

# TOWARDS RESILIENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN

Shelter - NFI Programme

*Using Cash-Based Interventions to Improve  
Living Conditions for Displaced Families in  
Wau and Bentiu*





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Note: The names of beneficiaries have been changed in line with IOM's data protection principles.

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## Foreword

The mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is to facilitate humane and orderly migration in order to benefit migrants and society. In many countries, this means providing secure, reliable, flexible and cost-effective services for persons who have been internally displaced by natural or man-made disasters. Since conflict erupted in South Sudan in December 2013, over 1.9 million people have been displaced internally by conflict and dire humanitarian needs. IOM South Sudan has continually focused efforts on responding to the rapidly emerging and changing humanitarian needs of displaced and crisis-affected communities.

IOM's involvement in humanitarian emergencies is holistic, focusing on all phases of an emergency intervention: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Programmatic activities encompass emergency relief, return, reintegration and capacity-building efforts, as well as protecting the fundamental rights and dignity of affected populations. To help bridge the different phases of an emergency, IOM's shelter and non-food items (NFIs) unit is gradually moving from in-kind assistance towards cash-based interventions (CBIs)



Ambassador William Lacy Swing  
Director General, IOM

in South Sudan, wherever this is feasible and contextually advisable. CBIs are a powerful tool for addressing the needs of affected communities through a more cost-efficient and empowering approach aimed at strengthening resilience and capitalizing on the coping mechanisms of those communities we serve.

This photobook reflects projects IOM South Sudan has implemented in two of the protection of civilian (PoC) sites, which have served as safe havens for South Sudanese fleeing the crisis. Using a phased modality of restricted vouchers and unrestricted cash-for-work, IOM worked with the community to upgrade emergency shelter through CBI for more than 5,330 households in the Wau PoC site. Likewise, in Bentiu PoC site, IOM is implementing a project to provide locally-made, fuel-efficient stoves to more than 14,370 households under the same scheme. Both projects will provide necessary outputs to reduce the vulnerability of the affected population and at the same time they will provide knowledge and skills that will leave communities better prepared for their recovery upon return to their areas of displacement.

## Foreword

Four consecutive years of civil conflict in South Sudan have inflicted significant social, institutional and physical destruction on communities. Nearly two million people are internally displaced, most of them facing multiple or protracted displacement. Families have been forced to leave their homes, abandon their belongings and seek protection in any place they can. Protracted displacement situations such as this not only aggravate protection challenges but can also undermine the existing coping mechanisms of the communities we serve by creating medium and long-term dependency.

In this context, IOM works with a resilience-based approach by maximizing opportunities that foster progressive resilience. We focus on strengthening coping capacities and countering risks, promoting self-reliance approaches to revitalize affected local economies and creating a conducive institutional environment to facilitate the resolution of displacement situations. In some circumstances, CBIs can be an instrumental modality to address challenges of protracted displacement and link emergency response and transition. IOM has many decades of experience in CBIs across multiple countries and programmes. More recently, CBIs' growing relevance in the humanitarian context has propelled IOM to institutionally scale up the use of this response modality in humanitarian operations. The CBI projects implemented by IOM South Sudan in the Bentiu and Wau PoC sites are solid examples of innovative and cost-

effective programmes that help communities during the emergency response while simultaneously enabling them to be better prepared to face future return or reintegration. For instance, the CBI project in the Wau PoC site produced shelter upgrades through stronger and more sustainable technical solutions at 40 per cent lower cost compared to an in-kind modality. An essential part of the project was the different capacity-building avenues and opportunities that focused on the transfer of skills and knowledge, which were concurrently offered to women, youth and the most vulnerable groups in the site. Similarly, in Bentiu PoC site, IOM is capitalizing on indigenous materials and techniques to serve 90 per cent of the affected population with a fuel-efficient stove through CBI. This intervention is introducing a fuel-efficient solution tool that is 50 per cent more efficient than current practices at a cost that is significantly lower to the traditional imported solutions. Crucially, the project's key aim is the mitigation of gender-based violence risks as a result of women's reduced needs to leave the camp to collect firewood.

Key to all these programmes' successes has been the engagement of experienced and committed South Sudanese and international staff, but, most importantly, the instrumental contribution of the communities themselves in proactively participating in the design and implementation of the project at all stages.



Mohammed Abdiker  
Director, Department of Operations and Emergencies, IOM



## South Sudan Shelter-NFI Cluster Rainer Gonzalez Palau, Shelter-NFI Cluster Coordinator

The Shelter-NFI Cluster in South Sudan was activated immediately after the country gained independence from Sudan in 2011. Amid a wave of goodwill and optimism, the Cluster and the larger humanitarian community focused their initial efforts from 2011 to 2013 on supporting the long-term building of the newly created state. After the sudden onset of civil conflict in December 2013, the Cluster had to quickly pivot its focus to the short-term emergency needs as displacement increased rapidly and humanitarian conditions deteriorated to dire levels.

In response to these needs, since the beginning of the crisis, Cluster partners provided shelter and NFI assistance to 4.5 million people, with an approximate value of US dollars 100 million. Despite access constraints and frequent insecurity, relief agencies have reached most of the displaced population in South Sudan with shelter and NFI assistance at least twice. In some instances, due to protracted and/or multiple displacements, some communities have been reached up to four or five times.

The conflict has evolved differently in each geographical location, with most of the country experiencing multiple displacements due to the worsening of the security situation. Nevertheless, we are observing small pockets where returnees or protracted displaced populations are resuming day-to-day activities. As the humanitarian community tried to keep up with the expanding needs, the Cluster limited its activities to in-kind distributions of emergency shelter and basic household items through the pipeline system. This approach proved to be effective and allowed partners to respond to the needs of the affected population in a timely manner.

Given the evidence that the conflict was not moving towards a solution, the Cluster took the strategic decision to explore resilience-based approaches in late 2016. The resilience-based approaches, mainly around CBIs, would target areas of stability and capitalize on the existing coping mechanisms and conducive environments where more cost-efficient and sustainable activities could be implemented. As a result of this, a pilot component on CBIs was introduced in the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan. During the first quarter of 2017, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as Shelter-NFI Cluster lead agency, successfully piloted the first CBI in Wau PoC site, Zone C. The project facilitated the upgrading of emergency shelter through a

combination of restricted and unrestricted cash approach. This mixed approach was key to its success. On one hand, the community received two restricted vouchers that allowed to revitalize the economic activity of local traders, who were also displaced themselves. On the other hand, a third, unrestricted voucher provided enhanced freedom of choice and the opportunity



for the affected population to prioritize their own needs. Eventually, the approach was not only 40 per cent more cost-efficient compared to an in-kind distribution, but its flexible and interactive nature with the community integrated capacity building initiatives with the strengthening of existing coping mechanisms. Throughout the year, IOM and other partners piloted other small interventions across the country.

Given the successful results, for the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan, the Cluster introduced CBIs no longer as a pilot but as a modality of response. For 2018, the Cluster is planning to reach 20 per cent of the targeted population through CBIs. Indeed, CBIs cannot be implemented everywhere in South Sudan due to the unpredictability of the security situation, protection concerns or the inexistence of markets. At this stage of the humanitarian response, in-kind distributions should be understood as the last resort—even though this will still be the dominant response modality—and approaches that build on resilience and sustainability, such as CBIs, should be prioritized whenever plausible.

The case studies showcased in this book summarize the tremendous efforts that IOM and the Cluster as a whole invested in gradually changing the status quo of the “in-kind” mentality in South Sudan. Nonetheless, the real success of this change lies in the communities we serve. Encouraging participation and enhancing accountability processes demonstrated that, even in emergencies, creative avenues for the beneficiaries to own and drive the humanitarian response are not only instrumental to ensure a future resilient South Sudan but also perfectly feasible.

# SOUTH SUDAN



**WAU**

## Wau Protection of Civilians (PoC) Site

The protection of civilians (PoC) site in Wau, Western Bahr El Ghazal, was established in June 2016 after intense fighting in the country's northwestern region prompted tens of thousands to flee their homes in search of refuge near the existing UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) base in Wau town. By the end of 2016, six months after the arrival of the first family, more than 30,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were living on less than 100,000 square metres of land in what remains the most congested PoC site in South Sudan today.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and humanitarian partners working in the site sought solutions to improve living conditions despite the space constraints. From January to March 2017, IOM South Sudan's shelter and non-food items (NFI) team piloted a cash-based intervention (CBI) in Zone C of Wau PoC site to deliver housing improvements to approximately 6,480 IDPs and further improve living conditions by incentivizing beneficiaries to undertake a series of shelter upgrades to provide increased privacy, security, ownership, protection from the elements and a sense of home in the midst of crisis. Shelter upgrade improved the usage life of plastic sheets used in the construction of roofs and walls from three to six months.

All materials required for the upgrades were delivered through commodity voucher fairs. The materials were procured locally through small-scale traders residing within the PoC site—many of whom have struggled to maintain business due to the crisis and protracted displacement—and the beneficiaries themselves undertook all labour associated with installing the upgrades. The success of this approach was underpinned by a cash-for-work (CFW) programme that incentivized beneficiaries to install the upgrades by offering a small cash grant upon successful completion and verification.

The CBI in Wau was the first concerted effort by IOM South Sudan to deliver shelter upgrades through a community driven, participatory approach in the context of a PoC site. The project provided cost-effective means of meeting shelter needs while simultaneously supporting the local economy, promoting ownership and building resilience.

The upgrades consisted of adding a layer of dry elephant grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*, also known as Napier grass, is a species of perennial tropical grass native to the African grasslands) found naturally in surrounding areas—to rooftops to lower inside temperatures and extend the life expectancy of the shelter, especially the plastic sheets and installing thatched bamboo walls and doors around the shelter exterior to increase family privacy and further extend the durability of the shelters.





## Resilience

The community-led process of the CBI programme in Wau supported increased resilience among the community. Through active engagement with traditional formal and informal leadership structures, business leaders, and women and youth groups, effective partnerships transferred expertise and knowledge to improve their living conditions and equip the community with skills that they can use both inside the Wau PoC site and beyond. IOM maintained a commitment to accountability to affected populations (AAP), including through transparent identification and notification of the project, inclusive and active engagement with the community during project design and implementation through focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

Through multiple and continuous discussions, IOM engaged directly with the community to better understand their intentions in recognition of the converging crises. The community played a central role in almost all aspects of programme implementation, proving a crucial partner in the process of selecting traders, sensitizing beneficiaries and the wider community, responding to feedback/complaints and organizing the skills trainings. Allowing the community to assume increased responsibility for the improvement of their living conditions served to restore dignity and strengthen the self-sufficiency of the affected population.

## Beyond the Pilot – Shelter Upgrade in Wau PoC Site Zone A

Following the success of the CBI shelter upgrade pilot in Zone C, IOM replicated the project in Zone A of the Wau PoC site from December 2017 to March 2018 by upgrading 375 newly constructed communal shelters as part of a large-scale rehabilitation of the site. In total, IOM upgraded 551 communal shelters in Zones A and C, reaching 5,330 households, or approximately 27,622 individuals.

Delivering these upgrades using a cash-based approach entailed three main steps:

### 1. Using locally available actors and materials

Empowering the community by enhancing their participation and motivated by the availability of relevant materials on the local market, IOM entered into partnership with a number of small-scale traders residing within the PoC site. These traders were tasked with procuring, storing and supplying all materials needed for the upgrades to the shelters.

### 2. Distributing commodity vouchers and organizing voucher fairs

IOM distributed commodity vouchers to the programme participants that could be exchanged for the shelter upgrade materials during several voucher fairs organized within the perimeter of the PoC site.

### 3. Involving programme participants in installing the upgrades

As a means of further promoting community ownership and lowering operational costs, the beneficiaries were responsible for installing the upgrades to their shelters. Upon successful completion and verification by IOM, they were given a cash-for-work grant worth 640 South Sudanese Pounds (SSP) that could be spent to cover basic needs, supplementing household income according to household economic survey. IOM also organized skills trainings for 300 participants from zones A, B and C –selected by the Youth and Women committees in coordination with IOM–on how to make bamboo thatch to serve as walls and doors. Participants sold the walls and doors they made during the training to traders who subsequently distributed these in voucher fairs to households in Zone A. Each skills-training session lasted three days and participants received a cash-for-work grant of 1,000 SSP.





## Cristina, Shelter Upgrade Beneficiary

“Before we installed the elephant grass, the temperatures inside the shelter were very hot. With the elephant grass, it has become very cool. IOM consulted us on how to improve our shelters and this was what we proposed. The elephant grass on the roof will last and will keep us protected for at least one year. I am looking forward to installing the bamboo-thatched walls that were also proposed by the community. We have thieves in the area that cut the plastic sheet and steal our belongings. The bamboo-thatched wall will serve as a barrier and prevent thieves from stealing.”



## Project Strategy

The CBI project was fully integrated with IOM's overall emergency response in South Sudan, supporting the continuation and scaling-up of shelter-NFI activities in the Wau PoC site. Moreover, it supported the integration of multi-sector activities—including protection, food, security and livelihoods—in Wau to provide life-supporting services to populations affected by conflict. The project was fully aligned with the South Sudan 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan:

### South Sudan HRP Strategic Objectives

**SO1: Save lives and alleviate the suffering of those most in need of assistance and protection:** IOM's CBI program is focused on alleviating suffering through the provision of essential services in the sector of shelter-NFI and improving the living conditions of the IDPs within the Wau PoC site.

**SO2: Support at-risk communities to sustain their capacity to cope with significant threats:** The skills development component of this project focused on the capacity building by transferring skills—namely the construction of bamboo-thatched walls—that can be used both inside and outside of the PoC site. This skills development was an effort to address long-term needs while simultaneously providing immediate emergency essentials.

### South Sudan HRP Shelter-NFI Cluster Specific Objectives

**CO2: Improve the living conditions of protracted IDPs in PoCs, formal IDP camps, collective centres, and host communities:** The project focused on ensuring that the living conditions of protracted IDPs in the Wau PoC site were improved through the shelter upgrades.

**CO3: Explore sustainable and cost effective interventions to support the cohesion of vulnerable and at-risk communities:** The proposed project is based on voucher assistance for shelter in lieu of in-kind assistance. This systematic approach resulted in the establishment of a local market, cost efficiencies,—including reduced maintenance cost—and improved life span of shelter structures.

### South Sudan HRP Food Security and Livelihood Cluster Specific Objective

**CO2: Protect and promote emergency livelihoods to enhance coping mechanisms and improve access to food:** The skills development component of the project sought to enhance the skills and knowledge of traders and IDPs. In the long run, it aims to contribute to self-sufficiency by stimulating entrepreneurship and increasing of economic activities in the local market.





## Thomas, Block Leader

“As the block leader, I advise my people and help them with issues and challenges. We, the community, are very satisfied and happy with the shelter upgrade. It was the community who requested for the elephant grass because it was very hot inside the shelters with only the plastic sheet used as a roof and wall. The skills training for the bamboo thatched walls is very helpful because the community can use these skills to maintain their shelters even when they go back to their homes outside the PoC site. They learned these skills within a few days and they will even receive cash at the end of the project. They can use this money to buy sugar, meat and other types of food in the market.”

## Working with Community Leadership

The IOM shelter-NFI team worked closely with the community leadership structures in the PoC site—including the Community Leaders Committee, Community Higher Committee, Women Committees, Youth Committees and Block Leaders Committees—to design and plan activities. These same forums were then used to disseminate information to the larger community for sensitization on project activities and community mobilization. Community mobilizers serve as focal points for communication with communities (CWC) along with block leaders to broadcast the messaging from IOM teams. This also helped IOM shelter-NFI teams to collect community feedback in a timely manner to ensure community inputs were collected and activities were adjusted accordingly.

## Community Sensitization Campaign

As promoting community ownership and empowerment was an essential aspect of the CBI in Wau, IOM initiated a comprehensive community sensitization campaign starting from day one of project cycle. This process began by presenting the project to the various sub-committees that make up the community leadership in Wau PoC site. Community consultations were designed to encourage the population to share their ideas and vital inputs in advance on how they can be actively involved in the project design and implementation. A noteworthy consequence of such consultations was the decision to engage the Women and Youth committees in identifying both participants and trainers for the bamboo thatch skills trainings. Other committees also received tasks based on their specific areas of responsibility or influence. For example, the Chiefs Committee assisted in verifying the selected traders by providing documentation confirming their status as recognized and trustworthy individuals with a legitimate right to conduct business within the PoC site. Another example is the role given to the Block Leaders tasked with going “door-to-door” in their respective blocks to explain the nature of the project to the community.



## Priscila Scalco, Camp Manager, CCCM

“Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) works in close relationship with all partners operating in the site to ensure assistance is coordinated and reaches those most in need. In a complex environment like the PoC site, it is extremely important that the voices of the community are consulted and not lost in the stress and pace of daily life in the camp. Due to the significant community engagement required in such a project, CCCM has been consulted on different aspects of the operation and supported the teams conducting the project through mobilization of communities and leadership, communication support and information dissemination and direct meetings with community and partners. To improve transparency and access to all site services and activities, Camp Management maintains an active information and complaint desk where the community can address grievances and provide feedback on services. Besides that, Camp Management has coordinated site activities ensuring the CBI project could run smoothly among all other operational activities taking place in the PoC site. Wau remains the most congested site in the country, and the CBI intervention is part of a larger project of site rehabilitation involving close coordination among several partners and clusters. CCCM is satisfied with the outcome so far because the CBI project increases the life span of the shelters, increases community participation and provides training and skills enhancement to several groups within the site. CCCM works towards a service provision that ensures safer sites with respect to an individual’s dignity. Improved living conditions is one tangible example of efforts being channeled in such direction. In terms of care and maintenance of the site, the CBI project allows a longer life span for the shelter which is cost efficient. It also promoted community participation in the process, supporting the creation of an environment for increased community ownership.”



## Afsar Khan, Shelter-NFI Officer

“The modality selected for the response, in this case CBI, was determined in light of a number of considerations. First, was determining the capacity of the population to procure these shelter materials locally. Because the crises caused a deterioration in people’s sources of income, the affected population were unable to meet their basic shelter needs. Second, was to determine the common practice of how the affected population used these material before moving into the PoC site. Prior to the crises, they purchased shelter materials, from the local market.”

Third, was to determine the current functionality and accessibility of the market. The local market is functioning and easily accessible for the protracted IDPs without causing any protection or security risk. Fourth, specific shelter materials in huge quantities were available in the local market and traders were willing to work on competitive prices in consortium with other traders as well as with the affected population and IOM. Most importantly, the population concerned were willing to work with IOM and local traders.”

“The unavailability of necessary documentation with the traders for service agreement posed a challenge. Thankfully, with the support of IOM Resource Management Unit, we were able to come up with the process and selection criteria to sign terms of engagement with the local traders. The project plan was also revised in accordance with the availability of the materials. Market days were planned in different steps to ensure the timely completion of the project. Due to the low capacity of traders in understanding the processes, we had to regularly conduct coordination meetings and consultations all throughout the duration of the project cycle. This served to build the capacity of the local traders to understand the overall process of voucher-based interventions. IOM staff and field supervisors were monitoring the shelters to ensure that the elephant grass and bamboo-thatched walls were properly installed as well as to assist and guide those who had some difficulties in installing the shelters.”

“Gender equality was considered in the project by ensuring that all gender and social groups were involved in project design, the capacity building component and implementation of the project. Transparency was also ensured all throughout the project cycle. Beneficiaries were informed in advance about their entitlements. Details on the number and type of items to be received were printed on the vouchers. The CCCM CWC focal point and mobilization team extended their support to communicate effectively with the community. They were also engaged to record and refer to complaints received from the community to ensure that the complaints were heard and addressed in a timely manner. Shelter-NFI team also shared information door to door using megaphones for messaging in local language. Community leaders, block leaders, youth and women committee representatives were engaged to support the project team in communicating with the community.”





## Trader Selection Process

The shelter upgrade was designed to involve multiple small-scale traders to strengthen community ownership and serve as an impetus to enhance economic activity over a larger segment of the population. Choosing a higher number of traders also helped mitigate the risk of delays due to potential breakdowns in the supply-chain. All materials for the proposed shelter upgrades were procured locally from traders within and around the PoC site.

### Community consultations

Before engaging with individual traders, IOM organized several rounds of consultations with the community leadership to help guide the choice of suitable partners. This was a crucial step as traders who were not recognized and trusted within the PoC site would have had not only difficulty in ensuring smooth supplies, but also, experienced difficulties interacting with beneficiaries and cooperating with other traders. Furthermore, the community leadership enjoyed full support of the community. Without their involvement, it would have been difficult to mobilize active community involvement in the project activities.

### Establishing selection criteria

- Capacity to acquire and stock significant amount of required materials
- Willingness to work with the community, IOM and with other traders in the consortium
- Willingness to provide employment opportunities to the trained persons in the project implementation
- Capacity to accept commodity vouchers and associated payment delays
- Good reputation within the community
- IDPs' accessibility to the market
- Competitive pricing

## Market Analysis

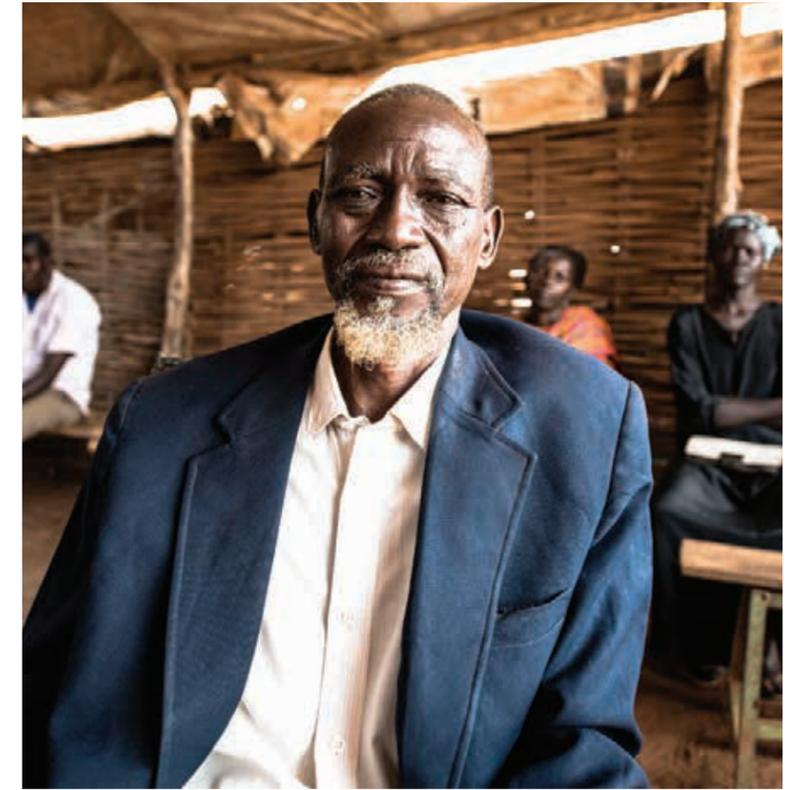
Having defined the required volumes of bamboo, grass, rubber rope, walls and doors, a market analysis was needed to establish whether the local market had the capacity to supply some, most or all of the materials. For this purpose, a detailed market assessment was conducted to finalized the CBI programme decision. The team decided to focus on the PoC site marketplace, which provided adequate availability of the required shelter materials, marketplace capacity and local traders operating in the area, as well as low logistics costs and easy market access for IDPs.



## Cost-Effectiveness

In an attempt to measure the cost-effectiveness of the cash-based project, IOM gathered quotations for all commodities from the established supplier in Wau, which, in line with IOM procurement procedures, would have been the natural partner for this type of intervention. However, a comparative analysis showed that traders in the PoC site consistently offered more competitive pricing. While undoubtedly less costly, engaging with local small-scale traders has a positive multiplier effect on the wider community. This was taken into consideration upon estimation of overall project expenditure. In summation, the market analysis showed that opting for small-scale traders resulted in lower logistic costs and easier access for the IDPs. A lack of individual trader capacity to supply sufficient volumes of materials was counter-balanced by engaging with multiple traders.





## Abdulahim, Trader

“This project is a good opportunity for my business. The demand for elephant grass rose and the financial gains from this project helped me expand my trade and enabled me to extend assistance to people in my village. Inflation was a challenge and we had difficulties in transporting the bamboo and elephant grass; but, overall, I am happy with the outcome not only financially but now I have become famous amongst the people here in Wau PoC site. It was also a pleasure to work with the trainees who participated in making the bamboo-thatched walls. I know that they are satisfied with the new skills that they learned. This is a potential source of income and can increase their standards of living.”



## John, Trainer

“The training was very organized. We started with an introduction followed by providing instructions on how to use the tools and cut the bamboo into four pieces and how to clean it so that the materials have a neat finishing. I am here to train anybody who is willing to learn. There were men and women in the training and the women participants were very eager to learn. Some girls would even accompany their mothers to see how they made the bamboo-thatched walls. Some of the trainees may forget the skills they have learned but the ones who are sharp and who are willing will master the skill and it can even be a source of income and help their families.”

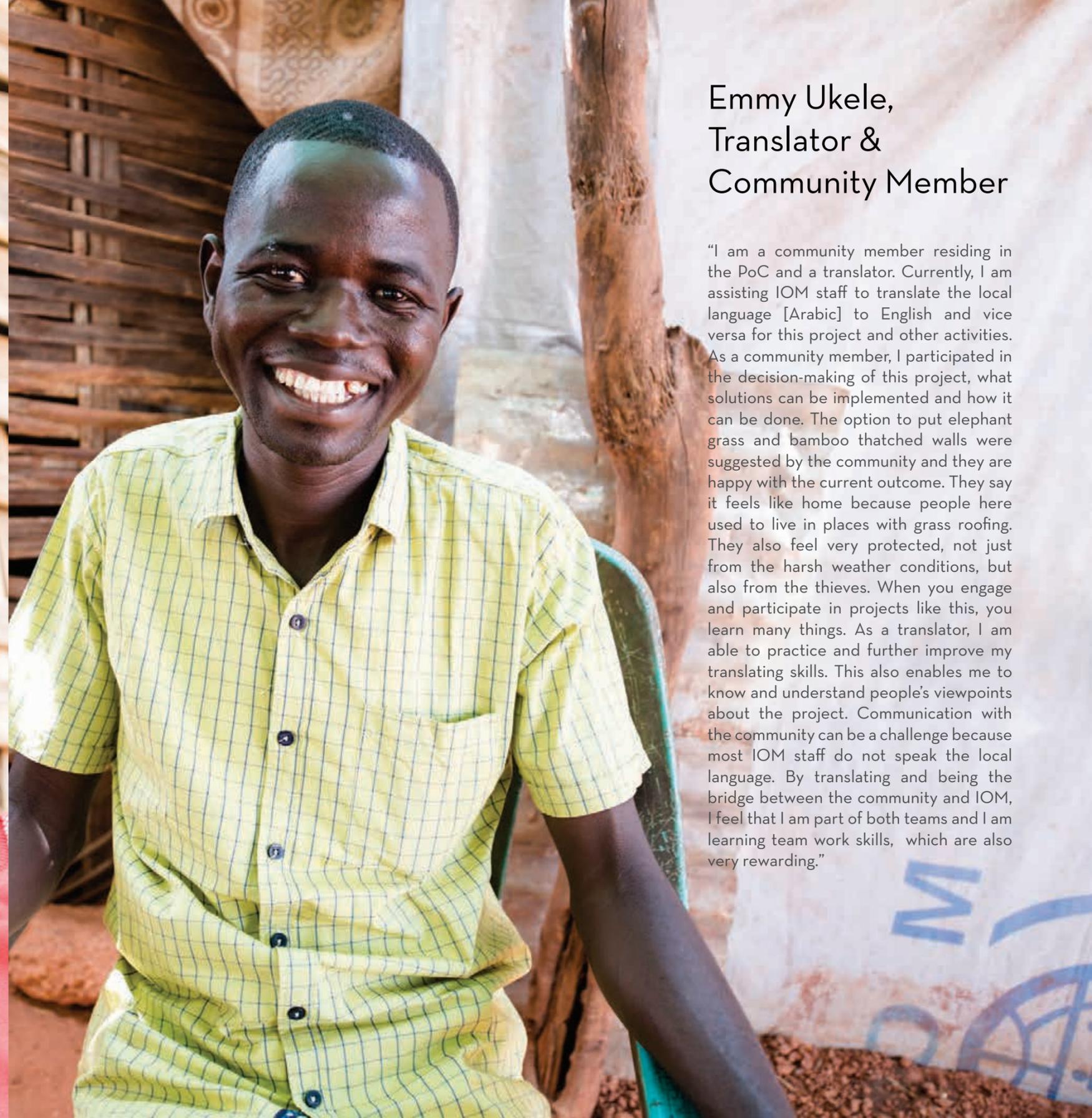
## Trainer Selection Process

The selection of 15 trainers and 15 assistant trainers, all of whom were from the PoC site, was likewise conducted by the community. The various sub-committees came up with proposals for suitable candidates who were then screened and hired by IOM according to their technical skills.



## Emmy Ukele, Translator & Community Member

“I am a community member residing in the PoC and a translator. Currently, I am assisting IOM staff to translate the local language [Arabic] to English and vice versa for this project and other activities. As a community member, I participated in the decision-making of this project, what solutions can be implemented and how it can be done. The option to put elephant grass and bamboo thatched walls were suggested by the community and they are happy with the current outcome. They say it feels like home because people here used to live in places with grass roofing. They also feel very protected, not just from the harsh weather conditions, but also from the thieves. When you engage and participate in projects like this, you learn many things. As a translator, I am able to practice and further improve my translating skills. This also enables me to know and understand people’s viewpoints about the project. Communication with the community can be a challenge because most IOM staff do not speak the local language. By translating and being the bridge between the community and IOM, I feel that I am part of both teams and I am learning team work skills, which are also very rewarding.”





## Training Implementation

IOM technical team drafted a teaching plan and identified tools and materials required for the training. It was agreed that IOM would provide each participant with one pair of work gloves to keep after the training, a machete to be returned to IOM at the end of each day and two bundles of bamboo to be used for training purposes. The trainings were scheduled to provide five and a half hours of guided teaching each day. On the first day, IOM staff explained the objective of the trainings and what was expected from the participants. The following two days were focused on practical work on how to both split and thatch bamboo using the correct tools and techniques. If the items passed relevant quality controls, then participants sold their products to traders participating in the voucher fairs. This provided them with a small income as a result of their newly acquired skills and also gave them the opportunity to assist in improving the general living conditions within the PoC site. Importantly, youth, most of which had remained idle prior to joining the trainings, were able to engage in a positive activity that contributed to social cohesion and building resilience.

## Skills Development

IOM conducted a three-day skills training on how to construct bamboo thatch walls and doors for shelters for 300 individuals. The team selected participants from within the PoC site, including zones A, B and C. Gender equality was ensured during selection of the training participants with the ratio of 50 per cent female and 50 per cent male.

The shelter-NFI team worked closely with the community leaders and Women and Youth committees to ensure equal representation of participants. Training participants were identified from each block according to their respective population. At the end of the training, each participant was provided with a training completion certificate and 1,152 SSP.



## Susan, Women's Group Leader

“As one of the leaders of the women’s group [elected Women’s Committee], I serve as a bridge between the women, the community and the different organizations in the PoC site. With the women, I discuss issues and challenges, and gather comments, complaints and feedback. We try to look for ways forward and/or address them to organizations and find solutions together. For this project, it was part of the women’s request to put elephant grass on the shelters because the temperatures rise in March and it gets really hot. In our areas of origin, we also put elephant grass on our homes, so the upgrades are a welcome initiative. Initially, we do not have money to buy the bamboo-thatched walls and install them. With the training, we learned how to make the bamboo thatched walls and how to put them onto our shelters. The only challenge is the installation of the elephant grass on the roof. In our community, women are not supposed to go up the roof so the men and youth install the elephant grass on the roof and women put up the bamboo-thatched walls on the sides of the shelter. I am very happy to see the women participate in these trainings. Women are very flexible and eager to learn. Given the chance, they can also do activities that only men can do. These skills can be used to generate income. We are still lacking many skills and we would like to learn more.”

## Angelo, Trainee

“The training is well organized and I can teach the skills I’m learning now to others. If my shelter gets damaged, I can easily repair it. If I decide to go back to home or another location, I can also use these skills for my shelter. We need more of these types of skills, and I am willing to learn as many as I can.”



## Andrea, Trainee

“They teach us how to prepare the materials, such as how to cut one bamboo pole into four. I am thankful for this training because it has taught me skills and has helped me to become self-reliant. I have seven children and I would like to use this skill to help my family. Now, I can divide the bamboo and make a bamboo-thatched wall and I can teach these skills to others. I can repair the shelter walls myself if they get broken.”



## Setting up the Voucher Fairs

The communal shelters in Zone A are dispersed over four adjacent geographical areas (blocks). The voucher fairs were organized by block to ensure ease of access. All voucher fairs took place in a demarcated area not far from Zone A. In order to guide customers and assist in transporting materials out of the market area, daily laborers were hired by IOM and the vendors themselves on the days of the voucher fairs.

Employing local, small-scale traders for the purpose of delivering shelter upgrades brought with it numerous benefits to the community and IOM operations. Nevertheless, this approach did not come without challenges: one of the major being that traders were unable to bring in large quantities of materials without being given time to prepare. Organizing several smaller fairs was an attempt at responding to this challenge. Furthermore, only voucher recipients were allowed access to the market area, thus giving ample time for sellers and buyers to interact with each other.





## Main Benefits

All materials were procured locally and subsequently passed on to beneficiaries in exchange for commodity vouchers during designated voucher fairs.

The main benefits of this approach for shelter upgrade are listed below:

- Increase shelter lifespan from 3-6 to 12-18 months, which will eventually reduce the high cost of shelter repairs and maintenance
- Lower inside temperatures by 3-5 degrees and increase ventilation
- Provide increased protection to beneficiaries from elements
- Increase economic activity in the local market while creating employment opportunities and stimulating entrepreneurship within and outside of the PoC site
- Engage the beneficiaries in improving their living conditions, contributing to the restoration of dignity and strengthening the self-sufficiency of the community
- Generate a significant reduction in material costs for shelter upgrades
- Reduce vulnerability by making community participation a central component of the project

## Protection & Gender Mainstreaming

To mitigate any risk or harm, such as potential conflicts arising between recipients and non-recipients or abuse of project activities, considerable measures were taken into account to mitigate unintended risks. The shelter-NFI team established transparent distribution systems that were widely disseminated through different forums. Shelter-NFI team worked in close coordination with protection actors and CCCM to ensure that persons with special needs were given special consideration in all activities.



## Justin Saninve, Shelter-NFI Assistant

“I am currently doing verification whether the beneficiaries have properly installed the bamboo-thatched walls on their shelters in Zone A, Block 4. Most of them have put the bamboo-thatched walls but some of the recipients do not know how to do this properly and we are helping them with these types of challenges. This project is very timely because the rainy season is coming and it will be very cold. Without the bamboo thatched walls to protect the inhabitants from the cold wind, children, the elderly and other vulnerable people can be affected and easily get sick. The community is very happy with the shelter upgrade because they also feel protected not only from harsh weather conditions but from thieves who can easily tear the plastic sheet walls and steal their food and belongings. What I find good with this project is the major involvement of the community. IOM consulted the community leaders and other major community actors in the PoC site before implementing this project. They did not just come and impose the project on the community.”



## Agnes Duku, Shelter-NFI Assistant

“The community is very satisfied with this project. Firstly, because the shelter upgrade protects them from the sun’s heat. Secondly, because the community is involved in the design and implementation of the project through skills training—the people learn more. They feel happy because they are able to acquire knowledge. Lastly, the money they receive is used to buy food for the household.”





## Futor, Youth Committee Leader

“My role as a youth leader is to guide and seek ways to protect the youth in the community. Without jobs, livelihoods and activities, the youth can resort to antisocial acts and violence. IOM, through this project, has provided the youth with opportunities to learn new skills and to be active. Because slots to participate in this project were limited, not all youths were able to join the project and some were left out. It would be good to have other projects of this nature so we can actively involve the youth and they have something to keep themselves busy. The trainings were very organized and the skills the youth have learned during this project can be used both inside and outside the PoC site. People feel involved and nobody remains lazy with these activities. You make the shelter you live in and that is very rewarding.”



## Monitoring

The shelter upgrade project was monitored through several mechanisms:

- Revision of activities and addressing issues raised concerning targeting, distribution, shelter upgrades and cash-for-work grant.
- Regular coordination meetings amongst stakeholders were conducted and incorporated during project activities.
- Establishment of complaint desk to ensure access of beneficiaries to voice their complaints and which were addressed by IOM shelter-NFI team.
- Technical staff regularly conducted field monitoring visits to monitor and ensure the quality of work and implementation. Juba senior management team also visited the field for support and to monitor the implementation.
- Bi-weekly and monthly reports on challenges and progress were shared, and challenges were identified and shared internally for the improvement of project quality.



## Supervision, Support and Verification of Shelter Upgrades

After the voucher fair, beneficiaries brought the materials back to their homes and were given approximately one week to finalize upgrades. Following this, IOM performed a verification exercise by making house calls to each programme participant. Four locally hired technical supervisors monitored the upgrades and provided support and guidance in the process of installing elephant grass and bamboo-thatched walls. After installation, IOM staff verified and ensured that relevant upgrades have been completed in a satisfactory manner before approving the beneficiary to move on to the next phase of the voucher distribution. In the event that the upgrade was only partly completed or finished in a way that is not in line with given instructions, the staff member provided assistance and guidance on how to properly finish the task. To guide the verification process, IOM staff made use of a monitoring check-list designed to ensure quick and consistent assessments.

In total, there were two verification rounds per block, the first determining eligibility for receiving upgrade materials for the second upgrade (bamboo walls/doors), and the second determining eligibility for the cash-for-work grant.





## Voucher Distribution

Commodity vouchers were designed for the two phases of upgrades: adding a layer of elephant grass on the roof top and installation of thatched bamboo walls and doors to cover the exterior of shelters. The commodity voucher value was restricted to the specific type of material and quantity. The commodity vouchers were used as legal tender for the exchange of upgrade materials during the market fairs and to justify an important role acting as proof of registration for eligible programme participants. Through the vouchers, the traders could keep track of the individual households they served, enabling IOM to verify the traders' claims before redeeming the vouchers.

Below outlines the process followed:

- The targeted beneficiaries were registered and their names linked to a voucher number. This was done by means of making house-calls on the voucher distribution day. To keep track of each household address, a system of numbering shelters and categorizing the partitions within each shelter from A - F allowed for the distribution to be undertaken with accuracy.
- Once the beneficiary was linked to a serial number and an address, IOM staff noted the information on each voucher before proceeding with distribution.
- All traders were provided with a specific vendor identification number that they noted on each received voucher before handing them back for redemption to IOM staff to process their payment.
- IOM staff then used the beneficiary name, serial number and address, along with the vendor ID, to verify the list of served beneficiaries as per traders. Each voucher was attached as a receipt to the list of served beneficiaries and distribution of material was subsequently verified through another round of house calls.
- Traders were only reimbursed for the households that were successfully verified.



## Beneficiaries

The IOM shelter-NFI team developed and agreed upon beneficiary selection criteria in consultation with community leadership committees, block leaders, Women and Youth committees. From each unit of shelter, one household was elected by the households residing in the shelter unit to be responsible for receiving shelter materials from traders and completing the required works of shelter/unit upgrade. Beneficiaries were the ones living in the newly constructed shelters of Zone A.

### Rosa, Beneficiary

“Before, we only had plastic sheets and the strong and cold wind could easily enter the house and also damage or destroy the shelters. It becomes very hot during the day and very cold in the evenings. Without the bamboo-thatched walls, thieves can easily cut into the shelters and steal your belongings and even the food that you have prepared for the family. With the bamboo thatched walls, it becomes difficult for thieves to do that. I hired somebody to put the elephant grass on top of the roof but I put the bamboo thatched walls myself. I am very happy because, now, my shelter has become a real house.”

**BENTIU**



## Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) Site

Approximately 114,000 people are seeking protection at the PoC site in the UNMISS base in Bentiu. Since December 2013, the site has witnessed multiple influxes of new arrivals in connection with spikes in insecurity in surrounding areas. Due to protection concerns, many individuals, particularly men, have not left the site since they arrived over four years ago.

Similar to the Wau PoC site, conditions are crowded in Bentiu, with families living close to each other and in small spaces. Households in the Bentiu PoC site are currently preparing their daily meals on polluting and inefficient three-stone cook stoves in very tight and poorly ventilated quarters. Women, who carry the main responsibility for fuel collection, are forced to venture further and further outside of the protection site for prolonged periods of time, exposing them to high risks of gender-based violence (GBV) on route.

Previous attempts at coming to terms with the health, safety, environmental and security risks that are underpinned by these rudimentary cooking practices have largely centered around distribution of technically advanced fuel-efficient stoves from foreign suppliers. However, in the Bentiu PoC site, imported fuel-efficient stoves models have failed to generate long-term usage among the population. Instead, these stoves often end up being sold on the local market, not being used at all or being left behind as families move to other locations. The reason behind this can likely be found in the lack of community buy-in, in turn stemming from an omission to identify and build on solutions that are well adapted to the local context.





## Resilience

By adopting a community-led implementation approach, the project sought to strengthen resilience and self-sufficiency, engaging in partnership with local leaders and entrepreneur, as well as other stakeholders such as women and youth. Through these efforts, the cash-based activity in Bentiu promotes local ownership and sustainability as the community was closely involved in all stages of the project cycle and will therefore be in a better position to respond to subsequent shocks.

While the skills-trainings were designed to facilitate implementation of the project, it also provided participants with a livelihood skill that could become an income-generating activity beyond the PoC site. They can earn money by training, assisting, or building the stoves for others. This may serve to reduce humanitarian needs in the long-term by reducing underlying vulnerabilities and risks in the form of unemployment and scarcity of cooking fuel.



## Major Concerns of Fuel Collection and Cooking Practices

### Gender-based violence

According to a baseline study undertaken as part of this project (including a household survey with 80 women, key informant interviews and focus group discussions), individuals leave the PoC site to collect firewood between two to three times a week for an average of four to six hours each time. During the surveys and interviews, women also reported that they are progressively staying outside for longer periods of time as firewood is becoming a scarce resource in the surrounding areas of the PoC site.

In the GBV Safety Audit of April 2017<sup>1</sup>, which identifies high-risk activities and GBV “hotspots” within and outside of Bentiu PoC site, women collecting firewood was highlighted as one of the most common circumstances accompanying reports of sexual assault, rape and forceful robbery. The more time women spend outside, the higher the risk of experiencing GBV, according to the audit.

There is thus a rationale, from a GBV perspective, for reducing the amount of time that women spend collecting firewood. Since firewood is almost exclusively used as cooking fuel, any intervention that can increase the efficiency of current cooking practices in a sustainable manner will also be instrumental to the reduction of GBV. Freeing up time for women will also improve their participation in community activities and increase opportunities to explore alternative livelihoods.

<sup>1</sup>. Global Protection Cluster – GBV Prevention and Response, 2017



## Adverse Health Effects of Smoke Inhalation

The traditional three-stone stoves<sup>2</sup>—an assembly of three round stones supporting a cooking pot over an open fire—used by most families in the PoC site have been widely documented in numerous studies to have severely negative health impacts. The excessive smoke pollution from these stoves leads to a significant increase in cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, with small children and infants particularly vulnerable.

Coming to terms with the adverse health effects of smoke pollution requires a sustainable transformation of current cooking practices in the PoC site. Since the long-term goal is behavioral change that goes beyond project implementation, the process must be community-driven and any potential solution must be based on considerations of what is culturally appropriate and acceptable to the population.

<sup>2</sup>. See photo presented on this page

## Environmental Degradation Related to Deforestation

Overall in sub-Saharan Africa, 90 per cent of the population relies on wood fuel for their domestic energy use, with firewood being preferred over charcoal in rural areas, according to baseline data. The incessant demand for cooking fuel is associated with an over exploitation of natural forests, which in turn has a number of detrimental long-term effects on the environment and, ultimately, on people's well-being. Forests not only provide local communities with food, shelter and livelihoods but also serve as a buffer against drought as they directly affect rain production. Furthermore, when trees and vegetation are cut down at a rate that exceeds their natural regrowth, and is not followed by good land management practices, the result is long-term land degradation and soil fertility decline.

Aside from the ecological aspects of deforestation, there are also sociopolitical dimensions. South Sudan's economy is marked by competition for scarce natural resources. As the crisis continues to force families from their homes to seek protection elsewhere, tensions have inevitably grown between IDPs and host communities in places where the collection of firewood is having an adverse effect on the environment.

The use of biomass as cooking fuel in the Bentiu PoC site is having an increasingly negative impact on the environment as a relatively large population remains reliant on limited resources in a comparatively small geographical area. The baseline study shows that women collecting firewood are not only increasingly resorting to cutting down live vegetation instead of collecting naturally occurring "dead wood," but they are also travelling further and further into the woods to find sufficient fuel, bearing witness to the effects of over exploitation.





## Niyako

"I collect firewood every day and it takes me around six hours per day. I leave at eight in the morning and come back at two in the afternoon. I also make charcoal from the firewood that I collect and sell it. This is the stove that I have used since I have been in the PoC site."





## Household Economy

Cooking fuel is a major source of expense for the majority of households in the Bentiu PoC site, with two thirds of the population spending up to 60 per cent of total household income on firewood and obtaining the remaining third collecting firewood outside. The baseline study also revealed that households sometimes opt to sell food to pay for fuel.

The fact that a significant portion of household income is spent on firewood further demonstrates the importance and potential benefits of introducing fuel-efficient cooking solutions.



## Beneficiary Needs

The safety, environmental and security risks stemming from the widespread use of rudimentary cooking stoves clearly highlight the need for more fuel-efficient cooking solutions.

To promote resilience, local ownership and sustainable outcomes, the fuel-efficient stove model needs to be both familiar to the local community and well aligned with indigenous cooking practices. The goal of the intervention must be to introduce an improvement of living conditions that will not be lost as humanitarian actors eventually withdraw, but, rather, one that will take on a life of its own by the community itself.





## IOM Shelter-NFI Response

Based on the results of a CCCM-led research project testing a number of fuel-efficient stoves in Bentiu PoC site, the Shelter-NFI unit identified a fuel-efficient stove model with an increased chance of achieving a sustainable impact. This stove can be built from locally available materials and has a user-friendly design that is familiar to the community.

To further ensure community buy-in and promote local ownership, the stoves were delivered through a CBI model to strengthen the resilience of the affected population by building their capacity to respond to the humanitarian challenges brought on by the ongoing crisis. The project supported increased interdependence between IDPs and the host community by sourcing materials from actors on the local market and involving these traders in the process of bringing the goods to target beneficiaries through commodity voucher fairs in the PoC site. To further increase self-sufficiency, the community played an active role in all stages of the project cycle, including the identification of needs, design of response and implementation phases.

The project aimed to provide fuel-efficient cooking solutions to 90 per cent of households within the PoC site through a skills-transfer programme teaching individuals how to construct and maintain their own fuel-efficient stoves in combination with a cash-for-work component. A total of 1,280 individuals, spread out over the different geographical blocks of the PoC site, received training on stove construction and basic principles of fuel-efficiency. Materials for the fuel-efficient stove were procured and distributed by local traders through a series of commodity voucher fairs. The cash-for-work grant was released to all eligible beneficiaries who successfully constructed a fuel-efficient stove.

## Ivan Karlsson, Shelter-NFI Officer

“From day one, it was critical that the community had the opportunity to take ownership and pride in this project. We set out to identify the needs of the affected population as per their own definition of the challenges they faced and the solutions they would like to see. It very soon became clear that, rather than importing a foreign stove, as had been tried and failed in the past, the community wanted to see a model that reflected the local cooking culture and that could be constructed by themselves. In this way, they would not only receive a much-needed item with numerous benefits, but also the skill of being able to construct the stove.

For the community, this participation was of great importance. Many feel that life is somehow on hold in the PoC site, like they are waiting in limbo for a better tomorrow and from this follows an ever increasing amount of frustration, generated and exacerbated by a feeling of helplessness and disempowerment. Through this modest initiative, we hope to transfer new skills and improve a sense of community even amid the stress and hardship of protracted displacement.

Although challenging and new at first, the participatory approach seemed to really bring the community together. Through proactive participation, the input of the beneficiaries and the Community Leadership helped strengthen the outcome of the project.

To me, it has been motivating to see the personal investment the community has put into the project and how it has taken on a life of its own – after all, we hope that the community is able to continue using this model even once they leave the PoC site. One of the most speaking moments was when a woman approached us and asked if we would kindly come see her stove. She had individualized it for her home, improving it with artistic and innovative modifications, and was now showing others how to do the same. A popular way of personalizing the stove was to add small mudbricks at its corners that can act as support for an oven tray, allowing for the preparation of kiswa, ciapati and wal-wal, among other local foods.”



## Goanar, Secretary General, Community Leadership

“As Secretary General of the Bentiu PoC site, my role is to ensure protection and address the needs of my community. We are in constant communication with IOM and we provided the list of women to be trained per block for the fuel-efficient stoves project in the PoC site. The women are very happy with the training. I went to sector one and saw one of the women using the stove, and who explained how she was using less firewood. Firewood collection is difficult. Women always go to the bush and I see them on my way to and back from the office. The project which involves training of women is good for the community because it provides new ideas and establishes communication with organizations and actors. We are looking forward to seeing the stove in the whole of Bentiu PoC site. The Community Leadership is willing to collaborate with IOM and other organizations for these types of projects.”





## Communication with Communities

To ensure the project's success, IOM maintained constant and continuous consultation with community throughout the entire project. Some of the CwC activities carried out during the fuel-efficient stove project included:

- Mapping of current cooking practices in Bentiu PoC site to provide information on the type of fuel-efficient stove that is culturally acceptable, feasible and sustainable;
- Consultation with the target population to better understand their needs and challenges during firewood collection and stove usage;
- Sampling of different types of stoves—locally made or imported—with specific focus on community acceptance;
- Identification of fuel-efficient stove design that is effective, culturally accepted, sustainable, gender and health sensitive, environment friendly and safe; and
- Multifaceted communication through popular channels, such as outreach through local radio, public meetings and billboards.

## Accountability to Affected Populations

The fuel-efficient stove project necessitated the active engagement of affected communities at all phases of the programme cycle, from project design to implementation to end-use monitoring. IOM implemented activities after receiving buy-in from all segments of the community, including women and people with special needs, through focus group discussions, key informant interviews, market assessments, survey and sampling of different stoves. Accountability to affected populations activities included:

- Community sensitization and establishment of complaint feedback mechanisms;
- Through each step of project implementation, the community leadership was involved in relevant decision-making processes;
- Involvement of the community in the selection of skills-training participants and follow-up discussions/evaluations on the quality of the trainings and
- End-use monitoring after implementation of fuel-efficient stove in the first block of Sector 1 to gather feedback and outcomes from the beneficiaries.



## Gender Mainstreaming

The CBI focused on women, as they are culturally responsible for meal-preparation, fuel-collection and child care within the PoC site. Community consultation processes also focused on and prioritized women with regards to delegation of decision-making power. Women block leaders were closely involved in the beneficiary communication campaign and in the selection of skills training participants. Female youth representatives assumed a leading role in organizing public meetings for those within the community interested in learning more about the fuel-efficient stove initiative. To ensure gender sensitivity, IOM adopted a risk-informed approach to map out any potential negative effects that could result from women being prioritized over men.

Women were consulted during all stages of the programme cycle and informed project design by providing input on cooking-related needs and potential mitigating action via focus group discussions, key informant interviews, household surveys and a series of tests providing women with various imported and local fuel-efficient stoves followed by activities to gather their feedback. The outcome of the testing was a report on cooking practices and women's participation in camp life that helped IOM identify and incorporate gender sensitive measures in the design of the fuel-efficient stoves.



## Birgit Weixelbauemer, Deputy Camp Manager, CCCM

“The project was the result of a large-scale study by the Women’s Refugee Commission and IOM aimed at identifying contributing factors and barriers to women’s participation in camp governance structures and camp activities, as well as at assessing their perceived level of being at risk of GBV. The main objective was to reduce and mitigate GBV risks through women’s and girls’ empowerment at different levels in IOM’s CCCM operations in the Bentiu PoC site, and as a result, to reduce their own perception of being at risk of GBV through their increased participation in camp life. Firewood collection is a never ending, extremely time-consuming and dangerous activity that lies culturally and traditionally solely within the responsibility of women and girls. They walk for hours to find firewood and are regularly at high risk of rape or other gender-based violence during firewood collection. So, the less often they have to go, because they do not need as much firewood—because of a stove that does not require as much firewood to cook the same meal—the safer these women and girls are and the more time they have for other activities, such as participating in camp life. Alternative stove types were introduced to the community to demonstrate that there are stoves that require less firewood for cooking and can save time in firewood collection. The women were then also trained in the independent and self-sufficient construction of these stoves, which intended to empower them and provide for more meaningful participation in camp life. Through the final report on the testing of fuel-efficient stove and the possibilities for their local production, this project created an evidence-based fundament for any future intervention on fuel-efficient stoves for this community, specifically, and possibly for other locations around the country. Any intervention—such as wider-spread distributions, skills or vocational trainings, or livelihoods, cash-based and environmental approaches—can be informed through this report. It will be shared widely with all partners, so it is a contribution by CCCM to the rest of the humanitarian community, as well as the Bentiu PoC site and its surroundings.”



## Rikka Tupaz M&E Officer, Shelter-NFI

“Comparing the results of the baseline and end-line assessments of the pilot implementation in Sector 1 was encouraging and it gave us more motivation not only in implementing the project, but also in getting the beneficiaries and other participants excited about it because from the immediate feedback that we received – we saw that it was working thus far. Seeing the women’s hopeful expectations, at first when the project was being presented, turn into concrete enthusiasm when they started the trainings provided hope that the project can make a meaningful impact in Bentiu PoC site and pave the way to other community-led projects. The cross-cutting issues were mainstreamed through all our projects. The shelter-NFI team strives to find ways to ensure that our commitment to uphold and safeguard the rights of the most vulnerable we serve are protected through ensuring coordination with specific partners and use of specific guidelines for protection, accountability to affected populations, gender and CwC into the project. These efforts constitute small steps, and we recognize that more still needs to be done in ensuring that these cross-cutting issues are integrated in the project. There are many lessons learnt and we are documenting them, together with the best practices, so we can use these for future interventions. It is my hope that through this community-led intervention, IOM will continue contributing to enhancing the affected population’s resilience and will have enabled them, not only to better cope with their current situations within the PoC sites, but also to be better equipped with their newly learnt skills in their future destinations.”





## Keat Bayak, Shelter-NFI Assistant

“We are currently implementing the fuel-efficient stove project through a cash-based modality targeting only people from the PoC site. We started last year with the community consultations, which led to the construction of a prototype. The design of the prototype was further refined by the community. My role was to oversee the trainings. Specifically, I briefed the women before the trainings, engaged with the community and relevant community actors, engaged with the traders on the delivery of cow dung and I take the lead on the distribution of the vouchers. The main difficulties we faced were at the beginning when we had to liaise with all stakeholders for the organization and community buy-in of the project. Bringing people from different blocks to one location for the training was also challenging. I am very satisfied with this project because it is tailored to the community’s needs. The community chose and refined the model of the stove and the raw materials are available here. The skills they are learning are not limited to the PoC site context but can also be used outside of the PoC site the day they choose to go back to their place of origin or any other location. The benefits are multiple and which we are slowly starting to see, such as reduction of firewood consumption, smoke reduction during cooking and lower risk of fire outbreaks since the fire is contained within the stove. The community members themselves said that they can use these skills to train other people when they leave the PoC site and it can also be a source of livelihood.”

## Procurement of Materials

To further promote community participation, project beneficiaries were responsible for the collection of clay that can be found in close proximity to PoC site. With regards to cow dung, however, additional support was needed as this could only be collected further away in other areas of Rubkona.

An initial assessment showed that going through the community as opposed to engaging directly with outside traders was cost-effective. Hence, the community leadership took charge of identifying traders originating from both the PoC site and the host community who were able to procure and transport the cow dung from Bentiu and Rubkona towns.

## Gatluak, Trader

“My partners and I have been responsible for collecting and distributing stove construction materials to the people in the Bentiu PoC site. We are all very happy to have gotten the opportunity to work with IOM for the implementation of this project. It gives us insights into how international organizations operate and allows us to understand how we can support them in helping our people. The profit we are making will be reinvested into our businesses. Personally, I am going to lend money to my sister who is trying to set up a small business in Rubkona. Not only are we developing partnerships with local farmers but we have also been able to hire 16 people from Bentiu town who have helped us with various tasks such as loading and distribution. Instead of remaining idle, these people can participate in an income-generating activity. In essence, the host community is coming together to do something that is beneficial not only to themselves but also to our brothers and sisters in the PoC site.”





## Delivery of Materials

Delivery of materials to beneficiaries was organized through a voucher-scheme consisting of the following steps:

1. Traders bring the cow dung to a designated location inside of the PoC site.
2. Beneficiaries collect one bag of 10 kilograms of cow dung in exchange for a commodity voucher previously distributed by IOM.
3. Traders redeem the commodity vouchers with IOM.





Gabriel Chuil Giel,  
IOM Communication Centre  
Assistant, CCCM  
(Former Youth Committee  
Member in Bentiu PoC Site)

“I used to be part of the Youth Committee and our role was to recruit the youth and engage them in activities such as sports and small business that can keep them busy and positive to prevent them from resorting to antisocial or unproductive activities. We want them to be fit mentally and physically so that they can provide something beneficial to the country and their own future. The youth are willing to participate in many activities, but they need support. The participants of the fuel-efficient stove project are women and most of them are young women. According to the feedback that I have received, these women are satisfied with the fuel-efficient stove. Firstly, it gives them an economical advantage because they can go every three to four days to collect firewood instead of doing it more often. Secondly, the project minimizes the risk of fire outbreak. Thirdly, it is beneficial health-wise because it produces minimal smoke. The shelters in Bentiu PoC site are one roof structure and when “shelter one” cooks with the traditional stove, it can easily reach “shelter five” and so on and so forth. When you look at the stove that is being constructed across the PoC site, this is a major reduction in smoke. Lastly, because they received the knowledge to construct the stoves, then it is easier for them to reconstruct it. It is something that will remain with them until they leave the PoC site. In the beginning, there were a lot of questions about why we are using the cow dung but once it was explained, the women understood why we chose these materials and the procedures.”



Gawar Puot,  
Communication Staff,  
CCCM

“I assist in communicating between IOM and the community concerning projects. I also take the complaints and feedbacks of the community. In this project, I assist in supervision of the trainings and in translating between beneficiaries, trainers, trainees and IOM staff. The communication between IOM and the community is very good and they constantly talk and have discussions. It is good to involve the community and the training is the most important part of the project because the participants learn and acquire skills. I will also have my own stove. I have seen the trainings and I will be able to make it myself and cook food using this stove.”







## Construction Assistants

As some households required more assistance in building their stoves and to ensure that such gaps were filled, IOM facilitated a skills-transfer process by training a total of 20 construction assistants in each block within the PoC site. The training lasted for one day per session and specifically targeted young men and women. Participants received a small training grant upon successful completion of the training.

The construction assistants were selected in coordination with all relevant stakeholders within Bentiu PoC site including the Women's Committee, Youth Committee, Block leaders and the Chiefs High Committee. All geographical sections within the PoC site were equally represented. Women were prioritized for the trainings (90% of construction assistants were female) since they carried the main responsibility of meal preparation in Bentiu. Idle youth without access to any other income-generating activity were also a priority (80% of construction assistants were between 18-25 years of age).

### Elizabeth, Construction Assistant

"I was trained by IOM on how to construct the stove and I am currently training other women and passing on these skills. I prefer to learn the skill instead of receiving a stove so I can construct this stove anywhere I go. I started training from sector one and now I am training women from the last sector, which is sector five. I am happy to train these women and I feel that I am contributing to reducing fire risks in the community. I have built two stoves for myself, one outside my shelter and one inside."



## Capacity Building

Capacity building activities were a priority for the community. To ensure that the affected population were equipped to become more self-sufficient by learning new skills, an inclusive training programme was implemented, which was sensitive to their culture, tradition, gender and capacity. The training provided a framework and explanation of the basic principles of fuel-efficiency and taught participants to properly construct their own fuel-efficient stoves.

### Angelina, Construction Assistant

“Today, I will train five women in sector five, block one. We will first collect the cow dung and take it to the shelter where we will build the stove. We will then pound the dry cow dung so we can easily mix it with mud and water. Once the mixture is ready, we will start building the stove. The women are happy with the training and are eager to learn. I have the stove in my house and am using it. The women here, including me, like this stove because it keeps and preserves the fire inside, even when the wind is blowing strongly, there is no risk of fire.”







## Stove Construction

Beneficiaries were responsible for constructing the stove and IOM incentivized the process by providing each household with a cash-for-work grant of 700 SSP<sup>3</sup> upon successful completion of a fully functional fuel-efficient stove. Upon reception of construction materials, beneficiaries had three weeks to finalize the stove—it takes two weeks for the stove to dry before it can be properly tested.

### Nyagak, Beneficiary

“I am here for the training, which I find very well organized and which will enable me to build my own stove. We heard about the construction of the stoves last year in December. We heard good news about it from those who have already used it in other sectors. I heard about how safe it is to use even if you have children around. Because the fire is retained inside the stove, the children will have less chances of getting burnt. You feel more at ease and will not have the feeling that the house will catch fire unless you constantly watch over what you are cooking. We were so excited and eager to be trained that we became disappointed when they told us about how the trainings will stop for a few days during Christmas break. I collect my own firewood, normally around three times a week. If I need money, I go out four times a week to sell the firewood. This is why I am looking forward to constructing and using this stove. Although I will continue to collect firewood, that firewood will not be finished as expected, it will take us more time to finish it. Now, I am ready to construct the stove for so long as I am given the materials. I am happy to construct my own stove because it is a skill that will remain with me even if I decide to go back to my home. The money that I will receive from this project will enable me to buy shoes and slippers for my children and perhaps other food items.”

<sup>3</sup>. The sum of 700 SSP (approximately 5 USD) is based on the time required to complete construction in relation to current casual labor rates (August 2017) for unskilled workers.





## Beneficiaries

The cash-based voucher activity targeted a total of 11,250 shelters—101,250 individuals. For purposes of immediate feedback and lessons learned before the roll-out of the project to the rest of the sectors in Bentiu PoC site, a pilot phase was completed in block one, sector one in November 2017, which reached 239 shelters—2,151 individuals. Community engagement constituted a central component of the project and, with support from the skills-training participants, beneficiaries were responsible for constructing a fuel-efficient stove that adhered to agreed upon guidelines and quality standards. Upon completion of the stove, pending approval of IOM staff, each head of household received a cash-for-work grant equivalent to the compensation rate for two days of unskilled labor (congruent with the expected time required for construction).

A total of 1,280 beneficiaries participated in the skills-trainings organized by IOM with the objective of proliferating stove-construction skills within the community. Participants may also be able to translate their skills into an income-generating activity upon return to their areas of origin.

### Nyadong, Beneficiary

“I am the one who built this stove and I’ve been using it for two days now. My neighbors have also built their own stove but it is still wet and the stove needs to be fully dry before we can start using it. I am happy with this stove because I use less firewood. I used to collect firewood every three days because the three stone stove consumes a lot of firewood. With this stove, I no longer need to go out and collect firewood as much because it consumes less firewood. This stove also produces less smoke than the three stone stove. I was trained by my neighbor. I simply went to her house when she was constructing the stove and I observed. Constructing the stove is quite easy and I can even teach others this skill. Once the stove has been verified by IOM, I will use the cash-for-work grant to pay the school fees of my children.”



## Moving Forward Asar Ul Haq Operations Coordinator, Shelter-NFI

The community-led shelter and NFI initiatives have created opportunities to bring people together to create collective solutions to mitigate the impact of protracted displacement. The IOM shelter and NFI approach supports efforts to progressively take steps to improve living conditions during displacement, providing relevant and timely support at individual, household, community and systemic levels so that displaced communities can make progress towards solutions when environments are conducive.

IOM's Shelter and NFI flexible programming allows static, semi-static and/or permanent presence of projects, staff and offices to appropriately respond according to the context. Aligning to Grand Bargain<sup>4</sup> commitments, IOM advocates for donors to adopt flexible funding models and seeks multi-year funding to reinforce the humanitarian-development nexus, incorporating research and pilot projects to test approaches.

Frontline response modalities will support resilience while addressing immediate needs, including through targeted in-kind assistance. Research and pilot projects will continue to identify viable strategies to address complex challenges. Value for money and sustainability will be addressed through encouraging beneficiary ownership.

As Cluster Lead Agency, IOM will support the Shelter-NFI Cluster strategy objectives to address the emergency needs and strengthen community coping

<sup>4</sup> An agreement between more than 30 of the biggest donors and aid providers, which aims to get more means into the hands of people in need. <https://agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/3861>

mechanisms in vulnerable and at-risk communities. The Cluster is improving and harmonizing monitoring tools and methodology to provide more holistic interventions, including for gender and protection concerns, and supporting local partners. The Cluster will build on existing community preparedness capacity in planning and implementing distributions.



Preparedness and resilience responses aim to support populations facing multiple hazards to improve their capacity to respond to risks and future needs. This includes through the Shelter-NFI Cluster taking a people-centered approach to resilience, considering risk management of hazards, vulnerabilities and coping mechanisms.

In 2018, IOM aims to place a strong emphasis on enhancing the capacity of affected people to enhance their resilience. Based on IOM's experience from South Sudan and the region, IOM is developing a programming approach that not only looks at hazard and vulnerability of affected people but also captures their capacity to cope; a key ingredient of resilient communities. At this stage, the focus is at the level of individuals, households and local communities in key locations, with an aim to replicate this across the country in coming years.

## Afterword, William Barriga, Chief of Mission, IOM South Sudan

I was introduced to humanitarian work in 1983, with a non-governmental organization in the Philippines, almost fresh from university—*tanquam tabula rasa*. One thing that was impressed on me and that I embrace until this day is the motto of the organization: “helping people help themselves.” In fact, it was more of a way of working rather than a motto. It was so entrenched in every action we performed that without it we assessed our work as failure. We were supposed to create independence among the beneficiaries rather than having them dependent on aid. We were supposed not to look at the beneficiaries as passive victims but as active participants. There was always an exit strategy in our work from which we gauged our success. When I moved on to IOM, I carried on this ethos. When we work in countries in crisis, we should work ourselves out of the job, building local capacities so that the local community can carry on with enhanced natural coping mechanisms. The CBI piloted in the Wau PoC site was exemplary. It used local materials, supported local entrepreneurs, built skills among the IDPs, provided cooler but stronger shelter and was 40 per cent cheaper than using international procurement. This experience will soon be implemented in other PoC sites, too. When the time comes that the IDPs can return home, hopefully soon, they could use those skills to re-establish their lives back in their home villages. The entire IOM South Sudan team, this year, has mainstreamed resilience in all its programmes. With the support of our partners and donors, we hope to be able to see a more resilient, and more cohesive, South Sudan.



# Acknowledgment

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The successful implementation of these projects would not have been possible without the committed hard work of IOM South Sudan staff and the relentless perseverance of the communities of the Wau and Bentiu PoC sites. We hope that, through these projects, their engagement in the processes that involve their own assistance has crucially contributed to enhance their resilience and coping mechanisms.





