Side-Event on Preventing, anticipating and reducing risks of climate induced disasters: Why do locally led gender transformative actions matter?

Co-organized by CARE International, Oxfam International, International Rescue Committee, and supported by the UK Permanent Mission in Geneva and the World Food Programme

Virtual, 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. CET on June 24th, 2021

Objective:
This multi-stakeholder event aimed to:
- Inspire more investments in locally led gender transformative climate action and resilience, emergency preparedness and anticipatory action in conflict and displacement settings that also face the impacts of climate change.
- Share promising models that apply a gender transformative and feminist bottom-up approach that, if taken to scale, can have significant positive impacts on reducing humanitarian needs, including on impacts on food and nutrition security, and on strengthening crisis-affected communities’ climate resilience.

The event was moderated by Ms Fatima Yamin, the Programme Development Specialist at Strengthening Participatory Organization, who drew from her personal knowledge and experience as a climate and gender expert when preparing and facilitating the event.

Panel Members:
- Ms Liberia Munduru, Deputy Manager Operations at the organization, Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment (RICE) -West Nile based in Uganda.
- Ms Viko Bianga, Uriama sub-county chief in the Terego District of Uganda.
- Ms Lena Schubmann, Programme & Policy Officer, World Food Programme Guatemala.

Main points:
- Ms Liberia Munduru focused on how vulnerable women and children, particularly refugees, are at a greater risk from climate change due to a degradation of their natural resources used for food and water. She discussed how using CARE's Community Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (CVCA) tool in conjunction with RICE staff and local government actors, and within both host and refugee communities, helped her team better assess the major risks from climate change, and allowed them to propose strategies that mitigate those risks. In her comments, Ms Munduru highlighted how the tool also analyzes climate risks and communities through a gendered lens, making gender issues much more apparent. She also explained that the CVCA research included speaking directly to women from both the host and refugee community about the links between climate change impacts, gender inequality, and a greater risk of GBV. She stressed that such gender sensitive participatory research approaches are actually transforming gender norms as it empowered these women by consulting them on solutions and gathering resources to suit their needs. Ms Munduru mentioned that it had been critical for RICE to conduct Gender, Equity and Diversity training with support...
from CARE prior to rolling out the CVCA because she acknowledges that the humanitarian and development staff of NGOs in West Nile carry their own biases.

- Ms Viko Bianga reminded the audience of Uganda’s large refugee numbers and discussed the impact of Uganda’s open-door refugee policy at the local governmental level, mentioning the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). She explained that the majority of refugees are women and children, and that women and girls from the host and refugee communities face increasing gender inequality and GBV. Her stories showed how the presence of refugees further stresses the harsh and fragile natural environment already suffering from the impacts of climate change through droughts etc. In response to this, Ms Bianga spoke about the importance of partnering with local humanitarian organizations, like RICE, to help counteract the exacerbated impact of climate change on both refugees and their host communities. She also discussed the implementation of the CVCA referenced above in her Ugandan sub-county, Uriama, and how this tool helped create a gender responsive Climate Adaptation Action Plan that became integrated into the planning and budgeting processes of local governments-- including Ms Bianga’s own sub-county. She mentioned how the CVCA and the subsequent CAAP development processes created a platform for the sub-county to work more personally with affected women, and to get advice directly from women on their needs. She shared several concrete examples of actions from the CAAP that were proposed by women and directly benefited them, such as refugee women increasing their access to land for farming, adapting natural resources development practices to support these women’s local communities in response to climate change, and creating leadership training sessions upon women’s requests.

- Ms Lena Schubmann from WFP Guatemala discussed the drastic effects of climate change in Guatemala, especially on communities that are reliant on subsistence farming for food security. In order to counteract women’s lack of financial stability as a result of this food insecurity and climate change, Ms Schubmann discussed the new WFP micro-insurance product recently developed and launched in Guatemala. This product helps women gain more financial knowledge and security in the face of climate change by addressing the gender barriers women face in accessing savings, loans, credit and insurances. It removes the requirement for a collateral-- such as land-- in order to access such financial products; this benefits poor Guatemalan women who often do not own land to put up as collateral in the first place. Ms Schubmann discussed how this new insurance model was embedded in a larger financial education strategy targeting women, which covered a range of financial issues and included education initiatives for women so they may have the same access to resources, technology, and knowledge as men when making financial decisions. This product is helping to facilitate a greater sense of entrepreneurship among women and contribute to their greater financial inclusion, independence, and creativity. This video made by the WFP helps explain the positive impact of this financial tool on women living in poverty within Guatemala.

Key messages of the side event:
- **Policy matters:** it is important for both local and national government policies to support locally led gender transformative climate resilience, emergency preparedness, and anticipatory action;

- **Local actors must lead:** CBOs, grassroot women-led organizations, and local governments must work together to lead the design and implementation of solutions, since they better understand the needs of crisis affected communities;

- **Leverage the power of the private sector:** the potential of the private sector to contribute to reducing the risks facing crisis affected populations remains untapped, making them a critical partner in scaling up and financing risk reduction strategies, as seen with the insurance product in Guatemala;

- **Gender and women and girls matter:** gender inequality is a risk multiplier for crisis affected communities, whether affected by conflict, natural disasters, or a combination of both. The impacts of climate change and deprivation, limited access to services, protection risks associated with typical humanitarian situations, and gender inequality all coalesce and increase women and girls’ vulnerability. Building climate resilience and reducing and responding to climate risks cannot be done without half of the affected population—women and girls—at the table, and without tackling the various gender barriers they face. By empowering women and girls through inclusion in research and analysis, education, accessing climate resilience building tools, and in relevant decision making spaces, these women and girls will be able to contribute to solutions that work better not only for them but also for the wider community.

- **Time for scaling up what works:** gender transformative climate resilience, emergency preparedness, and anticipatory action models already exist. While there is always room for improving such models and creating new and better ones too, it is high time we concentrate on urgently scaling up tested and proven models to reach a greater number of people facing climate risks today.

**Additional points raised during the discussion:**

- There was an extensive discussion surrounding how and why women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change, with questions focusing on the CVCA and insurance model tools implemented in Uganda and Guatemala respectively.

- There were many questions focused on how the CVCA tool was customized to include a gendered lens, and how the CVCA tool was implemented differently in separate geographical or agro-ecological zones, and depending on the diverging customs and livelihoods for women in disparate communities. Ms Munduru and Ms Bianga discussed how local organizations like RICE continue to work with local and national governments to monitor how effectively their CVCA solutions were functioning to match the differing needs of each community. The solutions matched these needs by prioritizing food, or fire-wood collection, or water hygiene depending on what was the most immediate risk.
- There was a discussion on how to measure the gender dimension of Climate Adaptation Action Plans (CAAPs), and the impact of these CAAPs on resilience building in targeted communities. The panelists explained how this is done by using a resilience marker and a gender marker applied at several levels by the NGO program staff of RICE, but more interestingly, also by local groups made up of women and youth who monitor the CAAP’s implementation. This showed progress in the community and reinforced a gendered perspective on the issue.

- Other questions focused on women’s access to the product in Guatemala, and how the insurance model was structured to account for any losses. Ms Schubmann discussed how to make this model more sustainable for the long-term by opening it up to farmers from different regions, and by partnering with the private sector and larger NGOs to gather funds and investments from their beneficiaries to provide women complementary financial education. This way, the model has investments, but there is also a continuous effort to educate many communities on how to use the model more effectively.

- Many questions focused on how to engage men in these practices, particularly in refugee settlements, in order to address any potential backlash women may face from male family members when taking part in these programs. Panelists discussed how men were simultaneously educated on gender inequality, positive masculinities, and on the positive impact of women’s involvement in addressing the effects of climate change on the larger community. Thus, while these practices focused on women’s rights, they also included men and boys so that all areas of the community could grow together and reduce risks of Violence Against Women.

**Outcomes of the side event:**

- The side event was attended by over 111 attendees from diverse background and parts of the world, including:
  - Officers from UN agencies like UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP and many others;
  - Senior advisors from different government missions to Geneva, including from the USA, China, Denmark, Gambia, Mexico and many other countries;
  - Senior employees of foreign government agencies such as USAID and the German Federal Foreign Office etc;
  - Large NGOs with senior officers and members from their offices in different countries, like WorldVision, MercyCorps, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Christian Aid etc.

- This side-event successfully drew attention to the links between the impacts of climate change and growing gender inequality in humanitarian settings by drawing from the examples of two distinct humanitarian contexts;

- The event gave a voice to women on the front lines, bringing together a mix of women’s perspectives from local grassroot NGOs like RICE, local governments, and a UN agency. Particularly for an NGO like RICE, the event provided a platform to share their work with
a larger audience, and prove how instrumental their direct engagement with crisis affected women at community level is.

- The event successfully shared lessons about specific tools that can help audience members understand how gender responsive climate change resilience and risk reduction systems can be built. Each panelist highlighted the importance of implementing these programs in order to increase resources for women (including displaced women), and also included the steps that can be taken to do so in order to create a more actionable conversation.

- This side event increased general knowledge on what feminist approaches to climate change solutions are and how they are defined. While these solutions focus on women and girls, they simultaneously provide resources for men and boys to promote equality. These same solutions also provide greater financial resources to women, which are then used to counter the consequences of food insecurity, famine, and GBV.

- The side event brought in the perspective of Guatemala and Uganda—two countries with very different geographical factors, and within those two countries, many different communities, each with their own unique demographics, including one community consisting of a large refugee population. Despite these differences, this event showed how these models can be adapted to disparate conditions and customs to engage specifically with each community.

Key Resources:
- Link to FULL RECORDING of this side-event.
- Link to CARE’s CVCA tool handbook, also referenced and linked to within this report.
- Link to IRC’s Ending the hunger crisis: Response, recovery and resilience report, which provides context on side-event discussion.
- Link to WFP video on insurance model, also referenced and linked to within this report.
Opening remarks

Good afternoon colleagues and partners,

I am delighted to be with you today to discuss this critical issue - *gender transformative actions and Climate Change*. These issues have been and continue to be at the center of UK international aid for nearly two decades. And are more critical than ever given the climate emergency we face today.

With over 80 million forcibly displaced people, a majority of whom are women and children, and climate change becoming a major driver of displacement and conflict, the urgency to reduce climate risks in ways that put gender responsiveness and transformation at the forefront has never been so high.

While drivers of climate change must be addressed at all levels, including at global levels through the fulfillment of States’ commitments under various Agreements, such as the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Action, local action by diverse actors, civil society, including women-led organizations, government actors, the private sector, research and media actors are critical.

The UK believes Gender inequality and other forms of inequality and exclusion, such as those relating to poverty, race, ethnicity, disability and age, drive vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and undermine resilience. Without addressing these unequal power dynamics, anticipation and adaptation efforts risk failing to reach their core objectives, or even further exacerbating marginalisation and climate vulnerability.

When conflict and climate interact, the impacts can be devastating. Climate change exacerbates food insecurity in fragile contexts, while weather and climate shocks such as droughts or floods in already conflict-affected areas can have catastrophic impacts from which it can take years to recover. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by the resulting displacement, violence and food insecurity. At the same time they are also frontline responders and critical agents of change within climate action. Their leadership, meaningful participation and access to finance, including through civil society organisations, such as women’s rights organisations, must be at the heart of effective and sustainable resilience-building efforts.

We also believe Gender equality is an enabler of impartial and effective humanitarian action, not least because it enables actors to harness the voices and capabilities of women and girls alongside men and boys, as leaders, decision-makers, and first responders.
The UK recently renewed its public commitments under the Call to Action to support and promote gender equality and inclusion in humanitarian action, including through the systematic and meaningful participation of women-led organisations as change agents and leaders, and the appropriate prioritisation and financing of responses to sexual and gender-based violence. We have used our Presidency of the G7 to galvanise international action on Famine Prevention through the G7’s first ever Compact to tackle the drivers of famine. In addition to mobilising urgent funding for humanitarian assistance in the countries at greatest risk, the Compact commits G7 nations to support action to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation, as well as the economic harm and the health impacts experienced by women and girls in conflict and crises.

The UK is also committed to delivering an ambitious and inclusive COP26 and, as Presidency, we want to see all countries stepping up their commitments to place gender equality centrally in climate action and finance. We will champion inclusion throughout our COP Presidency and use our position as Presidency to amplify the voices and solutions of women, girls and those whose views are often most marginalised, empowering them as decision-makers, advocates and leaders – to truly leave no one behind.

At COP26, the UK also aims to spotlight the risks climate change poses to global progress on SDG4 – on ensuring quality education for all - alongside the important and transformative role that education has to play in our response to the climate crisis. In doing so, we aim to corral attention and international resources around evidence-based approaches which deliver 12 years of quality education for all girls.

We believe this can support girls, their families, and their communities to be more resilient in the face of climate shocks through building skills for adaptability and enabling them to be healthier, including through higher living standards. It also empowers and equips girls to lead change in their countries and communities to tackle the climate crisis.

One of the models presented today, [CARE’s Gender sensitive Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment](https://www.care.org.uk/gender-sensitive-climate-vulnerability-and-capacity-assessment), to inform local Climate Adaptation Plans, was rolled out and refined with support from the UK’s funding for CARE’s [Adaptation Learning Programme](https://www.care.org.uk/adaptation-learning-programme). Implemented between 2010 and 2017 and funded through the UK’s International Climate Fund, alongside financial support from Denmark, Finland and Austria, this programme was implemented in Ghana, Niger, Mozambique and Kenya, in partnership with local civil society and government institutions. It increased the capacity of 28,000 people from vulnerable households in sub-Saharan Africa to adapt to climate variability and change’ by identifying successful approaches to community based adaptation for vulnerable communities, working directly with women and men as well as learning from other organisations and supporting the incorporation of these approaches into development policies and programmes. The Adaptation Learning Programme significantly contributed to the growing body of knowledge on the integration of gender analysis and climate action and linking local action with national level policies. I am particularly pleased to learn that the Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment tool has continued to be adapted to different contexts, including in fragile contexts and displacement and refugee settings, and that the gender lens has become even more central to this approach.
This of course aligns with UK priorities for increased attention to the interface between climate impacts and displacement in unstable regions, where more investments in anticipatory action, early warning systems and strengthening climate resilience are needed.

Gender, climate change, and risk reduction capacity are intricately linked. Poor and marginalized women and men both face multiple and complex challenges as a result of climate change but they are not equally prepared to confront them. Prevailing gender inequality, including Sexual and Gender Based Violence, but also limited mobility, access to information, to knowledge, to training and education opportunities, and time poverty due to unequal gender division of labour, mean that women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate risks, and that these risks are significantly magnified during crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically impacted the livelihoods of women and girls and exacerbated these risks.

Many women continue not to have decision-making power within the home or over all household resources, let alone over valued livelihood resources, and may not be able to keep or manage their own earnings. This is also true for displacement settings, such as refugee and internally displaced populations, where women and girls no longer have access to productive assets, such as land and livestock, that they may have owned or had access to before. Even in frequently found female-headed households in displaced settings or following a disaster, social stigma may prevent many women from being treated as economic or social equals, despite their sole management of their livelihoods. These and other gendered barriers tend not to be addressed by climate change adaptation, resilience and risk reduction programmes, which can inadvertently entrench gender inequality and even increase women’s workloads, or, worse increase the risks of Violence Against Women and Girls.

As a Climate and Gender Champion in international Geneva, the UK Mission here is therefore thrilled to be taking part in this side event under the auspices of ECOSOC HAS 2021.

I invite you to listen to our panellists and their respective experiences centering Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in climate risk reduction and anticipatory action, in two very different humanitarian contexts, Uganda and Guatemala. I hope the valuable lessons from these experiences can inform strategies of a large group of stakeholders, including donors. I look forward to speaking with you again after the discussion during what I hope will be a lively debate.

**Closing remarks**

First I want to thank CARE, OXFAM, IRC & WFP for an excellent event and for asking me to participate and the panelists for excellent examples of women’s leadership – it's great to hear from local actors – and important questions from the audience too – thanks for participating.

I have 5 key take-aways:
First - Policy matters: importance of policies to support locally led gender transformative climate resilience, emergency preparedness and anticipatory action is key – the experience from Uganda is an important example of more evidence-based policy which better reflects need and of the importance of building capacity of both Local Government and Communities;
Second - Local actors must lead: CBOs, women’s organizations at the grassroot, and local governments must lead the design and implementation of solutions and must be supported to work together and influence decisions taken by international humanitarian actors, for example through national coordination structures – some great examples of leadership from Liberia and Bianga on how women and girls can be included in decision making with governments, including through safe spaces – and the difference this makes delivery and outcomes – and to longer-term women’s empowerment and leadership;

Third - Leverage the power of the private sector: the potential of the private sector to contribute to reducing risks facing crisis affected populations is yet untapped; They are a critical partner in scaling up, reducing and financing risk reduction strategies that mitigate the impact of climate change. And there are great examples, as we heard from the micro-insurance, risk financing, activities of women in Guatemala - as Lena said, scaling these up and adapting to local contexts and local women’s needs, and learning lessons from this, will be important next steps. I thought it was interesting how important again empowering local women to participate in the design and management of activities and the decisions that affect them is to success;

Fourth - Gender and women matter: gender inequality is a risk multiplier; climate action and preventing and responding to crises, including to the climate and hunger crisis and even in displacement settings, cannot be done without half of the affected population - women and girls, at the table; and without tackling the various gender barriers they face. If supported to seat at the table, women will contribute to solutions that work better for them but also for the wider community as we have heard today;

Fifth - Time for scaling up what works: gender transformative climate resilience, emergency preparedness and anticipatory action models already exist; They benefit entire communities and need to be urgently scaled up. Finally, I know that the UK will continue to play its part to promote women’s empowerment and leadership, particularly local women and women organisations, in humanitarian action and in mitigating the impacts of Climate Change. We will continue to learn from local actors, who are best placed to play a leadership role. Thank you.

- Ms Liberia Munduru Talking Points

Uganda is home to over 1400000 refugees, 83% are women and children and the majority from South Sudan and DRC, and is the country currently hosting the largest population of refugees in Africa.

It is important to note that the West Nile region which is hosting the large majority of refugees from South Sudan, - was already suffering from a harsh climate and generally low fertility of soils with limited potential for agriculture (albeit with difference within the region).

Therefore the combined impacts of a very large refugee presence in an already impoverished host community living in drought prone areas has led to put even more stress on natural resources that both the refugee and host community populations depend on for their daily survival.
I also would like to note the high levels of GBV & prevailing gender inequality in both refugee and host communities that existed before the refugee influx and is exacerbated by the pressure put on women and girls to care for their families.

With these in mind, RICE-West Nile in partnership with CARE International in Uganda and CARE Denmark and with funds from DANIDA designed a project called Strengthening Resilience and Promoting Inclusive Governance, also referred to as STRENPO. The project is attempting to respond to this situation. The overall objective is: Women and youth in vulnerable, natural resource dependent communities, including in refugee settlements, are resilient to shocks and stresses from natural resources degradation, climate change, and conflict & displacement.

The project was kicked off by conducting research that combines gender analysis and Community Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments or “CVCA” in recognition of the fact that both refugee and host community women and girls can aggravate climate risks, are disproportionately affected by the combined effects of displacement, drought, and having to live in naturally stressed environment, have solutions to offer but are not or rarely consulted by development and humanitarian actors specifically on climate risks reduction strategies. If you allow me, I will refer to the acronym “CVCA” for this tool during this presentation. While not new for CARE who has developed this tool nearly a decade ago and used it in different countries, the application of the tool in a refugee setting in Uganda was new. It was also the first time the tool was introduced to RICE and our partners from the local authorities, as we will hear from my colleague Bianca shortly.

At the onset, the CVCA is a participatory rural appraisal tool, primarily qualitative in nature, that aims at consulting different groups living in a certain agroecological zone to assess their own climate risks but also to identify existing capacity and possible solutions to reduce these risks based on locally available capacities. Over the years the tool was adapted to include dimensions of gender analysis and to ensure the process equally includes women. In our specific context, we added consultation and participation of refugee women and men. The CVCA is not the end in itself. It is supposed to inform Climate Adaptation Action Plans (CAAPs) owned by communities, again in our case refugees and host communities and relevant local authorities. So, we conducted CVCA exercises with refugee and host communities to better understand the climate risks as well as the capacity and solutions of refugee and host community women, men and youth.

Before the assessment, CARE trained RICE -WN staff together with local government staff (Production officer, Community Development Officer and Environment officer) on the CVCA tool and other climate related information.

Later different tools were developed for this specific assessment and rolled out to the field. This process was led by the different community groups, including refugee and host community women and men, who were interviewed separately.

Examples of the gendered dimensions of climate risks that surfaced included how women and girls (refugees and host communities) are central to collecting firewood for cooking and how
charcoal production is a lucrative business, yet further stressing natural resources and causing tensions with host communities. Women also shared how they face risks of GBV when traveling increasingly long distances to fetch water and firewood. Refugee women were able to voice and share how challenges to access land for agricultural activities is an issue that is forcing them and family members (youth) to revert to livelihood activities that further stress the environment and increase climate risks, including illegal but lucrative charcoal production.

The process itself was empowering. The active involvement of women who were directly consulted and also involved in discussing findings and proposing solutions increased their confidence to demand for opportunities and claim their rights, including the right to participate in local government planning processes as we will hear shortly.

As much as the information generated by the research is critical to support women-led climate risks reduction, the participatory character of the process that ensures women have safe spaces to share their concerns and solutions also proved to be a game changer. The CVCA created opportunities for women to identify unique strategies to deal with climate change. An immediate outcome of the process was that a group of women asked us to train them on leadership so that they would feel better equipped to engage in the dialogue with authorities at various levels. For instance, a refugee women group doing hibiscus as an enterprise now adds value into powder, wine and juice parked for sale.

As I said above, the CVCA process led to development of CAAPs for refugees and host communities to address the issues identified in the assessment. These CAAPs stipulate community led solutions and strategies to adapt to climate change. Thanks to how gender analysis was included in the assessment and how women were engaged, I can confidently say that these plans are also led by refugee and community women in targeted settlements.

To conclude, I would like to share a final reflection. It is important for organizations supporting such assessments to also work on their own gender biases. In that sense, it was really critical for RICE staff to first undergo Gender Equity and Diversity training for our staff before even being trained on the CVCA. We also realize that working on our own gender biases is an ongoing journey.

- Ms Viko Bianga Talking Points

Good day colleagues. I am very happy to be part of this panel today and share perspectives from a local government point of view on the importance of locally led action to address climate risks, particularly in refugee settings like ours in Uganda.

Uganda has continued to maintain an open-door policy to refugees based on traditional African hospitality and not turning away anybody who is running to us for safety. Uganda’s refugee policy guarantees freedom of movement and the right to employment, education and health, as well as the right to start a business. The government also provides refugees plots of land so they can farm and construct shelters. It empowers refugees to become economically self-reliant, while granting them the same rights that citizens enjoy.
The office of the prime minister also referred to as OPM is leading and coordinating the refugee response in Uganda and all affairs of the refugees are directed to this office. However, over recent years and given the lasting and protracted character of the refugee situation, Uganda also embarked on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) that basically aims at integrating the refugee response in other national level processes, including in ensuring the territorial administration of Uganda, Districts, Parishes, Counties and Sub Counties integrate refugees into planning and budgeting processes.

As Liberia already mentioned, the presence of refugees has increased pressure on natural resources due to their large numbers, hence the importance of including refugees in climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction efforts of the government. Therefore, the local governments from the refugee hosting districts continue to work in partnership with development and humanitarian actors like CARE and RICE-WN to support refugees and host communities adapt to shocks and stresses arising from climate risks.

Uriama is one of the subcounties where a CVCA was conducted. As sub county authorities, we welcomed this research and the development of the subsequent Climate Adaptation Action Plan with a strong gender lens given the high number of women and youth in our refugee population and our desire to have a practical way of motivating them to engage with the the host community in local government planning and budgeting processes.

First, RICE and CARE trained me, the Community Development Officer and the production officer of Uriama on the CVCA methodology and on CAAPs development so that we would be ready and able to co-lead the process and connect it with our existing planning processes.

With the presence of CAAPs the refugee community voices, including women refugees, are captured in the development plans. This has pushed the local government into working more closely with the women, men and youth in the refugee and host community.

For instance, in the CAAPs the refugee women identified issues of inadequate plots for farming and the local government, with RICE, identified land owners who started renting their land for the women to do farming, reducing livelihood activities that had negative impacts on the environment.

Additionally, was the issue of challenges refugee women face in getting firewood from host communities where they are threatened by men and their children at risk. Currently the refugee women and men are benefiting from a government program, the women empowerment program, DDEG for both refugee and host communities, that among others looks into addressing this risk.

The issues identified in the CAAPs have formed part of planning priorities for the local government and actions are already taken to implement these actions, e.g. training of registered groups on land management practices.

RICE has identified women leaders in the communities to follow-up on priorities of the CAAPs and development plans and currently these individuals are the champions for local government
in continuing to identify additional risks, capacities and solutions among women and youth to be incorporated in the development plans on an ongoing basis.

We are grateful to CARE and RICE for bringing these tools to the community because it enhances participation of all categories of people. This needs to be done for the other refugee settlements like bidibidi, imvepi and palorinya so that the voice of the refugee women and host community women feature in the development plans of those areas as well.