated {}
4. Level of education
 - (a) No formal education {} (b) Primary education {} (c) secondary education {} (d) tertiary education {} (e) Non-formal education {}
5. Occupation
6. Position in the community.....
.....
7. Duration of stay/position in host community/refugee camp
 - (a) less than a year (b) 1-10 years (c) 11-20 years (d) above 20 years.

RQ.1. What are the livelihood strategies associated with food security of women residing in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani in Northern Uganda?

8. Food security?
 - a. Are women able to produce, share food among your family and store some? (Availability)
 - b. Do you think women have the means (money or resources) to get food whenever they need it? (Access)
 - c. Are they able to change diet within the week? (Utilization)
 - d. Do you think in the long run women will continue to have access to food that meets your nutritional and daily needs? (Stability)
9. What is the primary livelihood strategy employed by women in refugee communities in Adjumani, to ensure food security?
10. What is the current livelihood strategy for women in host communities in Adjumani, to ensure food security?
11. How is the relationship between women in the host and refugee community?
12. What are the challenges women face in both refugee and host communities in accessing and maintaining food security through their livelihood strategies?
13. How does the status of being a refugee impact the livelihood strategies of women in terms of accessing and ensuring food security?
14. Do you think the challenges women in both refugee and host communities face are different from the challenges men in these regions face?
15. What are the potential opportunities and interventions for women to improve food security in both the refugee and host communities?

RQ.2. What are the programs and strategies employed by some selected NGOs in enhancing food security among women in both refugee and host communities in Northern Uganda?

16. Which NGOs are currently working to enhance food security in both refugee and host community in Adjumani?

17. What are some of the specific programs and strategies these NGOs employ to enhance food security in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani?
18. What are some of the long-term and short-term programs and initiatives which targets women specifically?
19. Do you think most NGOs collaborate with each other, the community, and other stakeholders to effectively address the issue of food security among women in both host and refugee communities?
20. How effective has these programs and strategies been in enhancing food security among women in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani? (discuss failures and successes of the programs).
21. How sustainable do you think the programs mentioned above are?
22. How is the categorization done and what are its impact (both negative and positive) on the settlement? Brief history on how things were done before the ratio categorization.

RQ.3. What are the challenges and constraints faced by the selected NGOs in their effort to improve food security among women in refugee and host communities.

23. In your opinion, what are the measures NGOs take to assess the impact of its programs towards the enhancement of food security among women?
24. What are the major challenges and constrains NGOs face when it comes to enhancing food security in host communities?
25. What challenges do you think most NGOs face in improving food security among women in refugee communities?
26. How does the challenges NGOs face when promoting food security among women different from the challenges they face when promoting food security among men in both host and refugee communities?
27. What are the potential opportunities and interventions to overcome these challenges and constraints in improving food security among women in both the refugee and host communities?
28. Other comments.....

C. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

Demographics

1. What is the Organisation’s name?.....
2. What is your position and role in this organisation?.....
3. What is the overview of the organisation and its work in the field of food security?.....

4. Overview of the organisations work in the field of women empowerment.....
.....

RQ.1. What are the livelihood strategies associated with food security of women residing in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani in Northern Uganda?

5. Food security?
 - D. Are women able to produce, share food among your family and store some? (Availability)
 - e. Do you think women have the means (money or resources) to get food whenever they need it? (Access)
 - f. Are they able to change diet within the week? (Utilization)
 - g. Do you think in the long run women will continue to have access to food that meets your nutritional and daily needs? (Stability)
6. In your opinion, what are the primary livelihood strategy employed by women in refugee communities in Adjumani, to ensure food security?
7. What is the current livelihood strategy for women in host communities in Adjumani, to ensure food security?
8. How is the relationship between women in the host and refugee community?
9. What are the daily challenges women face in both refugee and host communities in accessing and maintaining food security through their livelihood strategies?
10. How are the challenges women in both refugee and host communities face different from the challenges men in these regions face?

RQ.2. What are the programs and strategies employed by some selected NGOs in enhancing food security among women in both refugee and host communities in Northern Uganda?

11. What are some of the specific programs and strategies you employed to enhance food security in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani?
12. What are the main objectives of these programs, and how do they address the specific food needs of women in both communities?
13. In your opinion do you think you specifically consider women when implementing programs to ensure they are food secured?
14. What are some of the short-term and long-term programs and initiatives which targets women specifically?
15. As an NGO, how do you collaborate with other NGOs, the community, and other stakeholders to effectively address the issue of food security among women in both host and refugee communities?
16. How effective has these programs and strategies been in enhancing food security among women in both refugee and host communities in Adjumani? (discuss failures and successes of the programs).
17. In your view, do you think the programs mentioned above are sustainable? This may include the Farming for their own food.
18. How is the categorization done and what are its impact (both negative and positive) on the settlement? Brief history on how things were done before the ratio categorization.

RQ.3. What are the challenges and constraints faced by the selected NGOs in their effort to improve food security among women in refugee and host communities.

19. In your opinion, does your organisation take measures to assess the impact of its programs towards the enhancement of food security among women?
20. What are the factors your organisation considers when it comes to the long-term impacts of your food security programs?
21. What are the major challenges and constraints this organisation face when it comes to enhancing food security in host communities?
22. What challenges do you think this NGOs face in improving food security among women in refugee communities?
23. How does the challenges this NGOs face when promoting food security among women different from the challenges they face when promoting food security among men in both host and refugee communities?
24. What are the potential opportunities and interventions to overcome these challenges and constraints in improving food security among women in both the refugee and host communities?



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