# Consultation with Children in East Africa for the World Humanitarian Summit

## Messages from Children Affected by Emergencies

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# Consultation with Children in East Africa for the World Humanitarian Summit

*Messages from Children Affected by Emergencies*

Our sincere thanks is extended to every child in South Sudan, Somalia/Somaliland and Uganda who shared their view and voice on what they have, what they need, and what they would like for their immediate and distant futures.
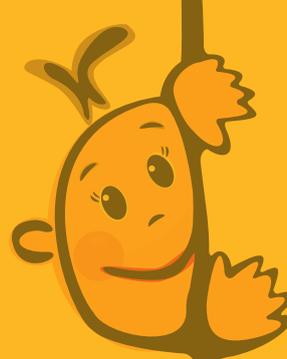
It is our hope these important voices of children, living as refugees or internally displaced children, will be heard and will inform how the humanitarian system responds to their needs in protracted emergencies - to best ensure that they survive, are educated, and remain safe.

# Contents

# 1
# Executive Summary

In May 2016 the UN Secretary-General will convene the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in Istanbul "...to propose solutions to our most pressing challenges and set an agenda to keep humanitarian action fit for the future."[1] The Summit and the processes and conversations leading up to the Summit have provided and will continue to provide an important opportunity to re-shape the future of humanitarian action to better serve people affected by conflict and disaster. In seeking to re-shape the humanitarian architecture, the views of all stakeholders need to be taken into account, including and especially some of the world's most vulnerable members—children.

In the lead up to the Summit, and keen to lend a missing voice to regional and global conversations, Save the Children and UNICEF carried out a consultation that sought the views of around 500 children, primarily aged between 7 and 14 years. The children, affected by conflict and protracted, complex emergencies, and currently living as Internally Displaced Children (IDC), or refugees in selected regions of South Sudan, Somalia, Somaliland and Uganda, were encouraged to identify their needs, express their concerns and make recommendations for living in areas of conflict and /or protracted displacement. The consultations were carried out over a 3 week period in June 2015 in:

- Adjumani in Uganda (84 children consulted *from June 9-11 2015*)
- Bor, Pibor, Yambio and Awerial in South Sudan (269 children consulted *from June 10-28 2015*)
- Hargeisa, Burao and Bosasso in Somalia and Somaliland (131 children consulted *from June 15-25 2015*)

The methods of gathering data included the completion of surveys, drawings, community mapping, general discussions and creative writing of poems and songs.

1 World Humanitarian Summit. 2015. About the World Humanitarian Summit. Retrieved from: https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/whs_about

The consultation design allowed the children to freely identify their needs, express their concerns and make recommendations on living in areas of conflict and /or protracted displacement. Each of the consultations not only affords a unique insight into the lives of children and the environment they live in, but also provides an opportunity to better understand the needs of children, their families and communities in the delivery of humanitarian assistance in this region.

From the consultation findings, the most important messages conveyed by the children are centered around the negative effects of conflict on their lives, and their urgent desire for peace. According to accounts from many children, peace will enable parents to return to everyday life and once again provide safe shelter, education and food. However, even when removed from conflict, there are still pressing issues that these children face, the most frequently mentioned being a general lack of sense of community and a lack of quality education opportunities. Children highly value education as a method to escape conflict, poverty and general harm, and look to leaders to help them with this.

As part of concerted efforts to inform the review of the global humanitarian architecture through the convening of the World Humanitarian Summit, this report will share children's views and voices and bring to the fore their most urgent concerns as sought through the lens of the four thematic areas of the WHS – *humanitarian effectiveness, reducing vulnerability and managing risk, transformation through innovation and serving the needs of people in conflict.*

The findings of this consultation will seek to feed into the WHS process and conversations through the submission of this report to the WHS secretariat. Scheduled to take place in Istanbul in May 2016, the Summit and the pre-summit processes provide an important opportunity to re-shape the future of humanitarian action to better serve people in need, as well as propose changes that will see a more effective, inclusive and global system that is fit for purpose beyond 2016.

Through this report, the children call on the humanitarian community to make a difference in reducing the vulnerabilities and risks they face. While presenting their voices is important, it is not enough to give them the opportunity to 'express' their views and opinions. These should be seriously taken into consideration enabling them to influence and affect significant change. These are their asks to world leaders and the humanitarian system:

1. **End conflict and war now, and reunite us with our families.**
2. **End our hunger by providing employment for our families or through feeding programs at schools and child friendly spaces.**
3. **Provide us with quality education even during periods of conflict.**
4. **Provide us with healthcare and access to medical facilities.**
5. **Protect us from abuse and harm.**
6. **Build child friendly spaces (CFCs) in locations away from conflict, ensuring these spaces have sanitary facilities for us to use, spaces for us to play, and sports equipment for us to play with; trained teachers; and counselling - for us and our family members.**
7. **Provide employment, training and access to technology for youth.**
8. **Regularly consult with children and integrate their perspectives into all planning and programming for effective responses.**

# Children's Voices

Uganda--South Sudan--Somalia

**WE ASKED +480 CHILDREN**

Living in refugee and IDP camps in Uganda, South Sudan, Somalia and Somaliland what **CHANGES** they would like to see in their current living situations.

1. End conflict and war now, and **reunite us** with our families;

2. End our hunger by providing **employment for our families** or through feeding programs at schools and child friendly spaces

3. Provide us with quality education **even during periods of conflict**;

4. Provide us with **healthcare and access** to medical facilities;

5. **Protect us** from abuse and harm

6. Build **child friendly spaces (CFCs)** in locations away from conflict ensuring these spaces have **sanitary facilities**; spaces for us to **play** and sports equipment for us to play with; **trained teachers;** and **counselling** for us and our family members.

7. Provide **employment, training and access to technology** for youth

8. Regularly **consult with children and integrate their perspectives** into planning and program-ming for effective responses.

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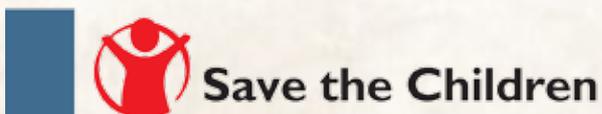
Children in Adjumani, Uganda (June 2015 WHS Child Consultation)

# 2 Context

## Tears of a Refugee Child

Born into suffering

Born to be malnourished

Born in the bush

Born on the run

Born in poverty

Born to be a refugee

Born in the middle of desert

Born in worries

Son of the scream

Daughter of boom

Sister of landmines

Brother of waters

Grandson of affliction

Born to either die or escape death

by a noose

Born to suckle sorrow

Born to worry of chaos and deny

peace, which won't come soon,

Tears of a South Sudanese child

~ Sabboth Mamer,
Adjumani, Uganda, June 2015 ~

According to the recently released *Global Trends Report: World at War,* the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that approximately 60 million individuals were forcibly displaced around the world as a result of persecution, conflict, widespread violence, or human rights violations in 2014.[2] Tragically, more than half of this population is children.[2] In 2014 children below the age of 18 constituted 51% of the refugee population, up from 41% in 2009. This is the highest figure in more than a decade.[3] In 2014 the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimated that 230 million children live in countries traumatised by conflict, therefore, placing millions more children at risk.[4]

In the face of conflict and protracted emergencies, including protracted refugee situations,[5] the Greater East Africa region is an area where 3 out of the top 10 refugee hosting countries[6] and 4 out of the top 10 major source countries for refugees[7] reside. With this, children living in countries with conflict and/or chronic and often complex emergencies are continually at risk of facing physical, emotional and psychological harm. Often children are killed and maimed during violent attacks, while other grave violations such as recruitment and use as child soldiers, rape and sexual violence, abduction, denial of humanitarian access and attacks against their schools and hospitals

2 UNHCR News (2015). *Worldwide displacement hits all-time high as war and persecution increase.* Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/558193896.html

3 UNCHR (2015) *Global Trends Report: World At War* at page 3

4 UNICEF (2014) *Children and emergencies in 2014- acts.* Retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/media/files/UNICEF_Children_and_Emergencies_2014_fact_sheet.pdf

5 UNHCR defines a protracted refugee situation as one in which 25,000 or more refugees from the same nationality have been in exile for five years or more in a given asylum country.

6 UNCHR (2015) *Global Trends Report: World At War* at 12

7 UNCHR (2015) *Global Trends Report: World At War* at 14

become commonplace.[8] For instance, South Sudan alone saw 750,000 children internally displaced, 320,000 registered as child refugees, hundreds killed, and over 12,000 recruited and used by the government and opposition forces as child soldiers in armed conflict in 2014.[9]  Similarly, in Somali/ Somaliland, where there is a protracted crisis, seeing a high number of the population  internally displaced as a result of civil war, children are almost twice as likely to die from disease and malnutrition due to some of the complexities manifested in chronic and complex emergencies.

 Against this backdrop, the lives and future of many children are at risk. "The sudden and violent onset of emergencies, the disruption of families and community structures, as well as the acute shortage of resources with which most refugees are confronted, deeply affects the physical and psychological well-being of refugee children"[10] Due to the disproportionate effects on children, conflict in children's lives must be addressed in an urgent, effective, and long-term manner. To address their needs, it is vital to know and understand them from a child's perspective. Unfortunately children's views and thoughts are often not sought in the response/design of programmes for people affected by conflict or humanitarian disasters. It is essential that the first step to make this possible be based on understanding the child's best interests and their needs and rights as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC).



Legend

⭐ Consultation locations

**Figure 1. Greater East Africa Region Consultation Locations.**

8 UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. (n.d.). *The six grave violations*. Retrieved from https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/effects-of-conflict/six-grave-violations

9 World Hunger (2015) 2*015 World hunger and poverty facts and statistics*. Retrieved from http://www.worldhunger.org/ articles/Learn/world%20hunger%20facts%202002.htm

10 http://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/pdf/refugee_children_guidelines_on_protection_and_care.pdf, 2004.

# 3

# Method and Findings

Over a three-week period in June 2015, field staff were trained and approximately 500 consultations[11] were conducted with children using a survey tool, mapping tool, and (when time permitted) a creative arts tool. With this, children had the opportunity to respond to an interactive survey, participate in a community mapping activity and also share a poem or a drawing. The objective was to engage children in interactive, fun and educational sessions. Reflecting the objectives of the WHS and the proposed new agenda for global humanitarian action, the consultation approach and tools were organized to inform the following four areas:



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**Figure 2. Adjumani, Uganda (June 2015 WHS Child Consultation).**

11 A detailed methods report on consultation tools and approaches are available for review (see Annex). As noted above consultations were carried out in Adjumani in Uganda (84 Child Consultations *from June 6-10, 2015*); Bor, Pibor, Yambio and Awerial in South Sudan (269 Child Consultations *from June 10-28, 2015*); Hargeisa, Burao and Bosasso in Somalia/Somaliland (131 Child Consultations *from June 15-28, 2015*)

1. Humanitarian effectiveness - How can humanitarian action meet the needs of all children?
2. Reducing vulnerability and managing risk - How can humanitarian action more effectively support children?
3. Transformation through innovation - How can humanitarian action remain more responsive and adaptive to change?
4. Serving the needs of people in conflict - What are the most pressing needs of children in conflict?

The methods used for the purpose of this consultation included interviews, short videos, artwork, story writing, face-to-face conversations and intergenerational dialogues, and drew on best practice methods applied in other similar consultations.

The consultation focused on determining the views of children on a broad set of questions, such as:
1. What they are receiving and not receiving in crisis situations (e.g. food, shelter, education, water, reunification, healthcare, ability to participate in decisions that impact them and their communities, safe spaces, etc.)?
2. What do they want in emergency situations for themselves and their families/communities?
3. How can the interventions of humanitarian actors and governments be improved?

The outcome of consulting approximately 500 children living as refugees or internally displaced children (IDC) in eight locations in Somalia/Somaliland, South Sudan and Uganda is summarized through the following messages to world leaders, community leaders and the humanitarian system:
1. End conflict and war now, and reunite us with our families.
2. End our hunger by providing employment for our families or through feeding programs at schools and child friendly spaces.
3. Provide us with quality education even during periods of conflict.
4. Provide us with healthcare and access to medical facilities.
5. Protect us from abuse and harm.
6. Build child friendly spaces (CFCs) in locations away from conflict, ensuring these spaces have sanitary facilities for us to use; spaces for us to play, and sports equipment for us to play with; trained teachers; and counselling - for us and our family members.
7. Provide employment, training and access to technology for youth.
8. Regularly consult with children and integrate their perspectives into all planning and programming for effective responses.



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**Somalia (June 2015 WHS Child Consultation).**

# 4

# Discussion of Thematic Areas

**W**ith varying needs in each community, engaging in participation based consultations with children to identify priority areas was integral to effectively reporting on all aspects of aid for children in conflict. A careful review of the child survey data reveals that the majority of children listed peace as the answer to almost every challenge or worry, and identified education as their hope. In South Sudan, almost every child consulted listed at least one of conflict, war or killing as their primary current worry, and regardless of age, peace was the most frequently mentioned solution.

Hunger (68%), sickness (57%) and lack of education (45%) were, respectively, the next three most commonly listed worries. Similar patterns were established in Somalia/Somaliland as children frequently referenced education and poor conditions of the settlements where they lived as two of their unmet needs. In Adjumani, Uganda – which hosts South Sudanese refugees, it was clear there was a great need for psychosocial support for the real and perceived fears related to personal protection when working in the fields and moving throughout the communities, and for issues related to the use of drugs.

The following sections provide a closer review of consultation findings as well as tangible next steps to increasing the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, reducing vulnerability and risk, transformation through innovation and serving the needs of children in conflict.

## 4.1 Children's Voices on Humanitarian Effectiveness

*What are the perceptions of children on humanitarian action, the actors and their participation: Is it timely, is it appropriate, is it sustainable, what needs to change and how? Who is best placed to meet their needs?*

The approach to understanding a child's perspective on humanitarian effectiveness was to engage the children in an interactive session to determine their worries and who they thought are best placed to respond to their needs.

Through the consultation process the children and their care-givers verified that the well-being of refugee children and IDCs is impacted by multiple factors including experiencing trauma, stressors, resettlement, acculturation, and social isolation. However, they noted that the same experiences contributed to their resilience. Very often, these children worry. This is one of the main reasons why the consultation methodology addressed the worries and fears that they experience. From this point, governments and the humanitarian community can better help the children find solutions that allow them to cope.

Increasingly, conflict is affecting children more than any other population. In Adjumani, for example, of over 100,000 refugees, more than 65% are children. From the consultation, it was determined that their voices on humanitarian assistance are not taken into regular and systematic consideration. This is often grounded in the cultural norm that the parents know best and children are supposed to listen and not be heard. This creates further issues for children without parents. Unaccompanied minors and orphans are the most neglected, because they have no parental figure to voice their issues and concerns.

In all three countries, second to the need for peace, the most powerful message the children illustrated in their drawings is the need for all aspects of community and development, including a sense of routine in the midst of turmoil. This was viewed as only possible once peace was achieved. The children believe that once there is peace, their needs will be met, including those of hunger and thirst. If peace is achieved, community leaders working with humanitarian actors can provide protection to children and their families. Over a third of the children mentioned they feared the loss of their family members.

In terms of recommendations, the children clearly showed through the mapping exercise a demand for a complete and functioning community in the midst of conflict, including having permanent homes and ensuring better protection around their homes, such as having a fenced compound and / or being able to access police protection. In Somalia/Somaliland every child consulted noted the need for cleaner camps and garbage removal. Regularly, throughout the consultations, the lack of personal security, well-designed communities, economic opportunities, reunification with family and parents, food security, and education were cited as the main concerns of children.

**Figure 3. Hargeisa, Somaliland, WHS Consultation, showing permanent compounds and homes.**

Where children could, they always identified the important role of their local leaders in addressing the challenges they faced, but they were very cognisant of the role of the international humanitarian community in delivering peace.

Children differentiated between the actors of aid. They appeared to have strongly and positively identified with agencies they are most connected to and the importance of having a connection to a child rights agency was emphasised. Unfortunately there were many examples of where children did not trust teachers or their families. Children expressed unease about their social networks - including family and teachers - not having their best interests due to their primary concern including the use of corporal punishment. When linked to priorities, children identified the need to improve their access to education as well as increased funding for schools, school supplies, teachers, language training, and school development. Children impressed the need for parents to take a lead role in providing things needed for school, such as fees and uniforms, for the local and national government to make education free or provide scholarships, and for humanitarian organizations to provide greater funding for school supplies and the development of more schools. Children also recognized the need for stability for students, which included time and willingness to study, support from their families to continue their education, and peace in their country to reduce their external stresses, including hunger.

Another factor children discussed was the need to increase feeding programmes at schools to ensure students were not hungry during their class time so they could focus more on their lessons. They suggested that the food could be provided by either the humanitarian organizations or the government, or a combination of the two.

Child participants also recognized that food is linked to educational success, health, and stability. They identified agriculture, animal husbandry, and income as key components of food security. They called for action from governments, humanitarian organizations, and the local community to engage in agricultural practices, to provide animals with food sources, and give more opportunities to their parents to make an income closer to home.

Children expressed the need for organisations to support in the delivery of services such as health and sanitation. The children also emphasized that schools and the child-friendly spaces (CFSs) were effective and important spaces to provide them with what they need.

Listening to the children in different areas and their different needs and experiences emphasised that the one-size-fits all approach does not work.

In addition to what was shared on humanitarian effectiveness, a review of the data suggests consideration should be given to the following:

## Peace, Peace, Peace

In our country, district, schools, homes and our communities
Peace, Peace, Peace
We are tired of living in this unpeaceful environment
Violence child neglect isolation defilement and poor relationship with our leaders
Peace, Peace, Peace
For us to have peace we should respect our leaders, stop violence and resolve conflicts peacefully
We are all expecting peace

~ Anzoa Gloria,
Child refugee, Adjumani, Uganda,
June 2015 ~

## *Children's Voices on Humanitarian Effectiveness*

- Children born in a country in which their parents are seeking asylum usually lack a sense of identity to their country of origin. Social programs need to be set up to educate children about their country and culture.

- Many children desired flagpoles and other ways of confirming and establishing identity, supplying children with birth certificates is an important solution in this regard.

- Children do not have adequate avenues to discuss their fears and traumatic experiences. It is important to have counselling centers for the children.

- It is important to teach children survival skills. The lack of awareness of potential dangers and how they could be handled is catastrophic. There are even potential dangers within the camp site from other adults. It is important to teach children about identifying dangers and effective ways of escaping such dangers, as well as allowing them the freedom to speak about their concerns.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of governments and the humanitarian community to ensure effective and efficient use of resources in meeting the needs of target populations. Engaging in consultation and integration of the child's voice is critical especially as it relates to the creation, location and resourcing of safe child friendly spaces (CFCs)

Some of the key worries expressed by a child in South Sudan are outlined in the form below.



**Figure 4. Survey from Yambio, South Sudan, illustrating UNICEF helping children through their worries**

**Figure 5. A group of boys in Somalia prioritize integrated recreational space in their community map.**

## 4.2  Children's Voices on Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk

*How can humanitarian efforts more effectively support countries and communities to build resilience to shocks and stresses? How should humanitarian efforts link with development processes?*

The approach to understanding the needs of children was to identify the immediate, daily risks they faced as children and the broader risks associated with protracted emergencies and conflict. This included understanding what the children deemed to be the most urgent issues, and how to respond appropriately and in a timely manner.

Children in conflict zones have obvious needs, but again their needs are usually assumed and not consulted on. For example, the Internally Displaced People (IDP) and refugee camps mostly addressed food, shelter and medical needs. Within the IDP camps in Somalia/Somaliland, children stated the importance of a place of worship as well as a market place so "their mothers could sell things and buy food." Improving access to these resources would also serve to create a level of stability that can improve the basic conditions impacting children's experiences. Children also know the importance of education as a way of escaping their predicament and therefore the children requested that all other services be delivered through a school or child friendly space.

> *"Usually projects are designed for children in conflict areas but without their inputs. Children in different areas have different needs and experiences, and the one-size-fits all approach does not work. Obviously children in conflict zones think strangers who are there to help them have all the answers."*
>
> *~ Former Child Refugee ~*

The following survey form illustrates the stress and worries of a 16 year old boy in South Sudan highlighting the importance of school, desire for safe housing, reliance on local government and his own personal fear of being killed.



**Figure 6. Contrast of the dangers that a 16 year old boy in Yambio, South Sudan is facing versus his hopes for his future, including a good home/house, car and happy people, safety and protection.**

Timing is important in minimizing risk. While children are quick to identify agencies responding to their needs, their focus on security and protection indicates that they remain highly susceptible to conflict and its impact. Each consultation location had varied risks, so any efforts to work with conflict-affected communities must prioritize the location-specific needs and views of children. For example, in South Sudan and Uganda, the largest reported source of trauma was the loss of family through death and displacement.

In terms of vulnerability, children are deeply affected by the changes to their environment. Sometimes these are rapid changes resulting in shock and intense stress. For example, many children in conflict zones are forced to flee their homes with nothing, and live in impoverished conditions, the bush, or unfamiliar communities. Another issue identified in South Sudan, by over 25% of the children was flooding and associated risk. In Somalia/Somaliland, garbage, refuse and waste management was the children's biggest environmental concern. These situations leave children with little hope for peace, experiencing widespread terror, and appalling living conditions. Identifying and minimizing the most acute risks in each area can drastically reduce exposure to harm.

On how to build resilience, children identified that fostering a sense of community was central to this. Education was repeatedly stated as a critical component needed to create a sense of community and stability, primarily because of the ability of schools to nature a sense of community while also

addressing the trauma of war. Education was viewed as a cornerstone of stability and resilience, a symbol of safety and structure in a life that is full of rapid changes and risk. In addition to education, there was interest in honing basic resilience and survival skills, and the freedom to voice their concerns. Children cited that a lack of awareness of potential dangers could be catastrophic. Therefore, it was crucial for children to learn how to identify dangers and empower them to communicate these in an effective way that would lead to reduced risks.

One recurring concern raised by children in relation to reducing vulnerability and managing risks was dealing with sources of fear and anxiety. Many children referenced fear of war and killing as well as spiritual fears. During consultations, for example, children in one settlement in Adjumani consistently discussed demons as their primary fear. A review of these images shows large, headless flying beings reaching down to snatch the children (shown in Figure 9). While there are several interpretations and many ways to try to understand an issue that is community-wide, what is important for our purposes to note the need for psychosocial support for children, and by extension their families and community leaders. Practices such as cutting to bleed out malaria, early marriage (often mentioned as a fear for girls), were other worries and risks that require attention through a holistic and community-wide strategy.



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**Figure 9. Adjumani child's drawing of demons, demonstrating psychosocial needs.**

In addition to immediate risk reduction, a review of the data suggests consideration should be given to the following:

- Children do not have adequate avenues to discuss their fears and traumatic experiences. It is therefore important to have counselling centers for the children.
- Children are vulnerable to sexual and gender based violence (SGBV); organizing community based watch groups both during the day and at night, while providing lighting in public spaces will also help reduce the risks of SGBV.
- Strengthening affected peoples' and communities' capacities for self-protection by humanitarian organizations.
- More teaching and awareness required on both the Convention of the Rights of the Child
- (CRC) and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)
- Integrating strategic information and goals into refugee camp education programs such as creating 'community' forums where experiences are shared and issues are discussed so common solutions can be found.

## 4.3 Children's Voices on Transformation through Innovation

*How can humanitarian efforts remain responsive and adapt to change? How can we respond to situations with innovation and out of the box solutions?*

The approach to understanding the needs of children was to identify challenges, from a new perspective, that can be met by improving existing procedures or suggesting new initiatives.

Innovation in the context of humanitarian efforts involves looking for opportunities to improve the delivery of existing humanitarian programs through innovative approaches and non-traditional means. Through the consultation with children, a unique message emerged with regards to innovation: Children desire a sense of community. It repeatedly became clear that in innovatively responding in protracted emergencies, creating a sense of community - for children - is the innovation. Early in the consultation process, the concept of community emerged in the songs and poetry of children. During the community mapping exercises and discussions, the children commented on the importance of community as a way to provide stability in their lives. According to the children, community included a place to worship, a place to gather, markets, safe schools, symbolic flagpoles, green spaces for play and other activities and repeatedly called for safer communal spaces. The children's voices on this topic suggest that building community would be an innovative approach to transforming humanitarian efforts.


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**Figure 7. Children's voices on the need for education in Maaji, Uganda.**
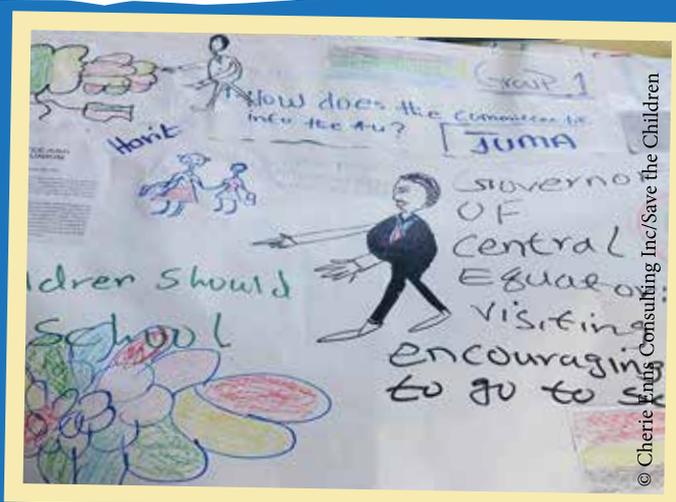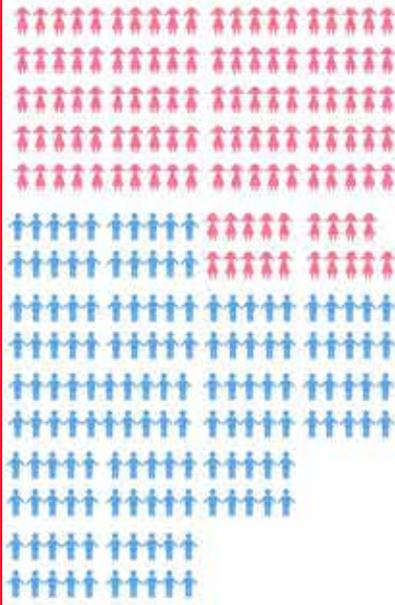

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**Figure 8. Child-created poster demonstrating child's perceived importance of school in South Sudan.**

# Children's Voices – South Sudan

Bor Settlement – Awerial Settlement – Yambio Settlement – Pibor Settlement

**269** children living in the areas mentioned above were asked what their primary worries were – with regard to their living conditions...

..This is what the children said...

### Education

No access to a quality education.

No proper educators and school supplies.

### Parental Care

Loss of family members and parents.

### Security

War and conflict

Fear of abductions and kidnappings.

Abuse from parents and teachers.

### Child Friendly Spaces

No playing equipment.

Need for flood management infrastructure.

### Basic Needs

No access to food.

No access to clothing.

Little access to clean water.

### Health Care

Little access to healthcare facilities & medications.

As well as communicating their worries, the children also suggested who can help: Government, International organisations, community leaders...

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> ## "...innovation is an umbrella term for concerted efforts to respond to new challenges or changing context to improve existing programs or to integrate new developments from other sectors..."
>
> ~ www.worldhumanitariansummit.org ~

When asked to draw what makes them feel safe in their communities, children's drawings showed permanent homes or compounds with space for everyone to sleep (as shown below in Figure 10). The drawings also included access to safe spaces. In the children's drawings, safe spaces included the provision of solar panel lighting. This can be related to the general lack of safety and risks that children encounter. The children's drawing also reflected a desire for no conflict in their communities. Many children felt that their camps lacked a sense of community as a result of different risks that interrupt community life. These risks include prevalence of crime, violence, abuse, ongoing conflict and the neglect of basic needs.

Children noted the importance of technology and alternative energy in their community map drawings.



**Figure 10. "Now and Future" drawing from a child in Somaliland, displaying elements of a wall and gate around the community, with trees and cars.**

## 4.4  Children's Voices on Serving the Needs of People in Conflict

*What are the most pressing needs of children in conflict? What are the effective strategies and methods of providing assistance and protection to children in conflict even where there is combat all around them?*

As previously noted, in South Sudan, almost every child consulted listed conflict, war or killing as their primary worry and regardless of age, peace was the most frequently mentioned solution. The children appreciated that once there was peace, their basic needs, such as access to food, water and education

# Children's Voices - Somalia/Somaliland

Burao Settlement – Hargeisa Settlement, Bariga Bosasso Settlement & Bandar Qasim Settlement
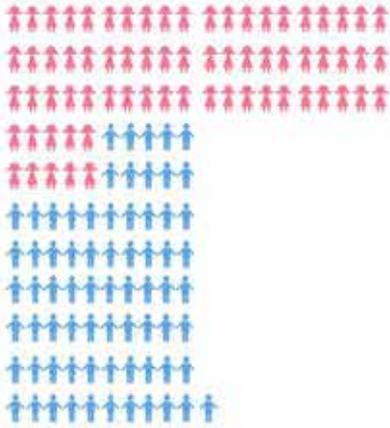
**131** children living in the above mentioned areas in Somaliland and Puntland were asked what their primary worries were – with regard to their living conditions...

This is what the children said...

## Health Care

Little access to healthcare facilities & medications.

Many accidents caused by fire & unmarked wells.

## Security

Continuous war and conflict

Fear of abductions and kidnappings.

Theft and robbery.

## Education

No proper educators and school supplies.

## Development

No proper garbage & waste management.

Dangerous roadway very near children spaces putting the safety of children at risk

## Parental Care

Neglect from parents.

## Basic Needs

No access to food.

No access to clothing.

Little access to clean water.

As well as communicating their worries, the children also suggested who can help: Government, International organisations, community leaders...

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would be met. In this sense, children viewed peace as the most important pathway to building better communities. In all three countries, the need for peace, was the most powerful message and the children illustrated this in their drawings.

In South Sudan hunger (68%), sickness (57%) and education (45%) were, respectively, the next three most commonly listed worries. Similar patterns were established in Somalia/Somaliland as children frequently referenced education as one of their unmet needs. In Uganda 86% of the listed worries by the children were classified as basic needs, with 82% of the children citing access to education and books are their main concern. The second most prevalent concern was hunger.

Throughout the consultations, the point that the "…international communities should bring peace…" was made resoundingly clear. Without a lasting and stable peace, families will remain at risk. This risk can be in the form of perpetuators of crime and violence or as victims of abuse[12].

| Male | 16 | South Sudan | War/Killing conflict | "if there is peace my parent will cultivate" |
|------|-----|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Male | 10 | South Sudan | War/ Killing/ conflict | "My solution I need peace in South Sudan." |
| Male | 10 | South Sudan | War / Killing/ conflict | "Rebel and government should stop killing children and women." |
| Male | 12 | South Sudan | Security | "if there is no security, my parent can't produce food." |
| Female | 8 | South Sudan | Education | "…I don't go to school always, but my brothers do. My mother should allow me to go to school and do chores after school." |
| Female | 8 | South Sudan | Abuse | "Children need protection from government and parental abuse" |

When asked who should fix their worries, eight to 14 year olds in Bosasso, Puntland responded with: Authorities/Government, Community Committees, Community, Parents, Teachers, Police, Local and International Organizations

In examining the data around protection and education, it was evident that education was critical in not only providing protection, but also creating a sense of community and stability while addressing the trauma of war. Education is seen to be a 'hope for the future'.
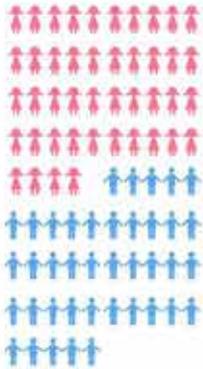
### "My solution: I need peace in South Sudan"

~ 10 year old boy, South Sudan ~

12 UNICEF. (2014). *Children and emergencies in 2014- acts*. Retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/media/files/UNICEF_Children_and_Emergencies_2014_fact_sheet.pdf

# Children's Voices - Uganda

## Maaji Settlement - Ojili Settlement - Mirieyi Settlement - Mungula Settlement

**84** children living in the Adjumani region were asked what their primary worries were with regard to their living conditions.

This is what the children said...

## Health Care
Little access to healthcare facilities & medications.

## Education
No access to a quality education.

No proper educators and school supplies.

## Parental Care
Loss of family members and parents.

## Child Friendly Spaces
No sports equipment.

## Security
Abuse from parents.

## Basic Needs
No access to food.

No access to clothing.

No proper shelter/homes.

As well as communicating their worries, the children also suggested who can help: Government, International organisations, community leaders...

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The information shared in the summary below indicates the urgency with which conflict needs to be resolved and provides insights into the impact of conflict on children in South Sudan.

| Question | Answer |
|---|---|
| How big is your family? Is it still the same? | We were 4 siblings in the family. No, I was abducted by the LRA, I was 10 years old. I am the 1st born. |
| Is where you are living now different from the past? | Yes it is very different. Life in the bush was very difficult, people move at night in the bush. |
| What worries you about where you are living? | Not worried because I am now free, safe from captivity and the harsh life with the LRA. |
| What do you want to do in the future? | Want to go back to school and get education. Want to join the military then go back to fight Kony because Kony spoiled all my plans. |

| Child's Need | Who Should Respond |
|---|---|
| Housing, food, school building, supplies, clothing, and reunification | UNICEF and Save the Children |
| Protection of children | Government and parents |
| Protection from rape | UNHCR |
| Protection from child labour | Government laws |
| Peace | Government, world, God and prayer |
| Security | Government, community, police |
| School fees | Government and scholarships |
| Passing examinations | Children themselves |
| Jobs and development | Government |

**Hunger, Hunger, Hunger**

**Hunger in the North**

**Hunger in the South**

**Hunger in the West**

**Hunger in the East**

**Hunger is Everywhere**

**What can you do to stop hunger?**

**We are all expecting Peace**

**~ Child Refugee,
Adjumani, Uganda, June 2015 ~**

The summary diagrams and above charts promote key consultation findings and prioritize putting an end to conflicts. In addition, child drawn maps (as seen in figures 7 and 10) stress the need for schools or child friendly spaces, as these allow them to feel safe. Extending protection for children in these places at night, as well as during the day, during conflict will increase security and better serve basic needs.

# 5
# Conclusion

Children living in countries facing conflict and or protracted emergencies have unique needs. While they make up the majority of displaced population, unfortunately their needs often remain assumed and insufficiently or not accessed. The consultation allowed the children to freely identify their needs and express their recommendations. This report has highlighted the critical need for a humanitarian architecture that reflects children's voices, and concerns, in the planning and roll out of responses and programmes. - as everyone has a story to tell.

Through the consultation, the focus was on the child as the storyteller. Children provide a unique insight into the realities of living through conflict, as well as important firsthand accounts of the most vulnerable people in conflict situations.

As an at risk constituency, their stories shed light on how to meet their basic needs, protect them and provide an enabling environment for them to grow. Allowing children to tell their stories, listening to these stories, and using these stories to shape our actions can move all key players in the humanitarian system closer to achieving the goals and objectives of international and continental law instruments that address the rights of children.

Through this consultation children's concerns around the universal access to education, an end to war and conflict, disease and illness, hunger and child abuse were dominant. The lives of millions of children in Greater East Africa are at risk, and in meeting more than their basic needs, children growing up in refugee and IDP camps can be provided with the opportunities to transition into adulthood where they can be contributing members of society.

Ultimately, it remains the responsibility of governments and the humanitarian community to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources in

meeting the needs that these children have identified. Understanding that in many cases more than half of the displaced populations in this region are children, with limited resources available, adequately responding to their needs in conflicts and protracted emergencies is critical. We must ensure that the best interests of children are at the heart of all humanitarian interventions so that they survive, are educated, and remain safe.

**Please note the following information is included in a separate report.**

1. WHS Consultation Concept Paper

2. WHS Consultation Method

3. WHS  Consultation Tools

4. Legal Framework and Crisis Context

5. WHS Child Consultation Country Reports

6. Data Sets and Selected Images

7. Selected Resources

**East Africa's Children's Consultation for the World Humanitarian Summit**

Children's Voices to World Leaders

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Save the Children
East Africa Regional Office (EARO)
P.O. Box 19423 - 00202
Nairobi, Kenya
Phone: +254 711 090 000
www.savethechildren.net

United Nations Children's Fund
Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO)
P.O. Box 44145 - 00100
Nairobi, Kenya
Phone: +254-20-7624536
www.unicef.org