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The Security of South Sudanese Refugees in Uganda: Assessing the Physical Security Implications of Ethnic Conflict-Induced Displacement

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The Security of South Sudanese Refugees in Uganda

Assessing the Physical Security Implications of Ethnic Conflict-Induced Displacement

Alex Pommier

SIT Study Abroad — Uganda: Post-Conflict Transformation

Academic Director: Martha Nalubega Wandera

Advisor: Denis Barnabas Otim, Refugee Law Project

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Acronyms

ACORD – Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development

ADEFO – Adjumani District Elders Forum

ADLG – Adjumani District Local Government

AGF – Anti-Government Forces

CPST – Community Peace and Safety Team

CRS – Catholic Relief Services

DRC-DDG – Danish Refugee Council-Danish Demining Group

DSC – District Security Committee

DRS – (Refugee) Dispute Resolution Systems

GoSS – Government of South Sudan

GoU – Government of Uganda

ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross

IDP – Internally Displaced Person

IOM – International Organization for Migration

IP – Implementing Partner

IRRI – International Refugee Rights Initiative

LC (I-V) – Local Council (I-V)

LRA – Lord's Resistance Army

LWF – Lutheran World Federation

MSF-F – *Médecins Sans Frontières*-France (Doctors Without Borders-France)

NFI – Non-Food Item

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

OAU – Organization of African Unity

OPM – Office of the Prime Minister (GoU)

PSN – Person with Specific Needs

PWG – Protection Working Group

RC – Reception Center

RDC – Resident District Commissioner

RHA – Refugee Hosting Area

RLP – Refugee Law Project

RS – Refugee Settlement

SGBV – Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SPLM/A – Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army

TC – Transit Camp

UN – United Nations

UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNMISS – United Nations Mission in South Sudan

URCS – Uganda Red Cross Society

WASH – Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

WCC – War Child Canada

WFP – UN World Food Programme

Maps

Source: Agency for International Development (United States), May 2, 2014.
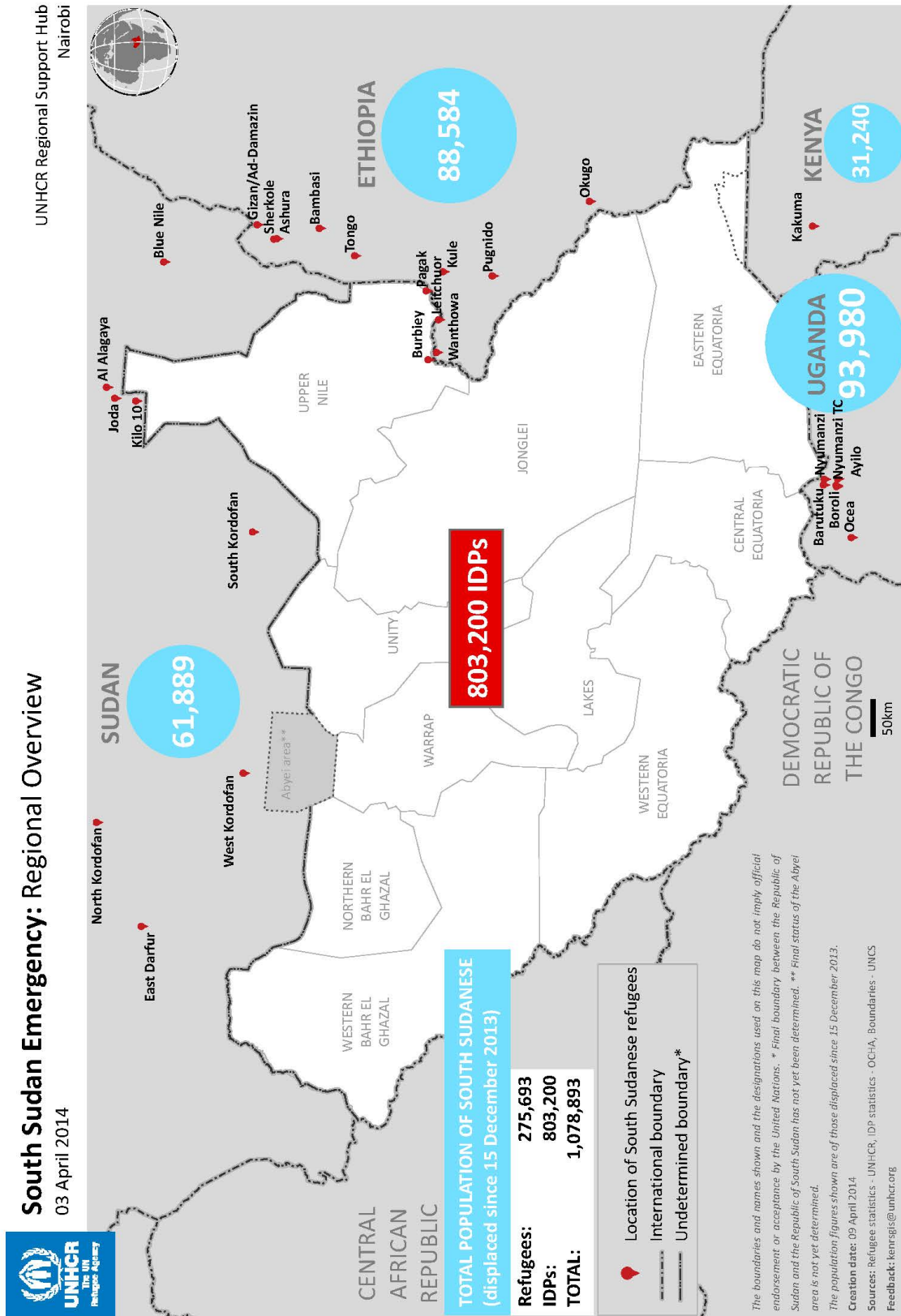
Source: UNHCR, April 3, 2014.

Abstract

Between mid-December 2013 and early May 2014, more than 71,000 refugees fleeing violence in South Sudan sought refuge in Adjumani District in northern Uganda. This major influx has challenged the capabilities of the Ugandan government, the international community, and humanitarian actors to provide for the basic human needs and security of these refugees. The complex ethnic dimensions of the conflict in South Sudan uniquely influenced this refugee influx, with ethnic tensions playing a significant role in the physical security of South Sudanese refugees in transit camps and settlements in Uganda. Through research in refugee hosting areas (RHAs) in Adjumani District, this study assesses the security challenges faced by South Sudanese refugees in Uganda to better understand the security effects of international forced migration induced by ethnic conflict.

During four weeks of fieldwork in April and May 2014, data was collected through interviews with government officials, aid staff, and refugees, meetings of refugee protection stakeholders, observation of Peace Prayers, a perceptions questionnaire administered to adult refugees, and a month-long internship with the Catholic Relief Services (CRS)/Caritas team implementing assistance programs at Ayilo Refugee Settlement. This research found that: (1) ethnic zoning policies have a significant effect on refugee security in northern Uganda and opportunities for peace building; (2) the unique role of the Ugandan host community in settling refugees causes significant tensions and risks of conflict; (3) refugees face additional security risks from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), crime within RHAs, potential forcible military recruitment, and tensions between refugees and aid workers over aid distribution; and, (4) current approaches to conflict mitigation and peace building by the Government of Uganda (GoU) and its partners are limited and inconsistent with the international legal obligation to protect refugees from security threats.

The Security of South Sudanese Refugees in Uganda:

Assessing the Physical Security Implications of Ethnic Conflict-Induced Displacement

Chapter 1: Introduction

The concept of "fear" in the 1951 Refugee Convention's definition of a refugee highlights the necessity of safety and security[1] in refugee hosting areas[2] (RHAs). As the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) states, "If other countries do not let [refugees] in, and do not help them once they are in, then they may be condemning them to death—or to an intolerable life in the shadows, without sustenance and without rights" (UNHCR, n.d., para. 5). A lack of security in RHAs, however, may defeat the purpose of granting admission and assistance to refugees. While many refugees claim that they feel safer in camps than in the midst of war where living another day can be an accomplishment, refugees around the world face an unacceptable level of violence, crime, sexual and gender-based abuse, and fear in so-called places of refuge.

Although the recent emergency arising from the conflict in South Sudan poses innumerable challenges for host governments and aid agencies responding to the regional refugee influx, it provides an opportunity for a careful approach to ensuring the security of these refugees and to promoting peace and reconciliation with long-term effects for South Sudan and host communities. The complex ethnic dimensions of the conflict in South Sudan uniquely contributed to the refugee influx, with ethnic tensions playing a significant role in the physical security of the refugee community. Through research on the security challenges faced by South Sudanese refugees in Adjumani District in northern Uganda, this study seeks to better understand the security effects of international forced migration, in particular when driven by ethnic conflict.

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[1] The term *security* is defined for this study as the human right to *physical* security, which according to international conventions includes "the right to life, the right to integrity of person, the right to security of person, the right to protection from physical violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as the prohibition of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Halperin, 2003, p. 4-5). This study does not discuss human security as a whole, a broader paradigm encompassing economic security, food security, health security, et cetera.

[2] For the purposes of this study, RHAs include all areas in Adjumani District in which refugees are officially living temporarily or semi-permanently: transit camps, reception centers, and refugee settlements.

The study also examined government and non-governmental organization (NGO) initiatives as of April/May 2014 to promote security and peace building as these relate to the refugee emergency in Adjumani District, providing a critical analysis of the Government of Uganda's (GoU) ability to uphold its international legal obligation to provide for the physical security of refugees in northern Uganda.

Chapter 2: Background and Literature Review

2.1   Conflict in South Sudan

South Sudan, the youngest nation in the world since its independence in 2011, has suffered from decades of conflict. Sudan's civil war from 1983 to 2005 has been characterized as a north-south conflict that led to South Sudan's independence, but this simple narrative ignores the infighting within southern rebel leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in the 1990s that caused struggles for power along ethnic lines (Blanchard, 2014, p. 2). Although SPLM leaders set aside their differences to unite in the movement for independence in the early 2000s, ethnic tensions and interpersonal rivalries continued after independence (Blanchard, 2014, p. 3). An article published by Chatham House stressed that the "dynamics of the leadership struggle between President Salva Kiir, a Dinka, and former vice president Riek Macher, a Nuer, colours politics throughout the country, illustrating the prevalence of political tribalism at the highest office" (Bryce, 2013, para. 2). The author also warned that this tribalism "could also create a refugee dilemma for the country's neighbours" (Bryce, 2013, para. 1), a prediction that became reality perhaps sooner than expected.

The two largest ethnic groups in South Sudan are the Dinka and the Nuer. The nation's largest tribe, the Dinka, is perceived both internally and externally as the most politically powerful ethnic group (Makerere University lecturer, personal communication, March 7, 2014). This pastoral group of cattle herdsmen rose to prominence in national politics through the legacy of John Garang, a Dinka and the first leader of the SPLM (Makerere University lecturer, personal communication, March 7, 2014). The Nuer tribe is another Nilotic tribe and the second largest ethnic group in South Sudan. Although a number of Nuer and other non-Dinka Nilotes from smaller tribes can be found in the political and military ranks of the SPLM, many non-Dinka Nilotes have expressed resentment toward the Dinka that they perceive as dominating national politics (Makerere University lecturer, personal communication, March 7, 2014).

In December 2013, a violent conflict erupted in South Sudan only three years after the country gained its independence. Although this recent outbreak of violence was initially triggered by political tensions between government forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and forces loyal to former Vice President Riek Machar, it rapidly evolved into a larger conflict highlighting ethnic tensions in South Sudan between the Dinka, Nuer, and other tribes. In

December, an article published by African Arguments effectively summarized the complex nature of ethnicity in the early stages of the conflict:

> [B]y accusing the respective antagonists of inciting or committing ethnic violence, ethnicity informs current strategies of violence in a much more subtle manner. Through the construction of an existential threat identified in the antagonists malevolent 'tribalism,' both factions aim not only to mobilise for conflict within their own constituencies, but to legitimise the use of force vis-a-vis an international audience, increasingly worried about the possible consequences of ethnic conflict in South Sudan. (Hirblinger and de Simone, 2013, para. 15).

After December—once constituencies had been mobilized—the conflict in South Sudan took on a much more visible ethnic dimension. In February, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) estimated the number killed thus far as "likely in the thousands" and reported that civilians were "deliberately targeted along ethnic lines" (Human Rights Division, UNMISS, 2014). In April, UNMISS reported that "when SPLA in Opposition forces [AGF] captured Bentiu on 15 and 16 April, they searched a number of places where hundreds of South Sudanese and foreign civilians had taken refuge and killed hundreds of the civilians after determining their ethnicity or nationality" (UNMISS, 2014, para. 2). The term *ethnic conflict*, which describes "episodes of sustained violent conflict in which national, ethnic, religious or other communal minorities challenge governments to seek major changes in their status" (Bates et al., 2003), has been overused when explaining African conflicts and is often abused by the media to simplify and sensationalize conflict, but in the current case of South Sudan, to claim that the conflict remains a political one simply ignores the facts. The Government of South Sudan (GoSS) has repeatedly denied since the beginning of the conflict that this is an ethnic conflict (Sirri, 2014), but all the refugees interviewed for this research explained the conflict in South Sudan as a political one turned ethnic.

2.2   Current Refugee Emergency in Northern Uganda

A refugee emergency is defined by UNHCR as "any situation in which the life or well-being of refugees will be threatened unless immediate and appropriate action is taken, and which demands an extraordinary response and exceptional measures" (UNHCR, 2007, p. 4). The violence in South Sudan thus far has created a significant refugee emergency regionally,

requiring an extraordinary response from UNHCR and its partners. The conflict has caused major and relatively sudden refugee influxes into neighboring states, in particular Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda, with the latter receiving the greatest number of South Sudanese refugees according to UNHCR (UNHCR Regional Bureau for Africa, 2014). As of May 8, 2014, UNHCR reported having registered or identified as awaiting registration 436,406 refugees from South Sudan in neighboring countries (UNHCR, 2014b).

Due to major clashes in Juba and Bor (major towns in South Sudan with Juba being the country's capital), 119,787 refugees entered Uganda from South Sudan between December 15, 2013 and April 8, 2014, and approximately two hundred refugees continued to enter Uganda daily in mid-April (UNHCR official, personal communication, April 15, 2014; OPM official, personal communication, April 17, 2014). Refugees arriving in Uganda from South Sudan are given *prima facie* refugee status[3] and are received at one of three reception centers; Elegu Collection Point, located at the Nimule border crossing in Amuru District in the northern region of Uganda, serves as the main entry point to Uganda, having registered 21,659 of the 27,870 refugees from South Sudan by January 12, 2014 (Refugee Law Project [RLP], 2014, p. 3-4). New arrivals are comprised of 86 percent women and children, as many men often accompany their families to the border and then return home to fight in the war (UNHCR official, personal communication, April 15, 2013). Refugees arriving through Elegu are then transported by OPM or UNHCR to a reception center (RC) or transit camp (TC) in Adjumani District (typically Nyumanzi RC or Dzaipi RC) where they undergo biometric registration, receive hot meals, and have access to medical care as they wait to be allocated a plot in one of the 13+ refugee settlements in the region, a process that has been taking as long as one month due to the shortage of land[4] and a continuing inflow of refugees (OPM official, personal communication, April 17, 2014).

Although UNHCR planning figures for South Sudanese refugees in Uganda were revised in March to prepare for 100,000 refugees after new arrivals in Uganda surpassed the 60,000-

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[3] Given the size of the influx and the GoU's resultant inability to review all asylum cases in a timely manner, OPM declared that all persons arriving to Uganda from South Sudan would be granted refugee status on a *prima facie* basis (OPM official, personal communication, April 17, 2014). This ensures that these individuals receive protection and assistance without the need for individual status determination since the cause of the refugee influx is well known and apparent.
[4] This is further discussed in Section 5.2 Ugandan Settlement Policy and its Effect on Host Community-Refugee Relations.

refugee planning figure, a UNHCR representative told the researcher they now predict double or triple the amount of refugees currently in Adjumani District to arrive by the end of the year, placing tremendous pressure on current capabilities and funding (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Yet, the refugee situation remains completely dependent on the violence in South Sudan. On May 6, 2014, the last day of fieldwork for this study, the UNHCR office in Adjumani announced that it had only received an average of 100-150 new arrivals per day in the past week and would no longer consider the current response to be in an emergency phase, allowing for a more concentrated focus on quality service delivery, psychosocial support, and livelihood development (UNHCR official, personal communication, May 6, 2014). This announcement was an encouraging one for better care and protection for the refugees in Adjumani District, but could easily be reversed at any moment with a change in the situation in South Sudan and a resulting increase in the refugee influx.

2.3   History of Refugees in Uganda and Adjumani District

Uganda's experience welcoming refugees dates back to World War II when it first provided refuge to Polish nationals fleeing violence in Europe in 1942 (OPM, n.d., p. 1). Various independence struggles and civil wars in neighboring countries have since made Uganda an epicenter for displaced individuals in one of the world's most volatile regions. Since it first began welcoming refugees, Uganda has served as a temporary home for thousands of displaced persons—most typically fleeing from conflict, political violence, or human rights abuses—from Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, and Burundi (OPM, n.d., p. 3). The influx of close to 300,000 refugees from Sudan in the 1990s created one of the most significant refugee emergencies in Uganda's history and placed the northern region of the country, including Adjumani District, at the forefront of the issue (Hovil, 2001, p. 4).

Adjumani District's experience with large refugee influxes began in 1989 when the SPLA attacked Nimule, a border town adjacent to the current entry point at Elegu, and thousands of Sudanese fled to Uganda. From 1989, the situation in southern Sudan escalated and a massive refugee influx similar to the current emergency ensued, causing more than 120,000 Sudanese refugees to cross into Adjumani District (senior OPM official, personal communication, May 2, 2014). While Adjumani District is thus well experienced with addressing refugee crises, the

context of the current situation brought unexpected security challenges according to a local government official: "The refugees we hosted before were very different. They were not aggressive or violent" (personal communication, May 2, 2014). The ethnic tensions that play such a significant role in the security situation today were not as prevalent in the previous refugee emergency in Adjumani when refugees faced mainly external threats of attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and forced recruitment by the SPLA (Hovil, 2001). The repatriation of refugees back to Sudan lasted from 2006 to 2010 and—combined with the effective end of the insurgency in northern Uganda—brought some normalcy back to Adjumani District; an OPM official who participated in the repatriation of refugees to Sudan noted, "Never did we think things would change so quickly in December 2013" (personal communication, May 2, 2014).

2.4   Refugee Security and International/National Law

A refugee and his or her rights are defined in international law by the 1951 *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*, and, since 1969, refugees in Africa are also protected by an expanded definition established by the Organization of African Unity's (OAU) *Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa*. These two international agreements (of which Uganda is a party) provide the most comprehensive and universally accepted legal basis for the rights of refugees in Uganda. For the present study, identifying who is responsible for protecting the refugees' right to physical security is essential. According to the UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies, "Under refugee and human rights law, a host state is obliged to ensure the physical protection of those who reside within its borders, including refugees" (2007, p. 32). This international legal obligation as it applies to refugee crises in Africa in particular was affirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 1208 (1998), UN General Assembly Resolution 39/140 (1984), and various conclusions presented by the UNHCR Executive Committee in recent decades.

In Uganda, refugee rights are determined by the Refugees Act of 2006, which builds upon the GoU's legal obligations under international agreements (including the 1951 Refugee Convention). While *prima facie* refugee status may limit refugee rights in some states, Uganda recognizes that asylum seekers who have been granted refugee status per a *prima facie* declaration "shall be subject to the general treatment and rights accorded to refugees under [the

Refugees] Act" (GoU, 2006, Article 25[3]). The Act acknowledges that all refugees permitted to be in Uganda receive the same constitutional protections typically accorded to Ugandan aliens (GoU, 2006, Article 29[1]e). However, the Act also establishes the obligation of all refugees to "be bound by and conform to all laws and regulations currently in force in Uganda" and to "not engage in activities which may endanger state security, harm public interests or disrupt public order," stressing the collaborative responsibilities for both the state and the refugees in ensuring the refugees' physical security (GoU, 2006, Article 35).

2.5   Literature Review

Forced migration is not new; it is a phenomenon that has challenged the international community throughout history. However, it was only formally defined and recognized in the 1950s with the current regime of refugee protection. Since then, numerous studies have been conducted to research the way refugees are protected from threats to their physical security in various conflicts and emergencies throughout the world. While the protection of refugees has been well studied, this issue continues to evolve with changes in modern warfare, various cultural contexts, and the evolution of response mechanisms. The following section will review—in an abridged manner—the current literature focusing on refugee protection in regards to physical security, the issue of ethnic tensions in RHAs, and the current conflict in South Sudan and the ensuing refugee influx in northern Uganda.

2.5.1   *Refugee Protection and Physical Security in Africa*

One of the most relevant pieces of literature to this present study was a thesis written in 2009 by a student at the University of Oslo who analyzed the physical security of refugees in Uganda in relation to the state's legal responsibility of refugee protection (Alupo). The highly legalistic paper assessed the security challenges facing refugees in settlements in Uganda and how the GoU addressed these challenges. The study concluded that refugees "are in the most unstable regions of the country and live in a state of constant fear due to inadequacy of protection within the settlements," calling for amending Ugandan laws to better protect refugees (Alupo, 2009, p. 57). While the study thoroughly examined the legal basis for refugee protection, its analysis of security threats in Ugandan refugee settlements was limited and generalized. Albeit a bit dated, another study that focused on refugee security in Uganda was the Refugee Law Project's 2001 paper on "Refugees and the Security Situation in Adjumani" (Hovil). This

paper presented a similar study to this present one, assessing the security threats faced by Sudanese refugees in Adjumani District. While the objectives were similar, the findings (that refugees lived in constant fear of attacks by Joseph Kony's LRA and of SPLA recruitment) were drastically different given the context of the previous refugee influx. Nonetheless, it provides a useful history of the refugee situation in Uganda and conveys how threats to the physical security of refugees can vary widely based on the causal conflict. It also highlighted an important finding very similar to one discussed in this present study (see Section 5.4): GoU was not providing adequate security forces to protect the refugee population (Hovil, 2001, p. 8-9)

     While the physical security of refugees in Uganda has not been widely studied, similar studies to this present one have been conducted in other contexts in Africa and in Kenya in particular. In 2000, UNHCR's Jeff Crisp published the most authoritative study on the issue, providing an analysis of forms and sources of violence in refugee camps in northeastern Kenya. His study addressed domestic and community violence, SGBV, robbery, tribal clashes, and violence targeting the host community. Although Crisp was studying a very insecure environment (compared to the relatively secure situation in Adjumani District), his findings on ethnic violence involving Dinka and Nuer refugees and on the need for UNHCR capacity-building support to the local police force strongly relate to the present study. Additionally, Crisp's discussion of ways to address host community tensions through a firewood delivery program and peace building needs through education and recreation help shaped the recommendations presented in this present study (Section 6.2). Similar studies of the physical security of refugees in Kenya were also published by a Tufts University graduate student who examined the issue in the context of human rights law (Halperin, 2003) and by Kenyan academics that examined how insecurity in refugee camps impacted Kenya's national security (Kirui and Mwaruvie, 2012).

     Finally, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre published another pertinent study in 2005 discussing the physical security of refugees in similar situations in West Africa (Opaye). This paper stressed the fact that this issue does not only occur in East Africa, and upholding law and order and the security of refugees are universal challenges for those responding to refugee crises. Its methods of addressing insecurity and ensuring a capable local police force also contributed to the recommendations provided in the conclusion of this present study.

2.5.2   Ethnic Tensions in Refugee Hosting Areas

Notwithstanding the long history of both refugee movements and ethnic conflict around the world, only a few studies have been conducted on ethnic tensions in RHAs. In 1999, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology published a paper on the physical security of refugees (Jacobsen). The study found that in RHAs in Africa and Asia, ethnic tensions between refugees was linked to "poor organization or management of camps; ineffective policing by host authorities; [and] refugees and/or locals [being] dissatisfied or resentful about camp conditions" (Jacobsen, 1999, table 1). The study noted one instance of ethnic zoning (the separation of refugees into separate RHAs based on their ethnicity) when it was used in Ethiopia in 1997 to divide Sudanese refugees along ethnic lines to avoid hostilities (Jacobsen, 1999, table 1.I), but the paper failed to describe the effectiveness or consequences of this policy. More recently, a study published by the George Washington University International Affairs Review (Pini, 2010) discussed the rise of political violence within refugee communities in Africa. The author noted the risk of ethnic tensions amongst refugees as a potential factor of instability in host countries. Importantly, he stressed, "In and of itself, ethnicity does not breed violence. However, when ethnicity becomes politicized, it can lead to political violence" (Pini, 2010, para. 14). The author also described the situation in northern Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp as an example of ethnic volatility and violence resulting from "interethnic competition for camp resources" (Pini, 2010, para. 18). However, this study also failed to describe ethnic zoning policies and their effect on refugee security, stressing the need for a deeper study into the practice of responding to ethnic tensions in refugee populations with segregation.

2.5.3   Current Conflict in South Sudan & Refugee Influx in Northern Uganda

Minimal research has been conducted on the most recent South Sudanese conflict, its effect on refugee movements, or on the implications of ethnic zoning in refugee settlements. In addition to publishing a Rapid Assessment Brief in January 2014, RLP conducted an unpublished study in 2012 on the impact of South Sudanese refugees on northern Uganda. The U.S. Congressional Research Service also published a brief paper on the most recent violence in South Sudan, but few other research groups have had the opportunity to conduct research on the cause of the recent refugee influx (Blanchard, 2014). Media reporting of the refugee influx from South Sudan has generally been published by the online news service of the UN regional information network (IRIN), BBC News, and the Uganda-based Daily Monitor and Uganda

Radio Network. While ethnic zoning of refugees has not been a major subject of academic research, the issue arose in numerous international media reports in January, drawing a response from the UN peacekeeping office in New York claiming such measures had been taken at the request of those seeking refuge (Leithead, 2014; Sengupta, & Mackey, 2014; Batre, 2014). The controversy surrounding ethnic zoning raised the issue of how refugee security is particularly affected in the context of the current South Sudanese conflict. At the time when this paper was written, only two studies had been published online regarding the refugee emergency in northern Uganda: RLP's January 2014 Rapid Assessment Brief and a study conducted in Adjumani District in February 2014 by the International Refugee Rights Initiative, which focused primarily on the conflict in South Sudan as perceived by the refugee population in Adjumani (Hovil).

Chapter 3: Objectives

3.1   Statement of Objectives

1) Examine the relation between ethnic conflict and ethnic zoning policies in regards to refugee security in northern Uganda;

2) Analyze the implications of Uganda's settlement policy on the relationship between the South Sudanese refugees and the host community;

3) Assess the additional security risks that South Sudanese refugees face in Adjumani District; and,

4) Examine approaches used by government officials, aid agencies, and refugee leaders to address the identified security challenges and promote peace building.

3.2   Justification and Rationale

Since the outbreak of the South Sudanese conflict in mid-December 2013, and associated continuous cross border movement and influx into Uganda, the physical security of refugees has been the primary concern for the GoU and aid agencies. Yet, given the emergency, limited research has been conducted to assess the physical security concerns faced by this refugee population and the current peace building programs. This study focused on assessing the risks and mitigating programs resulting from the refugee influx in northern Uganda to inform the key stakeholders (GoU, UNHCR, and their partners) involved in addressing the refugee situation.

Moreover, this case study presents an opportunity to understand the unique ways in which refugee security can be affected when displacement is induced by ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflicts have been a major driver of refugee movements since the end of the Cold War. This has been the case for conflict-induced displacement from Iraq, Rwanda, the Balkans, and Burma in recent years. As this trend continues, an understanding of refugee security resulting from ethnic conflict-induced displacement is valuable in shaping responses and ensuring the protection of refugees in armed conflict.

Chapter 4: Methods

4.1 Methods

This study was conducted in Adjumani, a district in northern Uganda bordering South Sudan, during a four-week period of fieldwork in April/May 2014. The researcher was embedded as an intern with the Catholic Relief Services (CRS)/Caritas team implementing water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and protection programs under OPM and UNHCR leadership in Ayilo Refugee Settlement (Ayilo RS). The internship facilitated transportation and access to RHAs and gave the researcher access to a number of relevant meetings while allowing for participant observation, in particular observing relations between refugees and aid agencies. Due to time, transportation, and safety constraints, data was principally collected in Adjumani town, Pakelle town, Ayilo RS, and Baratuku Refugee Settlement (Baratuku RS). The 132 study participants were all adults, defined by Ugandan law on the age of majority as individuals who are 18 years old or older (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2004, p. 31).

4.1.1 Interviews

Qualitative interviews served as the primary source of information for this study. In total, 32 interviews were conducted with refugees, government and police officials, UN officials, aid workers, and local elders. Each interview ranged from twenty minutes to an hour in duration. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, allowing for in-depth discussions of the participants' views and experiences. Interviews with refugees were informal and conducted in the refugee settlements, often under a tree and in secluded areas to allow for privacy when possible. Refugees were selected for participation through random systematic walks through the settlement. Verbal informed consent was obtained from all refugee participants and no identities were revealed in this report. Interviews with other participants (i.e. government officials, aid workers, elders) were formal and conducted in offices, hotels, or at the participant's home. These participants were selected based on their knowledge and expertise on various issues relevant to this study. Written informed consent was obtained for all formal interviews, although no names were disclosed in this study to allow for candid responses and to protect individuals involved in sensitive matters. The majority of the interviews were conducted in English to limit misunderstandings or issues in interpretation, but when participants were not comfortable with

English, an interpreter was used to translate the conversation from Dinka or Juba Arabic to English.

4.1.2 Meetings

The researcher also collected qualitative data at one Interagency Coordination Meeting hosted by OPM and four Protection Working Group (PWG) Meetings hosted by UNHCR. Each meeting lasted approximately three to four hours. All 14 accredited implementing partners (IPs), OPM, UNHCR, and representatives of the Adjumani District Local Government (ADLG) and District Police Commissioner (DPC) attended the Interagency Coordination Meeting held at the beginning of April 2014. This meeting provided the researcher with a general update of the situation in Adjumani District, an understanding of the roles of the various actors involved in the intervention, and an introduction to some of the security challenges discussed in this study. Protection Working Group Meetings attended on a weekly basis provided an opportunity to observe IPs involved in protection (i.e. Uganda Red Cross Society [URCS], Oxfam, UN Population Fund [UNFPA], Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development [ACORD], Save the Children, *Médecins Sans Frontières*-France [MSF-F], CRS/Caritas, Danish Refugee Council-Danish Demining Group [DRC-DDG], War Child Canada [WCC], Lutheran World Federation [LWF], World Vision) discussing security issues and corresponding solutions for all settlements and the RC in Adjumani District as well as the border entry point with South Sudan (Elegu).

4.1.3 Survey

To gain a better understanding of refugee perceptions and to reach a greater number of refugees in this study, a questionnaire was used to survey one hundred adult refugees in Ayilo RS. An interpreter speaking English, Dinka, and Juba Arabic administered the questionnaire, which consisted of non-identifying demographic information and eight questions focusing on refugee security. The one hundred participants were adults selected at random during a systematic walkthrough of blocks within the operational area of CRS/Caritas in Ayilo RS. The participants ranged in age from 18 to 70 years (median age: 22 years; mean age: 27.53 years) and were both male (60 percent) and female (40 percent).[5] Given that all refugees allocated land in

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[5] Although the gender demographics of the survey participants are far from reflecting the real gender breakdown of adult (18+) refugees in Ayilo RS during the week that the survey was

Ayilo RS are ethnically Dinka, all participants identified as Dinka. The one hundred participants originated from Jonglei state in South Sudan (74 percent), but some also originated from the states of Central Equatoria (2 percent), Eastern Equatoria (2 percent), Upper Nile (22 percent), and Unity (1 percent). Of the refugees surveyed, 20 percent had previously been refugees prior to the current conflict in South Sudan. Verbal informed consent was obtained and no names were recorded during data collection to protect the refugees' identities (fingerprinting was used for accountability purposes). While this method of data collection was limited in scope due to time and manpower and was unable to reach other ethnic groups for varied perspectives (on ethnic tensions in particular) due to location, it provided insight on perceived threats, perceptions of ethnic zoning policies, and popular sources of conflict mitigation assistance for the refugees.

4.1.4 Participant Observation

As the researcher was an intern with the CRS/Caritas team in Adjumani during the course of the fieldwork period of this study, participant observation played an important role in learning about the daily life and challenges of the refugees and in understanding the relationship between the refugee community and aid agencies. The researcher was involved in WASH programs (inspecting latrines and boreholes and distributing latrine construction materials) and in the mass distribution of non-food items (NFIs) to persons with specific needs (PSNs) in Ayilo RS. In addition, the researcher participated in staff meetings and meetings with refugees hired by CRS/Caritas as hygiene promoters (to discuss salary negotiations and hygiene sensitization activities). Participant observation provided the researcher with an opportunity to understand cultural differences and expectations between aid workers and refugees while also allowing the researcher to build rapport with participants in this study.

4.1.5 Peace Prayers

To observe current peace building efforts and to better understand refugee perceptions on ethnic and host community tensions, the researcher attended a day-long event of Peace Prayers funded by ACORD/Oxfam and organized by members of the Adjumani Disrict Elders Forum (ADEFO; a community-based organization composed of local elders and cultural leaders) in Baratuku RS. The Peace Prayers (discussed further in Section 5.4) were attended by approximately two hundred Dinka refugees, the Baratuku RS Settlement Commandant, religious

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administered (37.53 percent male and 62.47 percent female according to unpublished UNHCR statistics), male refugees invited to participate in the study were more likely to consent.

leaders from the refugee community, and elders and cultural leaders/clan chiefs from the host community (ADEFO members of the ACORD/Oxfam Peace Team). The event discussed the violence in South Sudan, the need for unity amongst South Sudanese refugees of different ethnicities, and the relationship between refugees and the host community.

4.1.6   Secondary Sources

While published secondary sources were very limited due to the recentness of the situation (as discussed in Section 2.5.3), the researcher also collected data from a number of unpublished internal reports provided by UNHCR and NGOs during the period of fieldwork. These were used to gain background on the situation, to understand which organizations were addressing which issues, and to review weekly updates on refugee arrivals and the demographic breakdown (i.e. ethnicity, age, gender) of refugees in Adjumani District. The researcher received permission to view and cite this unpublished data for this study.

4.2   Research Ethics and Limitations to the Study

4.2.1   Ethical Considerations

In undertaking this study, the researcher took into account the present emergency environment, the sensitivity of topics discussed (e.g. ethnic tensions, host community relations, SGBV, crime), and the vulnerability of refugees who participated in the research. To address these concerns, the study and data collection tools were reviewed by a Local Review Board of SIT Study Abroad in Gulu, Uganda in accordance with U.S. federal policy for the protection of human subjects, by OPM's head office in Kampala, and by the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology. Local officials and aid staff were also frequently consulted on ethical considerations and cultural norms during the study's duration. Given the vulnerability of the study community, the researcher also obtained permission from the local OPM authorities to conduct research in the RHAs in Adjumani District. The researcher entered the community as an intern with the CRS/Caritas team, which assisted with participant and interpreter identification.

Throughout the fieldwork, informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to any participation in interviews or questionnaires. Written consent was obtained from government officials, representatives of aid agencies, and local community leaders, but the researcher resorted to verbal consent with refugee participants to fully ensure anonymity given the vulnerability of this group. All study participants were informed that their names would not be

included in the study (regardless of whether or not they gave permission to be identified by name) and that only non-unique identifiers (age, ethnicity, gender, nationality, and occupation/affiliation) would be recorded with their responses.

In line with OPM regulations, no voice, video, or photo recordings were made of the participants during the study. Moreover, all participation was voluntary and could be terminated without cause at the participant or researcher's discretion. The researcher also valued the importance of rapport building in conducting ethical research and paid particular attention to the participant's comfort during his or her participation.

Interviews were generally conducted in English or with an interpreter who was fluent in English, Dinka, and Juba Arabic based on the participant's language abilities and comfort. The interpreter was compensated at a rate approved by CRS/Caritas in line with the organization's practices. Ethical considerations of this study and the voluntariness, anonymity, and confidentiality of participation were discussed with the interpreter before his involvement in data collection. Finally, participants were not given any incentive or compensation for their participation in this study.

The most significant ethical dilemma arose in the researcher's role as an actor in the humanitarian operation. The "do no harm" (*primun non nocere*) approach to research is especially important given the humanitarian context of the present study. A UNHCR official once challenged the researcher for not reporting specific vulnerable individuals identified through interviews with refugees. To protect the anonymity of the study participants and encourage candor, the researcher elected not to record individual names, which then made the reporting of specific cases impossible and would have contradicted the agreement made between the researcher and the participant in the process of obtaining informed consent. The researcher concluded that the most ethical procedure would be to share these non-attributable findings— including concerns that are irrelevant to this present study—with the appropriate authorities with the hope that although specific cases would not necessarily be addressed, these would affect the way the authorities respond to the refugees' needs as a whole.

4.2.2   *Limitations to the Study*

The current situation in Adjumani District greatly complicated the study's feasibility and, as such, this study should not be viewed as a comprehensive assessment of all the security challenges facing South Sudanese refugees in northern Uganda. Most importantly, this study is

limited by the rapidly changing situation both in South Sudan and in the resulting flow of refugees into Adjumani District; it should be noted that this study presents a *snapshot* view of the situation as it was in April and early May 2014. As the researcher was one of the first foreign researchers to arrive in the region since the start of the 2013-2014 refugee influx and local authorities remained focused on addressing this emergency, independent academic research by a foreign student would have been quasi-impossible without being embedded with an aid agency due to safety, logistical, and ethical concerns. Being embedded with the CRS/Caritas team provided the researcher with unfettered access to some refugee settlements, access to humanitarian coordination meetings, and credibility in the eyes of both refugees and local officials. Yet, this lack of complete independence may have also prevented some participants from being fully honest—in particular with refugees when discussing tensions between refugees and aid workers or if they believed certain responses might influence the aid they receive from CRS/Caritas. Language barriers (slightly mitigated through the use of an interpreter), limited transportation (mitigated by various agencies who assisted the researcher with transportation to research sites when possible), and time constraints also limited this study's reach and depth. The researcher was only able to speak with one non-Dinka refugee given the lack of transportation (or time to arrange suitable transportation) to the settlements where they were allocated land. Nonetheless, this four-week study served as an important opportunity to begin understanding the security implications of ethnic-induced displacement and calls upon further research on the issue.

Chapter 5: Findings & Analysis

5.1   Ethnic Tensions and Ethnic Zoning

Given the ethnic conflict context in which the refugee population from South Sudan was displaced, ethnic tensions can be a significant threat to the security of these refugees if they are brought with the displaced population and not addressed.[6] The failure to effectively address ethnic tensions within this large refugee population could cause future clashes affecting the Ugandan host community or could foster conditions allowing for a resurgence of conflict in South Sudan after the repatriation of these refugees. As such, this study found that the segregation of refugees by ethnicity may become a means rather than an end to further ethnic violence if not coupled with meaningful peace building programs and a gradual shift towards inter-ethnic integration in the operation's post-emergency phase. This section will identify the issue of ethnic tensions in the RHAs through the lenses of inter-tribal perceptions and issues with cohabitation and the sharing of resources. It will then define ethnic zoning and discuss its effect on peace building and reconciliation.

5.1.1   Indicators of Ethnic Tensions

A senior OPM official stated, "Ethnic tensions are inevitable. From Day One, we knew that issue would erupt. We sensitized them that we were welcoming them as refugees regardless of their ethnic identity" (personal communication, May 2, 2014). Yet, sensitization was not enough to prevent violence. In January 2014, media reports began commenting on rising tensions and acts of violence (including some stabbings) between Dinka and non-Dinka in Elegu and at the now-closed Dzaipi TC in Adjumani District (Owich & Makumbi, 2014). A member of UNHCR's Protection Unit in Adjumani noted, "We witnessed that hatred between Dinka and non-Dinka refugees was very high, so we had to sensitize the community to not bring the conflict onto Ugandan territory" (personal communication, April 17, 2014). While the Uganda Police

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[6] A discussion of ethnic tensions without statistics—such as the one found in various media reports on the subject—may imply that the refugees who have arrived in Adjumani District since mid-December 2013 are largely split evenly along Dinka-Nuer lines, but unpublished registration statistics provided by UNHCR during the course of this research state otherwise. As of April 15, 2014, there were 60,248 Dinka refugees and only 282 Nuer refugees in Adjumani District (UNHCR, personal communication, April 15, 2014). The other most prominent ethnic groups according to the same report were Madi (3,990 refugees), Bari (1,903 refugees), Kuku (1,268 refugees), and Murle (782 refugees).

responded with community-policing efforts to pacify ethnic tensions (further discussed in Section 4.4) and limit violence, the tensions complicated aid distribution and threatened the security of the refugees. Sensationalist stories in the media may have portrayed the tensions as more open and violent that they were; while in reality, the tensions had deeper, less obvious effects. According to the same UNHCR official, "Ethnic conflict was present at Dzaipi and I know that it continues to be present today. It's not like somebody is going around looking for Dinka or Nuer, but any small conflict—even between small children—can easily turn into a bigger one and bring up ethnic tensions" (personal communication, April 17, 2014).

This is exemplified in an incident in mixed-tribe Boroli RS that occurred during the fieldwork period of this study. While most ethnic tensions are described as involving Dinka and Nuer refugees (reflecting the simplified ethnic divisions of the current conflict in South Sudan), a riot occurred requiring police intervention with tear gas due to fighting between Murle refugees versus non-Murle refugees and the Madi host community. According to local elders and members of the District Security Committee (DSC) interviewed after the incident, a Murle refugee and a Madi national began fighting over soccer teams in a communal video hall within Boroli RS. The "gang culture" of fighting in Murle society and previous quarrels over shared resources in the settlement caused a riot in the camp between Murle and non-Murle (mostly Madi) refugees and nationals (ADLG Staff, personal communication, April 30, 2014; Madi Cultural Leader, personal communication, May 1, 2014; Senior ADLG Official, personal communication, May 2, 2014). Many people were seriously injured (assaulted with sticks and clubs and stabbed with knives and other objects) and a refugee was killed in the fighting (local cultural leader, personal communication, May 1, 2014). A member of the ACORD/Oxfam Peace Team who responded to the incident as it was occurring said, "Most of the victims were innocent refugees who were not involved in the original clash and who did not even know why people were fighting. It is very sad because when you look at the cause of the violence, you find such trivial matters, but they become much bigger because of the tribal tensions" (personal communication, May 1, 2014). Recent incidents such as the one described indicate the presence of ethnic tensions and the resulting threat to the physical security of refugees when these tensions are aggravated—even by petty arguments—and bring about episodes of violence.

5.1.2   Drivers of Ethnic Tensions

Inter-tribal perceptions and fears serve as an important driver of tensions. According to an ADEFO representative, "Ethnicity is very strong in South Sudan and we discovered that there were three very hostile tribes there: the Dinka, Nuer, and Murle" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Aid workers and local government officials who participated in this study commonly mentioned the perception—both within the displaced community and within the host community—of these three tribes being very "hostile." This perceived hostility combined with conflict-bred ethnic hatred and the fact that a number of refugees attribute their situation to violence by rival tribes in South Sudan increases the tensions and complicates cohabitation. One aid worker remembered a Dinka refugee telling him "it is easier to live with a snake in your hut than a Nuer in your camp" (personal communication, February 27, 2014). Refugee participants noted that this ethnic hatred became much more apparent after the resurgence of conflict in South Sudan as Dinka and Nuer expressed animosity based on being warring parties in the conflict or as other ethnic groups blamed the Dinka or Nuer for their forced displacement. They stressed that ethnic conflict was not the cause of the war in South Sudan, but that by employing ethnicity as a means of mobilizing supporters, leaders in both the SPLA and AGF fostered a sense of fear and hatred between the various ethnic groups.

Moreover, the inter-ethnic sharing of scarce resources and cohabitation in certain RHAs contributed to tensions that threaten security, especially for refugees who were allocated land in mixed-tribe settlements. Dominant ethnic groups of refugees used ethnicity as an excuse to marginalize others in the competition for limited resources. For example, a member of the ACORD/Oxfam Peace Team cited an observation he made in Boroli RS where Murle refugees had written a message on a borehole indicating that it should only be used by Murle, causing anger and confusion within the Madi refugee population living with Murle refugees near that borehole (personal communication, May 1, 2014). Seemingly petty arguments like this one could have significant consequences in a humanitarian emergency by exacerbating perceptions of hostility and ethnic hatred, indicating potential escalations into violence. This conflict over resources reflects some of the causes of violence in South Sudan where leaders are employing ethnicity as a tool of division in disputes over resources and land (Hovil, 2014, p. 4). Yet, ethnic conflict in Ugandan RHAs over limited resources is not entirely new. In 1990, Madi and Kuku refugees fought in refugee camps in Uganda over limited resources (Moro, 2004, p. 427). Violent

outbursts emerged from similarly petty quarrels at water points, for example, and grew as people from the two ethnic groups joined in on the fighting (Moro, 2004, p. 427).

In essence, ethnic tensions in the Ugandan RHAs indicate a continuation of the inter-tribal tensions and violence in South Sudan. While the tensions may not be inherent in the different ethnic groups, they have been constructed by leaders of the warring parties for their own gains and severely impacted the displaced population. As a result, while the refugees in Uganda are all fleeing the same source of violence, perceptions of whom to blame for their displacement and struggles over scarce resources drive ethnic divisions and increase risks of insecurity.

5.1.3   *Ethnic Zoning and its Implications on Conflict Prevention/Peace Building*

In response to ethnic tensions and violence within the refugee population, OPM and UNHCR jointly instituted a policy of *ethnic zoning*, defined for this study as the separation of refugees in settlements based on reported ethnicity. Refugees must report their ethnicity upon registration and are then resettled in ethnic zoned settlement camps.[7] Once they are registered and processed, refugees are then resettled on plots in settlements in Adjumani and Arua districts based on their ethnicity. Dinka refugees are placed in certain settlements such as Ayilo RS and Nyumanzi RS while Nuer and other refugees are placed in different settlements such as Boroli RS, a "mixed-tribe camp that does not include Dinka refugees" (OPM official, personal communication, April 17, 2014). According to a UNHCR official, "this is not something we forced onto them. They told us they wanted to be separated because they said it was too early to overcome the conflict that caused them to flee South Sudan" (personal communication, April 17, 2014). The refugees surveyed for this study largely agreed with this statement, with 96 percent strongly agreeing or agreeing with ethnic zoning policies.

While this physical separation may promote short-term security by preventing clashes like the one that occurred in Boroli RS, it can also prevent inter-tribal dialogue, cross-cultural understanding, and efforts at reconciliation. One member of ADEFO stated, "Some of us were against separating the ethnic communities because we thought they should learn to live together in peace. If we keep separating them, it means we are supporting the war in South Sudan to

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[7] According to one refugee who recently registered at Nyumanzi RC, he was asked for his ethnicity, but it was not printed on his registration card, eliminating fears of a recurrence of ethnic identity cards used during the Rwandan genocide (personal communication, April 7, 2014).

continue" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Though opposition to ethnic zoning was rare, some community members stressed the lack of opportunities refugees from various groups have to even "smile and greet each other" (local cultural leader, personal communication, May 1, 2014). A 2011 quantitative study found that ethnic segregation is significant in predicting the onset of civil war due to the physical separation between groups and the within-group proximity that encourages one collective mindset and facilitates mobilization (Daniels). These same predictors of civil war can be applied to future violence in the RHAs or to a future resurgence of conflict in South Sudan if ethnic zoning incubates ethnic hatred by facilitating the concept of cognitive proximity that helped leaders use ethnicity to breed conflict in South Sudan in the first place. Moreover, UNHCR's previous use of ethnic zoning as a reaction to Madi-Kuku fighting in 1990 led the settlements to "become the temporary territories of the separate ethnic groups" (Moro, 2004, p. 427). Ethnic zoning can serve as a means to ethnic conflict if dominant ethnic groups believe they own the settlement they live in and its facilities based on their understanding of the policy. These security risks caused by ethnic zoning led RLP to state in its January 2014 Rapid Assessment Brief that the "Zoning of ethnic communities at resettlement camps without any reconciliation initiatives is a recipe for future violence even within the settlement sites" (p. 9). An analysis of current peace building programs and how they are affected by ethnic zoning is presented in Section 5.4.

5.2   Ugandan Settlement Policy and its Effect on Host Community-Refugee Relations

Of the refugees surveyed during the course of this study, 79 percent claimed that violence and crime from the host community was their most significant security threat. Refugees shared anecdotes of relatives being assaulted when collecting firewood in the community, women being raped by Ugandan nationals, and a sense of fear to venture outside of the settlement. Moreover, a major riot in Boroli RS involving nationals and refugees that occurred during the course of this research and led to the death of a refugee highlight the tensions between refugees and the host community. This section aims to define the unique relationship between the South Sudanese refugees and the Ugandan host community arising from Uganda's settlement policy for refugees, to assess threats to the physical security of refugees stemming from that close relationship, and to understand what implications these tensions have on settlement opportunities for future arrivals given the expected rise in the refugee population in Adjumani District.

5.2.1   Ugandan Settlement Policy and Land Acquisition

Whereas refugee camps around the world are most often cramped and chaotic due to a lack of land or to the host government's unwillingness to use local resources to address refugee needs, refugees in Uganda face a very different experience that fosters much closer interaction— and with it potential conflict—between refugees and the host community. Refugee households in Adjumani District are allocated 30-meter by 50-meter plots of land to establish their new temporary homes in a refugee settlement (RS) on land donated by the local host community.[8] According to an OPM representative, "OPM has the responsibility of settling the refugees on plots without conflict to encourage self-reliance. We used to give fifty by fifty meters for residential plots, but because of the high numbers of refugees, we give thirty by fifty meter plots now" (personal communication, April 17, 2014). As most refugees in the region stay for years at a time while war continues back home, this allows for a gradual decrease of humanitarian assistance—especially food aid once refugees begin cultivating their land—and encourages refugees to not fall into the dependency trap found so frequently in other cases of displacement. UNHCR's country summary for Uganda notes, "Compared to camps, which are not found in Uganda, settlements such as the ones in Uganda provide greater livelihood opportunities for refugee families to achieve socio-economic security" (2014a, para. 5). Refugee self-reliance in the long run is thus made possible through Uganda's unique settlement policy and the generosity of the host community.

While Uganda's method of settling refugees appears ideal at first glance, the suddenness and size of the refugee influx in Adjumani complicates the task of acquiring land for these refugee settlements when the host community may be reticent to give up one of its most valuable resources. A senior local government official noted, "There are many issues with getting land for OPM because here in Adjumani, the government does not own any land that it could give to the refugees. The [1995] Constitution of Uganda [Article 237] gave the land to the people, so it is up to the people to give the land to the refugees, and that is with the understanding that the refugees will return the land to the host community when the war in South Sudan is over" (personal communication, May 2, 2014). However, this does not often create issues in obtaining land given

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[8] A UNHCR official interviewed for this study noted that this was the first time in his career that he had seen the host community donating land to refugees, noting that they were "actually quite nice and quite friendly" compared to other host communities he had interacted with (personal communication, April 17 2013).

the importance of hospitality in Ugandan culture and the frequency of refugee situations in the region. During an interagency coordination meeting hosted by OPM, a local government official explained that the host community was being very generous because: "We know land is valuable, but we give it freely because we know that someday we might be refugees ourselves" (personal communication, April 9, 2014).

Reciprocity and Uganda's famously hospitable culture surely play a distinct role in this manner of welcoming refugees, but these concepts do not fully eliminate tensions between the host community and refugees. Numerous individuals who participated in this study stressed the host community's need to benefit from their land contributions. In response to this need, the ADLG made an agreement with all participating aid agencies that 30 percent of all aid would be provided to the host community (LWF/WCC official, personal communication, April 23, 2014). As such, all organizations have been dedicating some of their resources to improving host community infrastructure, providing NFIs to nationals in need, and providing pro-bono legal services to host community members as well.

When compared to other situations around the world where refugees are most typically settled on government-owned land, Uganda's settlement policy creates a much closer relationship between the host and refugee communities. The host community's important stake in the refugee situation increases the likelihood of conflict. In the current emergency, negotiations for land donations are conducted through local elders and cultural leaders with the utmost care to prevent conflict between the host community and the refugees. A local clan chief explained that during the previous refugee influx, "the elders were not consulted on the land donations and this created challenges for the host community…Because of these issues, people were not at first willing to give land this time, so the elders had to convince the host community" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). This method of negotiating for land lessens the likelihood of conflict and allows the host community to voice their concerns with the authorities through the local leaders.

5.2.2 *Resulting Drivers of Host Community-Refugee Conflict*

Given the unique relationship between the host community and refugee communities described in the previous section, host community concerns of environmental degradation serve as a major source of tension between the two groups. According to Adrian Martin in his 2005 study on environmental conflict, this is not a new issue in RHAs in sub-Saharan Africa where

rapid population expansion and poverty, deforestation, water scarcity, soil erosion, et cetera have often led to conflict. Throughout this research, perceptions of environmental degradation were the most cited source of tensions between the host community and the refugees. A refugee living in Ayilo RS explained this issue: "One of my relatives was beaten by the host community for fetching wood to build his house. Another was beaten by the host community and is now in [the] MSF hospital. The [Settlement Commandant] tried to organize a meeting to promote dialogue, but it is not working" (personal communication, April 10, 2014). Refugees elected to manage the settlement responded that they have been meeting with the LC1 Chairman who then speaks with his constituents in the host community to quell tensions (settlement management official, personal communication, April 15, 2014). While these talks have been semi-successful given reduced incidents of violence between the host community and refugees around the settlements in recent weeks, officials interviewed throughout the course of this study attributed an increased difficulty in acquiring land donations from the host community to this concern of environmental degradation and resulting negative perceptions of the refugee population by the host community. Insecurity linked to collecting wood outside of the settlement was also observed in Kenya's Dadaab camp where 80 percent of rapes reported in 1998 and 1999 occurred when women were collecting firewood and building materials (Crisp, 2000, p. 56). Whereas donor funding provided a wood delivery program to appease this issue in Dadaab, funding shortfalls for this current emergency make such a program implausible. As a result, the recently launched provision of energy-saving stoves and seedlings by NGOs and UNHCR will lessen the environmental degradation, but dialogues between the refugee and host communities will likely remain the most important method of addressing this source of conflict.

In addition to concerns of environmental degradation, conflict between the refugee and host communities has been linked to perceptions (fears arising from exaggerated anecdotal evidence) of crime between the two groups. Although the agreement between the ADLG and aid agencies was intended to minimize crime that was targeting refugees, it has not been completely successful, aggravating the refugees' perceptions of the host community. A senior police official in Adjumani said, "The community here is very poor and has just come out of 20 years of civil war, and now they see international NGOs come in to provide food, water, schools [to the refugees]…how do you think they would feel? It is normal human nature that some conflict came out of that" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). As a result, there have been

incidents of theft and robbery by nationals targeting elderly and disabled refugees in particular, robbing them of NFIs provided by aid agencies and often the little money they come with from South Sudan. While the number of such incidents has been relatively low, it was clear through the course of this research that anecdotal evidence of theft and robbery by the host community was perceived by the refugees as a much more significant threat to their security. In some cases, this perceived threat limited their willingness to venture out into the host community to collect construction materials and firewood or to interact with nationals. This driver of refugee-national tensions can also have an impact on the settlement of future arrivals. A reported case of refugee violence against nationals in one of the settlements led local leaders to provide an ultimatum: if a similar incident of violence against the host community occurred again, the host community would take back the land it had contributed to that specific settlement (senior OPM official, personal communication, May 2, 2014).

These two drivers of tensions between the host and refugee communities highlight the role of perceptions in driving insecurity between the two groups. While issues of environmental degradation and crime should be mitigated, understanding how each group's perception of these issues can exaggerate or misconstrue them is important for peace building. Without addressing the perceptions, more violence could emerge between refugees and nationals. Moreover, the unique role of the host community in providing land for settlements could complicate the future settlement of refugees if these tensions are not mitigated.

5.3   Additional Security Challenges

Whereas ethnic and host community tensions are the most significant threat to the security of South Sudanese refugees in Adjumani District, other factors—encountered in virtually all cases of conflict-induced displacement worldwide—also endanger the physical security of these refugees. This section will discuss the way these refugees are or could be affected by sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), crime, militarization and recruitment, and tensions with aid workers.

5.3.1   Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

SGBV, defined by the Population Council as "the physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of a survivor" (Population Council, 2008), has been used as a weapon of war in South Sudan—especially towards women—and is a serious issue in the camps. One aid worker focusing on

addressing SGBV explained: "In the case of the South Sudan conflict, many people were raped by armed combatants before arriving at their country of asylum. Then, because of congestion in the camps, they have continued to face this sexual violence in Uganda" (personal communication, April 21, 2014). Refugee men, women, and children have been widely recognized as especially vulnerable population groups for SGBV globally, and this present emergency does not contradict this trend. At first glance, SGBV may appear non-existent in RHAs in Adjumani District; no refugees surveyed in this study reported SGBV as their primary security concern and few refugees interviewed were willing to discuss SGBV. A more in-depth study of the issue, however, proves otherwise.

Given the refugees' reticence to discuss SGBV, this study referred to discussions with police, UN, and NGO officials, PWG meetings, and an analysis of *reported* SGBV cases in order to better understand the issue. In Adjumani District, SGBV cases in the RHAs must be reported to the police and OPM, and survivors are then referred to LWF/WCC, ACORD, or other organizations for legal representation and psychosocial support. SGBV cases studied generally involved rape, defilement, and domestic violence. These cases largely affected women and children (only one case targeted a male survivor) and were most often between two individuals from the refugee and host communities or between relatives living together in the refugee settlements. The cases that were shared with the researcher involved survivors ranging from six years of age to an elderly female refugee. However, the number of SGBV cases received by the LWF/WCC Legal Unit as of May 2014 was minimal (less than ten) due to a lack of reporting by the survivors. A South Sudanese refugee working as settlement management official at Ayilo RS described the lack of reporting: "I know SGBV is there, but not one single person has reported it to me. This is because in our culture, SGBV is a secret just for you" (personal communication, April 15, 2014). This view that cultural expectations prevent South Sudanese refugee survivors from reporting SGBV was shared by all government, police, and aid officials who participated in this study. This cultural phenomenon has been the principal inhibiting factor in addressing SGBV in the RHAs and ensuring that perpetrators do not continue this violence with impunity. A representative of the LWF/WCC legal unit providing legal representation to survivors cited this phenomenon as a major challenge for his work: "I found that the South Sudanese, especially the Dinka, do not like sharing any information [related to SGBV] with third parties—me or any other NGOs. I have found that they like to conceal SGBV cases, but in Uganda it is criminal to

mediate a case of SGBV without involving the authorities like OPM and the police" (personal communication, April 23, 2014).

To address the issue of SGBV and this lack of reporting, a few organizations (i.e. LWF/WCC, ACORD, UNFPA, Oxfam) have launched programs for sensitization, mitigation (through condom delivery and SGBV mapping), and legal representation. SGBV prevention stakeholders often noted that refugees were unaware of the legal remedies available. Yet, even when they were aware, they were not necessarily willing to pursue legal remedies due to cultural expectations that SGBV must remain a private matter. A recent case of an elderly female refugee who reported being raped by host community individuals two weeks after the incident but refused to follow legal remedies indicates this challenge regardless of the evidently strong psychosocial effects of such violence. This specific case was discussed by the PWG to review how to address the refugees' unwillingness to pursue legal remedies while also attempting to prevent impunity; a UNHCR representative concluded, "We must fully inform the survivors of the possible consequences, but if he or she is afraid or does not want to expose themselves or does not trust the system, we cannot insist on seeking legal remedies" (personal communication, April 29, 2014). Moreover, the fear of retribution also plays a role in the lack of SGBV reporting. According to a member of Oxfam's Emergency Response Team, "they often do not report the violence to the police or OPM [because they are] scared that their families will be attacked—that their huts will be burned—if they report the rape" (personal communication, April 21, 2014). This individual also noted the issue that male survivors often fail to report SGBV cases because "there are currently no programs in Adjumani specifically targeting male victims [and] sensitization focuses solely on SGBV against women" (personal communication, April 21, 2014). Unless better addressed through improved sensitization, resources to protect survivors, and more available legal services, this lack of reporting and legal resolution for SGBV cases will only worsen the threat to refugees and increase impunity for SGBV perpetrators.

5.3.2 Crime Targeting Refugees

Refugees surveyed in this study perceived crime within the refugee settlements as their second most significant security challenge. A GoU official described the crime rate as "normal" while a Uganda Police representative claimed there had only been a "*slight* increase in crime," but—like SGBV—ignoring the threat of crime to refugee security would encourage impunity and only worsen the threat. Incidents of non-SGBV crime in RHAs thus far have generally been

assaults, theft (of money, food rations, NFIs, cattle), and robbery targeting both refugees and aid agencies.[9] According to a UNHCR representative, "Criminality and theft are also important security issues. Thieves have especially been targeting PSNs and unaccompanied or very young children" (personal communication, April 17, 2014). PSNs, women, and children are especially vulnerable to crime due to their common inability to defend themselves and due to long distances traveled for daily activities such as going to school or child friendly spaces (CFSs), collecting firewood, and fetching water. Although human nature makes crime in any society inevitable, the desperate situation of the refugee population and of the very poor host community still recovering from elongated civil war in northern Uganda worsens this threat and calls for a particular need to provide police to deter, investigate, and punish crime in the RHAs.

5.3.3   Forcible Recruitment Risks

The role of conflict in inducing refugee movements from South Sudan raises the concern of the need for demilitarization and the threat of forcible recruitment by South Sudanese armed groups (i.e. SPLA and AGF) in the RHAs, both issues that threaten the purely humanitarian and civilian character of the humanitarian relief operation. This forcible recruitment "can take place anywhere and anytime – especially in schools, marketplaces, youth and community centers and the homes of refugee families" (UNHCR, 2007, p. 35). Children (in particular able-bodied boys aged 14-18) are especially vulnerable to this given the ease of indoctrinating them and the desperate situation they and their families live in. This is particularly concerning in a refugee emergency where 64 percent of refugees in Adjumani District as of April 28, 2014 were minors (UNHCR, personal communication). Moreover, the concern of the military recruitment of children is significant given the historical context in northern Uganda, in which thousands of children were recruited into armed combat during the recent LRA insurgency, and given recent reports by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights of thousands of child soldiers being recruited by both the SPLA and AGF in South Sudan (BBC, April 30, 2014). Individuals involved in protection also stressed the particular vulnerability of unaccompanied minors and separated children to forcible recruitment given difficulties that child protection agencies have had in keeping track of these especially vulnerable children.

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[9] Although the researcher attempted to collect official crime data, statistics provided verbally by government, police, and NGO officials varied widely and could not be trusted to accurately reflect the level of crime. Moreover, many crimes go unreported due to a lack of confidence in or access to the police.

South Sudanese refugees in Uganda have not been severely affected by this security threat as of yet, but a discussion of the risk of forcible recruitment of the refugees, for children in particular, is useful in understanding potential scenarios for future insecurity in the RHAs if actions to mitigate this concern are not continued and enhanced. A senior police official in Adjumani District explained, "At first, recruitment efforts were there very openly, but this is something we cannot accept so we sensitized the community about that. There could still be clandestine efforts, but they are no longer open" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Preventing this risk from becoming a major threat to refugee security necessitates careful measures be applied along each refugee's path from arrival to settlement. Strong efforts by GoU security forces to demilitarize refugees entering Ugandan territory play an integral role in decreasing the incidence of recruitment. All refugees entering Uganda undergo a double screening by the Ugandan police or military for weapons and military uniforms on their persons and in their belongings first at the border crossing and again upon arrival at a transit camp or reception center (UNHCR official, personal communication, May 6, 2014). Preventative measures to promote the civilian and humanitarian character of the operation continue in the settlements through undercover checks by Ugandan intelligence officers and through police-led sensitization efforts (senior GoU official, personal communication, May 2, 2014). Nonetheless, multiple officials who participated in this research acknowledged the potential for malicious actors to pass these checks if security forces are overstretched and then carry out recruitment activities if children are not protected. Careful attention must thus be placed—preferably through the refugee-led Child Protection Committees currently being established in all the settlements—to identify vulnerabilities and establish mechanisms to report suspicious recruitment activities to prevent the forcible recruitment of children.

5.3.4   Tensions with Aid Workers

Although one of the less threatening security issues facing refugees, tensions with aid workers provide a potential source of conflict in the RHAs when coupled with the lack of police presence observed in the settlements. Following a meeting with refugees in one of the settlements, an aid worker lamented: "These people [the refugees] are aggressive. If this argument had been about food, it could have been violent. And then people lose their life for what? For nothing. Why would anyone want to work in something like this again?" (personal communication, April 22, 2014). The issue of tensions between refugees and aid workers was

voiced frequently during the fieldwork period of this study, especially by WFP staff during periods of food distribution. One WFP worker recounted a time when her team had to "hide in the bushes until the police arrived" while another described his staff "being 'arrested' by the refugees who were preventing them from leaving the camp" (personal communication, April 9, 2014; personal communication, May 6, 2014). While distributing NFIs in his role with CRS/Caritas at Ayilo RS, the researcher observed these tensions firsthand when a crowd of refugees became agitated when supplies were visibly running out and mobbed the distribution site, fighting for the few remaining supplies and easily overcoming the small distribution team of aid workers. Although no weapons were present so the risk of violence was limited, the lack of police presence at these distribution events (and sometimes within the settlements in general) would have left the aid workers and bystanders defenseless had the small quarrels become violent.

Tensions between refugees and aid workers were largely linked to cultural differences (especially in regards to time management, which repeatedly caused heated arguments between Ugandan aid workers and South Sudanese refugees), language barriers, and issues with efficient service delivery. According to a refugee respondent at Ayilo RS, the lack of efficient service delivery causes some refugees to "just steal supplies from the NGOs because they do not know where they are supposed to go or they do not want to wait. There is no security to protect the supplies, so people just take them" (refugee subject 7, personal communication, April 14, 2014). When the researcher observed aid workers attempting to protect the supplies they were distributing, language difficulties caused a tense argument exemplifying how the refugees' desperation can clash with the aid agencies' activities. These issues highlight the impact that aid workers' efficiency and cultural awareness can have the security of RHAs.

5.4   Conflict Mitigation and Peace Building

The existing literature on refugee security in the current emergency in Adjumani District stressed the need for increased security measures and emphasized the lack of peace building programs (Hovil, 2014, p.5; RLP, 2014, p. 9). This present study was conducted at a time when a transition towards prioritizing refugee security was apparent and when changes meant to address previous researchers' recommendations could be observed. This section will evaluate the capacity of various actors to address the threats detailed in this report, the effectiveness of

current mitigating programs, and present concerns resulting from the limited policing capabilities
and peace-building efforts. When asked who they would seek help from to resolve a security
concern, the majority of the refugees surveyed for this study responded that they would go to
other refugees for help (55 percent would seek out the Settlement Commandant and 22 percent
would go to refugee elders). Given that only 19 percent of refugees claimed they would seek
assistance from the police and that not one police officer was ever observed during the
researcher's 14 visits to Ayilo RS and Baratuku RS, this section will pay particular attention to
the GoU's inability to provide capable security forces and how that affects conflict mitigation
and resolution in the RHAs.

5.4.1   Police Presence and Challenges

The policing of RHAs in Adjumani District is the responsibility of the Uganda Police
under the leadership of the Resident District Commissioner (RDC; the central government's
representative in the district) and the District Police Commissioner (DPC; the equivalent of a
police chief). While a member of the ADLG said that he requested an army unit be deployed to
Adjumani at start of the refugee influx (personal communication, May 2, 2014), a representative
of the central government explained that they must rely on the police to provide security to avoid
further traumatizing the refugee population with an army presence in the RHAs (personal
communication, May 2, 2014). Yet, throughout the course of this study, refugees often
complained of the lack of police presence in the RHAs and the resulting feeling of hopelessness
when facing security threats. A refugee in Ayilo RS explained, "There is no police in the
settlement and this is one of our main complaints. We asked the [Settlement Commandant] and
OPM to send security forces, but that is not happening" (refugee subject 2, personal
communication, April 10, 2014). According to a senior police official, five officers were
allocated to Ayilo RS in April when the settlement's population numbered approximately 21,000
refugees, but the officers often find it difficult to reach the settlement, a potential reason why the
refugees may not notice them (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Another reason for
their lack of obvious presence could quite simply also be the fact that only five police officers
must protect a population of 21,000 traumatized and often desperate individuals. A senior GoU
official responded to this issue by stating: "We do not have enough manpower on a national
level. That is not a problem only here in Adjumani, it is a problem all over Uganda. Our country
has many challenges with resources and funding, so the government must focus the little

resources they have in some areas, and—right now—this is not one of those areas" (personal communication, May 2, 2014). The claim that this emergency is not a priority for the central government raises further concerns as to whether or not the lack of manpower is resource-driven or due to a lack of political will.

OPM and police officials provided numerous excuses for this lack of a robust police presence: a short-staffed police force, a significant shortage of vehicles to transport police officers, no fuel for the one truck the district police force does have, and a lack of constructed police posts in the settlements (a responsibility attributed to the overwhelmed OPM). Aid workers and a senior police official noted that police officers must typically find rides with NGOs if they plan on going to the settlements to perform their duties given the lack of vehicles for the district police. Finally, the police face the challenge of an untrained force in regards to dealing with refugees. As a police official explained, "Uganda has never trained the police to deal with refugees or traumatized persons…I am trained to handle criminals and riots, not refugees. That is very unfair to all" (personal communication, May 2, 2014). All of these challenges create a reactive rather than proactive police force; it is wholly incapable—with its current resources—of adequately policing both the approximately 300,000 Ugandan nationals in Adjumani District and the significant refugee population as well.

A study conducted in 2000 during the refugee influx in northeastern Kenya identified similar failures in RHA policing, in regards especially to manpower and training (Crisp). The researcher noted that support to police became a principal objective for UNHCR, which provided vehicles and fuel, constructed police posts, and supplemented police wages (Crisp, 2000, p. 60). Although the literature fails to address the success of UNHCR's support to Kenyan police, it indicates how non-governmental groups can support the government's ability to carry out its duty of providing police services. The UN Security Council stressed in Resolution 1208 "that a range of measures by the international community are needed to share the burden borne by African States hosting refugees and to support their efforts to ensure the security and civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements," (p. 2). Without international or NGO support, the Uganda Police will likely continue being unable to meet the policing needs of RHAs in Adjumani District; as the refugee population continues to grow, this can have serious ramifications on the security of both the refugees and the host community.

5.4.2   Community Policing

In an attempt to address the lack of police presence in the settlements, community policing has been employed to deter and monitor security threats. Two forms of community policing were observed during this study: (1) official government-led forums intended to be held weekly between security officials and refugees in all settlements, and (2) unofficial—and some claim *illegal* due to a lack of official oversight—community policing teams of unarmed refugees to supplement police patrols in the settlements. The first initiative was described by a GoU official as meetings with elders in the settlements attended by the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), the District Police Commissioner (DPC), and other member of the District Security Committee (DSC) to discuss and address security challenges in an open forum (personal communication, May 2, 2014). The same official noted visible success in this initiative: "Boroli [RS, where a significant security incident had occurred days prior,] was the only settlement where we did not do community policing. I targeted the Dinka first because of their reputation. There is a positive impact because the crime rate comes from other tribes now" (personal communication, May 2, 2014). However, the need for all these officials to be present at the meetings makes it difficult to reach all settlements and to do so frequently (the DSC has been unable thus far to conduct community policing dialogues on a weekly basis as originally planned). While community policing dialogues are important to address grievances and build trust between security forces and refugee leaders, settlement officials and refugees who were interviewed stressed the need for more tangible and visible forms of community policing to deter crime and violence.

As a result, refugees in some settlements took the initiative to launch Community Peace and Safety Teams (CPSTs) comprised of unarmed refugees to supplement the minimal police presence in the settlements. A settlement management official in Ayilo RS described this effort: "I selected 25 people from the refugees to be the main security power for the refugees to bring people to the police and to court" (personal communication, April 15, 2014). In Ayilo RS, refugees claimed this CPST was particularly useful to deter crime at night given that there are no police patrols then due to the lack of a police post in Ayilo RS. However, while this study was being conducted, the legality of these refugee-led CPSTs was highly contested amongst officials who were interviewed. While a police official in Adjumani District noted that "community policing is allowed and a very good effort," some aid workers and OPM officials claimed they

were unsure if such efforts were permissible under Ugandan law, especially if CPSTs were not established by democratically elected leaders in the settlements and with proper care to fairly represent all members of the refugee community. The creation of refugee-led CPSTs without any oversight could threaten the security of marginalized groups (e.g. ethnic groups, PSNs, elderly persons, women) if they are not fairly represented in the community policing efforts.[10] CPST members in Zambian refugee camps, for example, were accused of "abusing their power and using extortion and intimidation," stressing the needs for stringent oversight by official, non-refugee actors (Veroff, 2009, p. 36).

Moreover, once made official, there is an important need to train these CPSTs to appropriately support police efforts. While the Uganda Police claims it cannot train these refugees (as was done with Zambian CPSTs in 2009 according to Veroff, p. 36) for fear of being perceived as "militarizing the refugees," purely humanitarian agencies and NGOs should implement programs to train CPSTs in how to deter and report crime, make referrals to appropriate GoU and police organizations, and deal with the unique psychosocial needs of the refugee community. CPSTs addressing insecurity in Kenya's Dadaab camp underwent a month-long NGO-led training prior to beginning their work in the camp (Davison, 2011). They then played an integral role in supporting the short-staffed Kenyan police and alleviating security concerns in Dadaab, indicating the positive potential of these CPSTs in Ugandan RHAs if they receive proper training and support.

5.4.3   *Refugee Dispute Resolution Systems and Formal Legal Remedies*

Another major component of conflict prevention is ensuring legitimate and accessible justice mechanisms. According to the International Association for Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research, access to justice is "an integral element of any peace-building and long-term development process after conflict, [and] it also plays an important role in preventing conflict, consolidating peace, and protecting the most vulnerable groups" (2007). Access to justice is ensured in the RHAs through two mechanisms depending on the severity of the incident being addressed. The refugees themselves address less severe conflicts (e.g. quarrels at water points, minor land disputes) within the settlements through traditional justice mechanisms, known as

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[10] In its Handbook on Emergencies, UNHCR states that refugees "should be empowered along with host community leaders and supported to develop refugee volunteer guards/neighborhood watch teams with 50% participation by women" (2007, p. 54).

Refugee Dispute Resolution Systems (DRS). More significant conflicts of a criminal nature must be reported to OPM and the police, and they are then addressed through official legal proceedings in the Ugandan formal justice system.

DRS have been employed in a number of refugee emergencies worldwide, often based on the refugees' own initiative, with UNHCR and government counterparts only becoming involved in later stages of their development (da Costa, 2006, p. 23-38). This trend continues in the case of the refugee situation in Adjumani. A settlement official in Ayilo RS explained the way DRS are incorporated in the settlement: "I selected ten refugees for the traditional justice system in the camp. They will review cases referred by the security power I set up, but they will only take care of simple cases. Big cases—like rape—will go to the police" (personal communication, April 15, 2014). Local elders in the host community strongly supported the use of refugee-led traditional justice mechanisms to resolve conflict and lessen the need to rely on the strained local legal systems. An ADEFO representative noted, "We told them that in Uganda, there are two types of conflict; there is civil and there is criminal. If it is criminal—like fighting, theft, defilement, or rape—it will be managed by police, but small quarrels can be managed the way the elders were managing them in [South] Sudan. They are doing that and it is helping a lot" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). Yet, as is the case with current CPSTs, the lack of active involvement by non-refugee officials in DRS creation and management raises significant concerns regarding fair representativeness (for women and minorities), democratic mandates, and training to address the specific needs of a traumatized population. Involvement by UNHCR and government counterparts in DRS in refugee camps in Sierra Leone, Nepal, Thailand, Kenya, and Ethiopia revealed the opportunity to empower refugees while also upholding human rights standards through capacity-building, the codification of DRS in camp by-laws, and setting standards for fair representativeness (da Costa, 2006, p. 39). The success of these programs calls for similar involvement by UN and GoU agencies in DRA in Adjumani RHAs.

More severe security incidents in the RHAs must be addressed through the formal judicial system in Uganda. Article 16 of the 1951 Refugee Convention stipulates that refugees must have the same access to formal justice as host nationals. As such, refugees (and host community members in conflict with refugees) receive pro-bono legal representation from WCC that, by the time this research was conducted, had provided legal services to refugees in Adjumani District for nine cases of rape or attempted rape, one land dispute, two murders, three

cases of domestic violence, one case of assault, and one suicide (LWF staff, personal communication, May 6, 2014). However, a member of WCC's legal unit noted that refugees are often not aware of the available resources to pursue legal remedies, so his team is launching sensitization programs and a telephone hotline to provide information on the Ugandan legal system and the available pro-bono legal services. This problem is not new to refugee situations; a 2006 UNHCR study found that a lack of familiarity with formal legal systems served as a significant barrier to access to justice for refugees in Tanzania, Zambia, and Thailand (da Costa, p. 28). Although WCC is providing pro-bono representation and raising awareness of legal remedies, other concerns that could arise from refugees' use of the formal justice system in Uganda include fear of reprisals, uncertainty of outcomes, lack of transportation, the language barrier, and fear of bias or corruption.

5.4.4 Current Peace Building Initiatives

Policing and legal remedies are invaluable measures for conflict prevention and mitigation, but peace building initiatives promise to have a longer, more sustainable impact on the security of the refugees while also potentially affecting the root cause of the refugee emergency, the conflict in South Sudan. RLP's January 2014 assessment of the situation in Adjumani District observed the lack of peace building initiatives and recommended that, "Peace building and reconciliation initiatives, including intra-ethnic dialogues between the rival groups should be promoted even while in displacement and exile and local humanitarian agencies should intervene immediately before the situation becomes dire" (p. 10). ADEFO, in partnership with ACORD and Oxfam, heeded this recommendation and launched a *Peace Team* to address peace building needs through Peace Committees in all settlements, Peace Prayers, and Peace Clubs. This Peace Team has been largely composed of local cultural leaders and elders with previous experience in refugee relations as well as the conflict in South Sudan, enabling them to establish contextually and culturally appropriate peace building programs.

The Peace Team's first initiative thus far has been the creation of Peace Committees in all settlements, groups of 15-19 individuals from the refugee and host communities including two youth, three to four women, a cultural chief and elders from the refugee community, a religious leader, LCI and LCIII chairmen from the host community, and the local Ugandan cultural chief (ADEFO representative, personal communication, April 23, 2014). These Peace Committees establish a permanent peace building presence in each settlement and provide the

first opportunity to promote dialogue between various groups and to resolve tensions. By including various stakeholders and empowering refugees, the Peace Committees provide a highly engaging opportunity for the community to resolve its own security challenges without interference from external actors such as the police, NGOs, or UN agencies. Furthermore, these Peace Committees can have important cross-border effects upon the refugees' repatriation. For example, a previously displaced refugee who returned to South Sudan from Uganda in 2012 chaired a Peace Committee in his district, using lessons on peace building that he had learned while in Ugandan RHAs to resolve conflict (Mennonite Central Committee, 2012). In essence, these committees provide an empowering and far-reaching prospect for conflict resolution and peace building.

Second, Peace Prayers build upon the highly religious culture of the refugee and host communities to provide a more informal forum to build unity and empower individuals who may not necessarily have leadership roles in the community. Peace Prayers have been used in other refugee situations in the past, such as in the recent Syrian emergency to build unity between Muslim and Christian refugees who had fled to Lebanon (Conte & Diez, 2013). In the case of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda, the Peace Prayers are held in each settlement by the ACORD/Oxfam Peace Team and include testimonies and prayers for peace both in the RHAs and in South Sudan. The first round of Peace Prayers (held in Nyumanzi RS in mid-April 2014) united Dinka, Nuer, and Murle refugees in a forum that encouraged reconciliation and spread a message of unity. A Peace Team member recalled a moment when "a Nuer and a Dinka prayed together publicly. They held hands and told the whole crowd that the two tribes hated each other for nothing and they should learn to live in peace" (personal communication, April 23, 2014). The success of the first Peace Prayers indicates willingness amongst the refugees to participate in inter-tribal peace building, but due to the distance between the ethnic-zoned settlements, it has been very difficult for refugees from various groups to participate in the Peace Prayers. Thus, the second round, which was observed during the course of this research, only included Dinka refugees. This highlights the effect of ethnic zoning on preventing peace building dialogue between separated groups.

Finally, other peace building efforts focus on the incidence of conflict erupting from quarrels between children. Numerous aid workers and refugees provided examples of fights between adults stemming from petty conflict in schools and CFSs. The ACORD/Oxfam Peace

Team responded by establishing Peace Clubs in schools to integrate peace building into the curriculum. Although it is too early to judge their impact on the refugees' security, Peace Clubs in schools have been successful used as a peace building tool in other refugee situations, including in southern Uganda's Nakivale RS (Lawson, 2012, p. 8). The Peace Team also plans to launch recreational and sports activities to unite refugee and national children and show them how peace can exist around mutual interests, in line with the UN Office on Sport and Development for Peace's findings that "Sport is a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and networks, and to promote ideals of peace, fraternity, solidarity, non-violence, tolerance and justice" (n.d.). Combined with the Peace Committees and Peace Prayers, these programs set the stage for the peaceful coexistence of the various groups involved in this refugee emergency. By encouraging cross-cultural understanding and promoting tolerance, these peace building efforts discourage conflict, and when conflict does occur, they provide a forum for reconciliation. Nonetheless, they are severely limited by the physical separation of refugees through ethnic zoning and by the common issue of limited funding.

Chapter 6: Synthesis and Conclusion

6.1   Conclusion

Stressing the urgent need for attention to refugee security, an aid worker stated in an interview that "Sometimes, children are sexually abused and beaten to the point where they escape and return to South Sudan…they say that they would rather die in their own country" (personal communication, April 21, 2014). In assessing the current situation in RHAs in Adjumani District, this study, albeit not comprehensive, identified a number of security challenges facing South Sudanese refugees that threaten the viability of seeking safe refuge in Uganda. Emerging from the ethnic conflict that induced this refugee influx, ethnic tensions present a unique risk of insecurity, and ethnic zoning meant to address this risk may in reality be serving as a means to further perpetuate ethnic conflict. This study also identified Uganda's unique settlement policy and the resulting close relationship between the host and refugee communities as another source of concern for the security of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. Finally, the study identified SGBV, crime, potential military recruitment, and tensions with aid workers as further issues that must be addressed to ensure the safety of those displaced by the violence in South Sudan.

Conflict mitigating and peace building programs assessed through this research proved to be either deficient (in the case of policing) or in need of support from the GoU, UN agencies and donors, or NGOs to ensure their effectiveness and their attention to the specific needs of this vulnerable community. These actors have both legal and moral obligations to ensure that innocent individuals, like those victimized in Boroli RS in April 2014, have the opportunity to live in peace. Only through sufficient funding and capacity building for policing, justice, and peace building programs can the identified sources of conflict be mitigated. As this study found, the unique role of the host community in the settlement of refugees in Uganda could complicate Uganda's ability to provide asylum to refugees if these security concerns are not mitigated. Finally, given the frequent occurrence of ethnic conflict and forced migration worldwide, the challenges discussed in this study should be taken into account when planning for and responding to future ethnic conflict-induced refugee emergencies.

6.2   Recommendations

Government of Uganda (GoU) and Local Government Officials	• Establish a permanent budget for disaster relief and refugee operations in Uganda to provide the GoU (especially OPM) and Uganda Police with the ability to react rapidly to future refugee emergencies (RLP representative, personal communication, May 7, 2014). • Urgently supplement the police force in Adjumani District with officers trained in addressing refugee needs and able to assist with policing for both the refugee and host communities. • Provide additional vehicles and fuel to meet the growing needs of the police force in Adjumani District (senior police official, personal communication, April 27, 2014). • Establish police posts as a prerequisite (like water points and roads) to the preparation of a refugee settlement prior to its opening. • Conduct elections for, and train, official unarmed CPSTs in all refugee settlements to supplement the police force by deterring, monitoring, and reporting crime and violence in the settlements.
International Community Donors and United Nations (UN) Agencies	• Provide funding and vehicles to the GoU to meet police needs in Adjumani District as UNHCR did in its response to refugee insecurity in Kenya. These donations should be made directly to the district police force to prevent diversion to other police needs in Uganda (senior GoU official, personal communication, May 2, 2014). • Create and fund a training program for security forces, CPSTs, and settlement management officials to efficiently carry out protection duties with vulnerable and traumatized individuals (senior police official, personal communication, April 27, 2014). • Promote innovative strategies—such as the distribution of energy-efficient stoves—that alleviate the root cause of tensions in the RHAs and host community.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	• Implement training programs addressing the specific needs of refugees for security forces, CPSTs, and settlement management officials. • Sensitize staff about differing cultural norms—in regards especially to time management—to limit the risk of aggravating refugees due to inefficient service delivery. • Ensure that peace building programs cover all TCs, RCs, and RSs. • Facilitate the timely establishment of a Peace Committee after a settlement's opening. • Include refugees from multiple ethnic groups as well as members of the host community in all Peace Prayer events (provide transportation when necessary) to ensure that ethnic and refugee-host tensions are addressed and to promote reconciliation. • Enhance the sensitization of refugees on SGBV, legal remedies, and Ugandan law to promote the reporting of SGBV/crime and reduce impunity.
Future Researchers	• Study the long-term impact of ethnic zoning policies on inter-ethnic perceptions and incidents of violence both in the RHAs and in the refugees' country of origin upon repatriation. • Research ways to promote peaceful host community and refugee relations through innovative and sustainable solutions (e.g. energy efficient stoves, seedling distribution). • Examine national policymaking in Uganda as it relates to funding/staffing for the Uganda Police and OPM in refugee emergencies.

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Appendix 1: List of Anonymous Interviews with Refugees

Subject	Interview Date	Current Location	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Origin	Previous Refugee Experience
1	April 7, 2014	Ayilo RS	Male	20	Dinka	Jonglei State	Yes (Kenya)
2	April 10, 2014	Ayilo RS	Male	34	Dinka	Jonglei State	Yes (Kenya)
3	April 10, 2014	Ayilo RS	Male	29	Dinka	Jonglei State	Yes (Kenya)
4	April 10, 2014	Ayilo RS	Female	27	Dinka	Jonglei State	No (IDP)
5	April 10, 2014	Ayilo RS	Male	30	Dinka	Jonglei State	Yes (Kenya)
6	April 14, 2014	Ayilo RS	Male	31	Dinka	Jonglei State	No
7	April 14, 2014	Ayilo RS	Male	24	Dinka	Jonglei State	No
8	April 22, 2014	Ayilo RS	Female	22	Dinka	Jonglei State	Yes (Uganda)
9	April 24, 2014	Ayilo RS	Female	20	Dinka	Jonglei State	No
10*	April 30, 2014	Ayilo RS	Female	24	Dinka	Jonglei State	No
11*	April 30, 2014	Ayilo RS	Female	28	Dinka	Jonglei State	No
12*	April 30, 2014	Ayilo RS	Female	28	Dinka	Upper Nile State	No
13*	April 30, 2014	Ayilo RS	Female	35	Dinka	Upper Nile State	No
14*	April 30, 2014	Ayilo RS	Female	20	Dinka	Jonglei State	No
15	May 5, 2014	Dzaipi RC**	Female	(Adult)	Madi	Central Equatoria	No

*Interviews conducted with English-Dinka interpretation through a male, Dinka refugee interpreter. Refer to Section 4.1.1 for additional details on interview methodology.
**OPM identified this subject as an individual particularly vulnerable to ethnic violence and temporarily relocated her to Dzaipi RC under protective measures following events in Boroli RS.

Appendix 2: List of Formal Interviews with Emergency Response Stakeholders

Interview Date	Subject	Interview Location
February 15, 2014	Refugee Law Project Representative	Gulu
February 27, 2014	CRS/Caritas Representative	Gulu
April 15, 2014	Settlement Management Official	Ayilo RS
April 17, 2014	UNHCR Official (Protection Unit)	Pakelle
April 17, 2014	Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) Official	Pakelle
April 21, 2014	Oxfam Emergency Response Team Member	Adjumani
April 23, 2014	Adjumani District Elders Forum Representative	Adjumani
April 23, 2014	Local Cultural Leader/Clan Chief	Adjumani
April 23, 2014	ACORD/Oxfam Peace Team Representative	Adjumani
April 23, 2014	LWF/WCC Official (Legal Unit)	Pakelle
April 23, 2014	Senior Uganda Police Official	Adjumani
April 29, 2014	Adjumani District Local Government Staff	Adjumani
May 1, 2014	Local Cultural Leader/Clan Chief	Baratuku RS
May 2, 2014	Senior OPM Official	Pakelle
May 2, 2014	Adjumani District Local Government Official	Adjumani
May 2, 2014	Senior Government of Uganda (GoU) Official	Adjumani
May 6, 2014	UNHCR Official (Field Unit)	Pakelle

Appendix 3: Refugee Perceptions Survey Results

Note: Refer to Section 4.1.3 for survey methods and respondent demographics. As each question was optional, not all of the participants answered all of the questions.

1. Why did you come to Uganda as a refugee?
   a. Violence by the government – 0%
   b. Violence by rebel forces – 96%
   c. Tribal violence – 4%
   d. Poverty/lack of resources – 0%
   e. Other (please explain) – 0%
   f. No response – 0%

2. What are the biggest security concerns you face since arriving in Uganda?
   a. Tribal conflict between refugees – 1%
   b. Crime/violence by the host community – 79%
   c. Crime within the refugee settlement – 17%
   d. Sexual or gender-based violence/domestic violence – 0%
   e. Other – 1%*
   f. No response – 2%
   *Respondent answered: "Snakes."

3. If you have a security concern, who do you go to for help?
   a. Settlement Commandant – 55%
   b. Uganda Police – 19%
   c. NGOs – 4%
   d. Adjumani District Local Government – 0%
   e. Refugee elders – 22%
   f. Other – 0%
   g. No response – 0%

4. Have you heard of or observed ethnic tensions or violence in this refugee settlement?
   a. Yes – 3%
   b. No – 96%
   c. No response – 1%

5. Do you agree that refugees should be placed in different settlements based on their tribe/ethnicity?
    a. Strongly agree – 88%
    b. Agree – 8%
    c. Neutral – 0%
    d. Disagree – 3%
    e. Strongly disagree – 1%
    f. No response – 0%

6. Do you feel aid (food, water, shelter, non-food items) is distributed fairly between refugees?
    a. Yes – 100%
    b. No – 0%
    c. No response – 0%

7. When do you hope to return to South Sudan?
    a. Within 1 year – 0%
    b. Within 2-3 years – 1%
    c. In more than 3 years – 0%
    d. When I feel it is safe – 96%
    e. I do not plan to return to South Sudan – 3%
    f. No response – 0%

8. What is preventing you from returning to your home in South Sudan?
    a. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)/current government – 0%
    b. Rebels – 88%
    c. Dinka – 0%
    d. Nuer – 11%
    e. I want to stay in Uganda – 1%
    f. I cannot afford to return home – 0%
    g. Other – 0%
    h. No response – 0%