



Access to Adult Education Project

Mid-term Evaluation 2022-2023

April 2024

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Uganda is one of the few countries globally that has been recognized and appreciated for its open and friendly approach towards refugees who are fleeing from different countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan among others. According to the Uganda Country Response Refugee Plan (UCRRP)-2024-2025, Uganda hosts 1,577,502 refugees with majority being from South Sudan (57%) followed by (31%) from DRC. Most of these refugees (92%) live in the settlements while 8% live in urban areas; that is Kampala. It should be noted that the number of refugees has steadily been increasing in the recent years and this is expected to continue considering the continuing conflicts in DRC, Sudan and South Sudan among others. With regards to updates on the new arrivals, data obtained from the UNHCR Uganda Comprehensive refugee Portal January 2024, there was a total of 15,007 new arrivals-(2,597-from South Sudan, 2,608 from Dr. Congo and 4,108 from Sudan and 5,694 urban new arrivals). These arrive through various border designated zones. Therefore, these increasing numbers have put pressure on access to basic service provision and access to resources such as land, firewood, livelihood opportunities etc. These have at times had negative consequences, for example on the climate, environment, and level of social cohesion between the refugee and host communities among others. Apart from all this, most of the refugees that come from the above-mentioned neighboring countries have low literacy levels; with the women being the worst hit and majority cannot communicate using the common languages like English. This makes it difficult for them to cope in their new environments. Due to the low literacy levels, many find it challenging to access services such as health care on their own, financial services among others. All this has even been made worse by the shift towards food prioritization due to a reduction in humanitarian funding where only those who are most in need are given support in form of food or of cash to buy food. This prioritization of General Food Assistance (GFA) for the most vulnerable refugees and significant cuts in food ration size has even made some refugees go back to suffer in their war-torn countries. Under the GFA, the most vulnerable refugees are prioritized for the highest ration provided, which is now only 60% of the standard ratios. All the refugees are receiving less GFA overall¹. All this has also been compounded by an increase in commodity prices. The cash working group's recent update of the refugee settlement Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) indicates a 55% increase in the average MEB cost from UGX 440,000 (US\$ 115) in March 2021 to UGX 682,551 (US\$179) in Dec 2023².

1.2. Background of the project

Access to Adult Education (AAE) is one of the 4-year projects in the current 2022-2025 program that is being implemented in Uganda by FRC and is funded by Ministry of Foreign

¹ WFP-"WFP prioritizes food assistance for the most vulnerable refugees in Uganda as needs outstrip resources." January 2022

² WFP, CWG. "Uganda Cash working Refugee Group Refugee market Monitor." Dec-2023

Affairs Finland (MFA). The implementation of the AAE project under the new program will last for 4 years -that is it will be running between 2022 to 2025. The project is implemented by Adult Education Officers (AEOs) and team leaders under the supervision of the Program Manager. The AEOs and team leaders work hand in hand with the instructors and leaders in the communities who support in mobilizing the learners, monitoring the learning groups and also advocate for Adult Education in their locations. The instructors that are recruited by FRC AEOs are from within the community. The AEOs are supervised by the team leaders who report to the program manager. The project has also got a functional M&E system in place as well that helps to track project progress in terms of attainment of results. The M&E system is manned by a MEAL Specialist and 2 regional M&E Assistants who work hand in hand with the implementing teams and report to the program manager.

The AAE project offers four major learning courses to both refugees and host communities in 12 refugee settlements/ locations where FRC is present. These learning courses include:

- i) Basic Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) course on local languages
- ii) Basic English For Adults (EFA) learning course
- iii) FAL and EFA FRC Continuous learning course which were only implemented in 2022.
- iv) Business Skills FRC learning course which has been implemented in nine refugee settlements so far.

The FAL/EFA basic learning courses last for 11 months, continuous learning courses last 5 months while the Business skills learning course lasts 3.5 months. All these learning courses are delivered using various Adult Education participatory methods like through group learning, role plays etc.

The learning courses offered focus on providing basic literacy, language (English) and business skills. The learning courses are offered by trained instructors guided by the curriculum and training manuals given to them by FRC. The instructors are trained on how to deliver the learning courses by FRC staff specifically the AEOs and team leaders. The learning sessions that are offered to the learners' help equip them with life skills, numerical skills and business skills which they use in their daily life. The learning course curriculum incorporates several topics such as; how to count things like money, how to manage income-generating activities, how to manage conflict in their families and community etc. Under Life skills they are taught health related topics such as how to manage their hygiene, how to read and write, nutrition related topics like importance of different food values etc. All this knowledge that is provided helps the learners/ participants become self- reliant and resilient. It also helps them to appreciate the new environment around them and how to peacefully live and relate with others.

1.3. Purpose of the mid-term evaluation

The overall purpose of the Mid- Term Evaluation is to assess the progress of the AAE project towards its targets during the two first years of implementation (2022 to 2023) and to provide recommendations for possible revisions in the final years of implementation. Besides this, the information that will be obtained will also be used to validate and assess

the accuracy of the Theory of Change (TOC) and the Pathway Of Empowerment (POE) results that have previously been obtained, especially at higher level.

1.3.1. Overall Objective of the Mid-Term Evaluation

The overall objective of the midterm evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and short-term impact of the project on the participants/stakeholders.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

1. To establish the extent to which the AAE project has made progress towards attainment of planned results (i.e. Output and intermediate outcomes) and objectives.
2. To assess the contributions made by the AAE on the project participants or changes experienced by the project stakeholders because of the implemented project activities.
3. To identify existing gaps and challenges that are hindering achievement of project progress towards its objectives.
4. To document lessons learnt and provide recommendations that can be used to improve project performance and inform future project design.

1.3.3. Evaluation Questions

1. To what extent has project progressed towards attainment of planned results and objectives? (How have disaggregated groups (-Women/Men/PWDs/ Youth/ Elderly) benefited from the project against targets – What was supposed to happen and what actually happened?
2. To what extent has the project been effective and relevant? - How effectively is the project managed at all levels?
3. What changes have the project participants experienced so far as a result of being part of the project?/ What kind of impact does graduating from FRC learning courses have on participants life and empowerment? What skills and resources have the FAL/EFA course graduates gained from the courses? In what ways have the new skills/ resources benefited project participants, their households, communities and how significant are these benefits?
4. What have been the successes and the failures of the project?
5. What project related factors are affecting successful implementation and results achievement of the project? What went well and what did not go well?
6. What can be improved concerning the project and how?
7. How can/have project achievements been sustained?

1.4. Scope of the mid-term evaluation

The Mid Term Evaluation was conducted in two regions: South-West; specifically in Kyaka refugee settlement and in the North in Adjumani district in Pagirinya, Ayilo,

Nyumanzi, Baratuku and Elema settlements. Kyaka Refugee Settlement was selected because it has got the highest number of Continuous learning groups and has not been included in past evaluations. Adjumani was selected because it hosts the biggest number of refugee settlements out of the areas where FRC is present and it also includes new locations that FRC has recently expanded to namely Baratuku and Elema which acted as control groups. The Mid Term Evaluation focused on what the project has Implemented so far in the current program from the year 2022 to 2023. The evaluation focused on FAL/EFA/ Business Skills learners, instructors, Community leaders, implementing staff and other partners in the different locations like Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) that work with FRC in the same locations.

2. Methodology

2.1 Approach and methodology

The Mid-Term Evaluation exercise adopted a mixed study design having both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The adoption of a mixed study design enabled the evaluation team to triangulate the data obtained to ensure validity and reliability. Also, the team was able to get an in-depth understanding of the progress made by the project towards attainment of its objectives. With regards to the evaluation design, the evaluation used the experimental evaluation design where the Randomized Control Trial (RCT) was undertaken. The RCT involved having two groups which are the intervention (Treatment) group and control group. The treatment group was comprised of participants from locations where FRC has been conducting Adult Education interventions since 2022 (Kyaka, Pagirinya, Nyumanzi, Ayilo I & II) while the Control groups comprised of participants that are from locations that FRC has just started intervening in (Baratuku and Elema in Adjumani). The data obtained from the control groups will also be used as baseline for the same groups in the future.

Formative type of evaluation, specifically Process Evaluation was used during the assignment which helped to generally identify the strength, weaknesses, and areas of improvement for the project. Process Evaluation was selected because the mid-term evaluation was conducted during the development and implementation of the project. Also, the evaluation largely adopted participatory evaluation which ensured stakeholder engagement during the data collection process and ownership of the project. The participatory data collection tools that is; crossing the river and stickman tools were specifically used to collect data from the learners and instructors.

2.2 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

2.2.1. Sample Size

A total of 1,986 (567M, 1419F) participants took part in the mid-term evaluation out of the overall total sample of 38,434. Out of these 1,692 (444M, 1248F) participated in surveys,

293 (123M, 170F) including 11 FRC staff members participated in FGDs and 1 person participated as a Key Informant. Participants were selected from the year 2022 and 2023. Also, instructors and leaders that have worked with FRC in the last two years mentioned above were selected. The learning groups were used as entry points to access the project participants. The Table below shows the total number of participants that participated in the evaluation in the different selected locations.

Table 1: Number of participants that participated in the evaluation

	Location	FGDs (Learners, and leaders and instructors)	Surveys – (Learners)	Klls	Staff (FGD)-AEOs	Total
1	Kyaka	114 (49M, 65F)	710 (260M, 450F)	1	1M	826 (311M, 515F)
2	Ayilo I	37 (10M, 27F)	234 (31M, 203F)		1M	272 (42M,230F)
3	Ayilo II	27 (14M, 13F)	147 (49M, 98F)		1F	175 (63M,112F)
4	Nyumanzi	5 (2M, 3F)	367 (63M, 304F)		1M	373 (66M,307F)
5	Pagirinya	63 (21M, 42F)	234 (41M, 193F)		1M	298 (63M,235F)
6	Baratuku	21 (11M, 10F)	0			21 (10M,11F)
7	Elema	15 (9M, 6F)	0			15 (9M, 6F)
8	Palabek	0	0		1F	1F
9	Kyangwali	0	0		2-1M,1F	2-1M,1F
10	Nakivale	0	0		2-1M,1F	2-1M,1F
11	Kiryandongo	0	0		1M	1M
	Grand Total	282- (116M,166F)	1,692- (444M, 1,248F)	1- (1M)	11- (7M,4F)	1986 (567M,1419F)

2.2.2 Sampling method

Different sampling methods were used in the selection of participants and these included:

2.2.2.1. Simple Random and purposive Sampling

This was used to purposively select FRC learning groups representing the different learning courses. 19% (123/663) of all the learning groups were sampled for the evaluation. The learners in the different selected learning groups were then randomly picked from the different selected learning courses by the data collectors. The same sampling methods were also used to select the leaders in the different targeted locations who have specifically worked with FRC before by advocating for Adult Education and Identified Adult Education instructors who have been facilitating FRC learning courses

since 2022. These participated in FGDs that were conducted in each of the different selected locations which are; Kyaka II, Ayilo I, Pagirinya, Nyumanzi and Baratuku. The Implementing partners (Staff) were also purposively sampled. Majority of the staff that were selected to participate in the FGD were those who have been implementing the project in the last two years.

Figure 1: Photo showing FRC Staff (M&E) Team training data collectors on how to use the data collection tools in Kyaka II settlement



Figure 2: Photo showing FRC staff and data collectors having a team debrief on different field experiences in Kyaka II settlement



2.2.2.2. Snowball and Convenience sampling

Snowball sampling was also used especially during surveys to identify some of the learners in the different learning groups. It was mainly used for groups that did not have mobilizers to support in locating the sampled learners.

Furthermore, Convenience sampling was also used in some cases to replace some of the sampled learners that had left the location. These were selected from the lists and those that were available or nearby were the ones that were interviewed.

It should be noted that the sampling procedure of the learning groups and participants was guided by the available budget and also at least a minimum of 10% of the learning groups and participants were targeted. The evaluation also considered the aspect of gender (ensured both females and males are represented in the evaluation) and the aspect of age (elderly, youth) and disability inclusion in the methodology is catered for.

2.3 Data collection

The assignment kicked off with the training of data collectors who had been selected a week prior from within the communities and mobilized by the AEOs on the ground. These were selected based on their ability to speak local languages, previous work experience in data collection, ability to read, write and the ability to use a smart phone or tablet among others. The training was conducted by the FRC MEAL Specialist for one day and tools were pre-tested on one sampled learning group in each of the regions by each of the trained data collectors in the evening before the roll out of the tool. The quality of the evaluation was assured mainly through training that was provided to the data collectors / enumerators to enable them understand the tools and also administer the tools in a standard way. Also, feedback provided after the pre-test was used to improve the tools and ensure capture of quality data. The data collectors were trained on how to administer the questions in the tool, ethics in data collection like obtaining consent from respondents, how to use the tablet and Kobol collect. Besides this, clarity was also made on who the target respondents are and other administration issues. Data collection in Kyaka was conducted between the 19th/03/2024 to 27/03/2024 while in Adjumani; data collection was done between the 16/04/2024 to the 26/4/2024. The evaluation methods used are described below.

2.3.1 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs were conducted with all project stakeholders that with learners, leaders, instructors and implementing staff. Discussions during the FGDs were recorded using a recorder and were facilitated by the FRC M&E team. A total of 29 FGDs were conducted in both regions (18 FGDs in Adjumani and 9 in Kyaka and 1 FGD for implementing staff sampled from across all the locations). Focus Group Discussions with the learners utilized “Crossing the River” participatory tool as well as a Most Significant Change tool to capture the key benefits of the project on the target learners and their households. A “Stick Figure” tool was used with the instructors to help them to reflect on the most significant impacts

of their new skills and roles for them. In addition a “Big Fish and Crocodile” participatory tool was used to collect data on the enabling factors and hindrances of the project.

Table 2: Below is a table showing the total number of FGDs that were conducted for each category of respondents

	Category of Respondents	Kyaka	Adjumani	Total number of FGDS
TREATMENT GROUP				
1	Learners	6	9	15
2	Instructors	1	3	4
3	Leaders	2	2	4
CONTROL GROUP				
4	Leaders		1	1
5	Community		3	3
IMPLEMENTING STAFF				
6	Staff	10		1

2.3.2 Surveys

Surveys were administered on randomly sampled learners’ groups. Between 12-15 learners were randomly sampled in each of the selected learning groups using learner group lists with learner names that were provided to the data collectors to validate the learners that had been sampled. In the end, a total of 1,692 learners responded to the questionnaires. Survey data was collected using the Kobo collect tool.

Table 3: Showing the total number of learning groups sampled for surveys in different locations

	Location	FAL Basic	FAL Continuous	EFA Basic	EFA Continuous	Business Skills	Total
1	Ayilo I	8	1	4	1	3	17
2	Ayilo II	4	1	4	0	3	12
3	Pagirinya	8	1	7	0	3	19
4	Nyumanzi	14	0	9	1	4	28
5	Kyaka	19	6	16	6	0	47
6	Total	53	9	40	8	13	123

2.3.3 Key informant Interviews (KIIs)

One KII was conducted with a settlement commandant from Kyaka. The interview was recorded using a recorder.

FIGURE 3: Photo showing commandant Kyaka Settlement participating in a key Informant Interview (KII)



2.3.4 Documentary Desk Review

This was also done especially for objective one of the evaluation which focused on assessing the progress of the project. The evaluator focused on reviewing quarterly reports and Indicator Performance Trackers (IPTs).

2.4 Data analysis

Survey data from Kobo collect was exported to Excel and cleaned of any potential errors. Quantitative analysis was then conducted to generate descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and frequencies). The findings, where necessary were disaggregated into gender, age, disability, location, and to some extent possible any other relevant

category. On the other hand, content analysis was conducted for data collected from FGDs and KII. The audios were first transcribed and analyzed using qualitative content analysis approach in the Atlas.ti system where the transcriptions were first be coded, categorized, and organized into sub-themes and themes. The collected qualitative data was triangulated with data collected using other methods of data collection during analysis. This was able to complement and provide explanation or information to explain the quantitative results obtained.

2.5 Limitations

- Some of the locations in the North like Pagirinya had several learning groups that were of different ethnicities that had been sampled for the survey. Unfortunately, the evaluation team had not foreseen this challenge during recruitment and training of data collectors. This therefore created the need for other data collectors who could speak these very languages that is; Lotuku, Nuer, Kuku, Acholi and more Madi data collectors. Majority of the trained data collectors were Dinka and then Madi speakers. As a result, the evaluation team had to identify, keep recruiting and training (one on one) other data collectors when the need arose. This created more work for the evaluation team yet the human resources were limited.
- There was a red eye outbreak in some of the locations that were visited that is; in Nyumanzi, Elema and Baratuku. As a result, the evaluation team was not able to meet some of the project participants who had been sampled to participate in the evaluation for example two instructors could not participate in the FGD due to this. More to this, some of the sampled learners from two selected learning groups in Nyumanzi also had to be excused from participating in the Mid-Term Evaluation.
- The Mid-term Evaluation was conducted at a time when both regions were receiving the first rains of the year. As a result, data collection was at times disrupted by the rains because majority of the FGDs were conducted in the open as well as learner surveys. The evaluation team had to put on hold some of the FGDs till the rains cleared before proceeding with the discussions hence keeping the respondents much longer than anticipated.
- Also, the state of some roads was made worse due to the rains. The rains washed away some roads, bridges and created deeper trenches across the roads in some locations making it hard for the evaluation teams to access some sampled learners.
- Finally, there was also a challenge of limited human resource during data collection specifically with regards to the FGDs which affected the quality of some of the data collected. The Mid- term Evaluation was mainly conducted by the M&E team that is; the MEAL specialist and one M&E assistant in each of the regions yet the amount of work to be done within few planned days were many. This forced the M&E team to include some few implementing staff (AEOs) to support in note taking during the FGDs specifically in the Northern region. This helped the evaluation team to conduct all the planned FGDs.

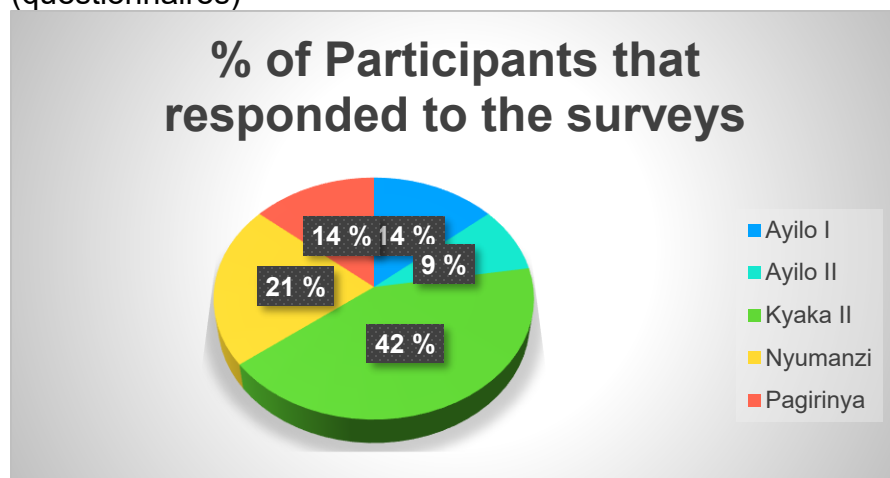
3. Findings

This section presents the analysis findings of the mid-term evaluation. It begins with the presentation of demographic characteristics and then continues to respond to the different evaluation questions.

3.1 Respondent Characteristics

A total of 1,986 (1419 Females, 567 Males) participated to the Mid Term Evaluation. Of these 71.5% are Females and 28.5% are Males. Out of these 1692 (1,248F, 444M,) learners responded to the surveys that were administered to them by the data collectors. Below is a pie chart showing the % of participants that responded to the surveys.

Figure 4: A pie chart showing the % of sampled learners that responded to the surveys (questionnaires)



As shown above majority of the respondents were from Kyaka (42%) which represented the South. This was followed by Nyumanzi which had 21% of the respondents, then Ayilo I and Pagirinya each having 14% of the respondents. Ayilo II had the least number of respondents (9%). Similar results were also obtained when the overall total number of participants was added up where Kyaka still had the highest number of 826 participants, followed by Nyumanzi with 373 participants and Pagirinya with 298 participants. Looking at the residence status of the survey participants, 23% (385/1692) were from the host community while 77%, (1307/1692) were refugees; with majority having stayed in the country for more than a year.

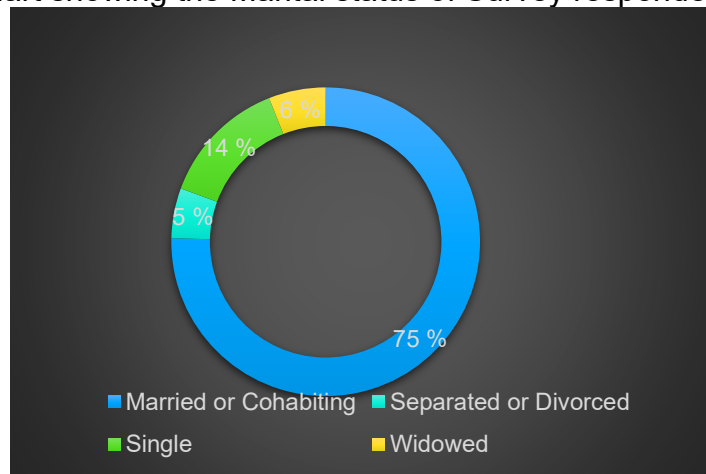
With regards to the age categories, the survey results indicated that majority (76 %) of the respondents were adults. These were then followed by 335 (20%) youth and the least number were the elderly (4%). The table below summarizes the age and sex data of the participants.

Table 4: Analysis showing the number of participants who responded to the survey in the different age categories

Row Labels	Female	Male (blank)	Grand Total
Don't Know		2	2
Adult	985	304	1289
Youth	227	108	335
Elderly	36	30	66
Grand Total	1248	444	1692

Furthermore, with regards to the marital status of the respondents, demographics obtained indicated that majority of the survey respondents were married as shown in the pie chart below.

Figure 5: A pie chart showing the Marital status of Survey respondents



Looking at the level of education 44% (752/1692) had completed some primary education followed by 35% (598/1692) who never went to school and 8% (135/1692) who completed primary. When asked which FRC learning course they had attended since the year 2022, results indicated that majority (877) had attended FAL Basic followed by those that had attended EFA (605) Basic as shown in the table below.

Table 5: Number of survey participants that attended different learning courses offered by FRC

Learning Course	Female	Male	Total
FAL Basic	690	187	877
EFA Basic	400	205	605
FAL Continuous	169	82	251
EFA Continuous	95	80	175
Business Skills	96	54	150
Others	8	4	12

Out of the 1692 survey participants 86% (1455/1692) reported that they had graduated while 14%, (237/1692) had not graduated. When asked why they did not graduate, the biggest number 55%, (130/237) mentioned that they did not sit exams. This could be explained by different reasons such as fear for the new standardized exam that was introduced and other contextual changes that happened such as food prioritisation which made some learners focus more in securing a livelihood for their families.

The evaluation study also ensured inclusion of persons with disabilities and a total of 220 (13 %) persons with disabilities took part in the survey with the biggest number of these 54%, (118/220) coming from the South- Kyaka. A further analysis on this indicated that most of these (120) had difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses followed by (91) those who had difficulty walking/ climbing steps and then those (78) that faced difficulty remembering/concentrating. Results on the degree of severity of the disability showed that those that faced a lot of difficulty were those who faced difficulty walking or climbing steps (24). More details on this are displayed in the table below.

Table 6: The types of disability faced by the respondents and degree of severity

Type of Disability	Difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses	Difficulty hearing, even if wearing hearing aid	Difficulty walking or climbing steps	Difficulty remembering or concentrating	Difficulty with self - care such as washing all over or dressing	Difficulty communicating
Cannot do at all	6	5	4	5	7	2
Yes, a lot of difficulty	15	9	24	7	16	2
Yes, some difficulty	99	54	63	66	42	42
Total for Yes response	120	68	91	78	65	46

3.2 Progress Towards Attainment of Project Results

Overall analysis indicated that the project had made positive progress towards attaining most project targets for both years 2022 and 2023. Majority of the project indicators (both outcome and outputs) were on track in terms of realization of results while some of them had already hit the four-year program target that had been set. Some of the examples of these indicators were; *'the number of participants to diverse courses'* where the initial target that was made for first time learners was 21,510. However, the project had already achieved past that target and had recorded a total of 33,332 first time learners under the immediate outcomes.

Assessment of specifically intermediate Outcomes showed that 6 out of the 8 indicators were achieving progress as planned for both years in terms of attainment of the set targets as shown in the IPTT. As an example the overall number of participants for both years had achieved above the set target for both years. Also, graduated business learners that had reported being able to meet sudden expenses due to emergencies had also attained above set target in both years etc. Only 2 of the 8 intermediate outcome indicators did not fully achieve results as planned and these were; *'% of participants to program activities equipped with skills to improve their economic resilience at the end of the program'* and *'% of participants to program activities able to get access/improve income opportunities minimum 6 months after training'*. The former indicator measured the % of FAL and EFA course graduates and those who have completed the course and the underachievement was due to the introduction of the standardized exam which some learners were not used to and which demanded higher skills than previously used examinations in some cases. More details on this are shown in the IPT Table shown in the pages below.

With regards to qualitative indicators that measure empowerment of the project participants under outcomes, results obtained showed that the participants had obtained a number of changes in their lives, families and communities resulting from the interventions that had been done by the project in both locations. Participants had for example acquired skills such as; literacy skills where they e.g. were able to write, read, count, speak English etc. They also acquired knowledge and new practices in different aspects of life which had been used to improve their lives like in health; where e.g. some had adopted better hygienic practices in a bid to avoid diseases-like washing hands with soap after using the toilet, were able to interpret prescriptions, could access health facilities on their own etc. Also, some of them had set up thriving income generating activities using the acquired knowledge and these businesses were now being used to sustain their families. Furthermore, some had gained confidence or had experienced improved self-esteem and as a result were now taking up leadership positions in the community/ groups and actively participating in decision making both in the family and community as well. More of these changes resulting from the interventions are highlighted in the next section of this chapter- on *'contributions made by the project'*. It should be noted that all these changes were measured using a tool called Pathway of Empowerment (POE) and results were measured at different levels (after a certain span

of time) as the interventions were being implemented from the start (baseline) to the end of each learning cycle (Endline). The developed POE tools were designed based on the listed changes obtained from the beneficiaries and previous experiences of the implementors that were compiled in the consolidated POE tool on the four POE thematic areas. The four thematic areas which the tool measures include; thematic area A-which focuses on living a healthy and improved life, thematic area B-which focuses on Social Cohesion, culture, communication and participation, thematic area C- which looks at improved self-awareness, psychological aspect and thematic area D-which focuses on improved Economic Empowerment / improved access to livelihood opportunities. Below are graphs showing a summary of the Helsinki tracked POE signs for the two years 2022, 2023 where learners were asked if they had attained the expected changes in their lives. A sample of 20% is randomly selected from the total number of groups formed per learning course in each location. Selected groups are then tracked from the start of the cycle (Baseline) to the end (Endline) or highest level.

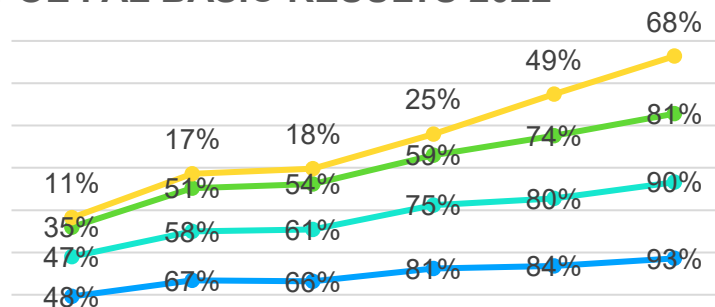
Figure 6: Photos showing FAL Basic (up) and EFA Continuous (Below) project participants in Kyaka II settlement sharing and demonstrating the changes that they have realized since they joined FRC learning course using ‘Crossing the River’ Participatory tool





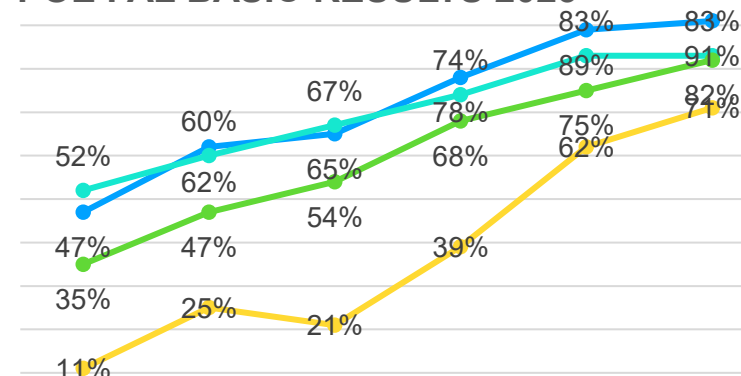
Figure 7: Graphs Showing Summarized Performance of PoE Signs For Different Learning Groups -2022 & 2023

POE FAL BASIC RESULTS 2022



	Baseline	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Theme D	11%	17%	18%	25%	49%	68%
Theme C	35%	51%	54%	59%	74%	81%
Theme B	47%	58%	61%	75%	80%	90%
Theme A	48%	67%	66%	81%	84%	93%

POE FAL BASIC RESULTS 2023



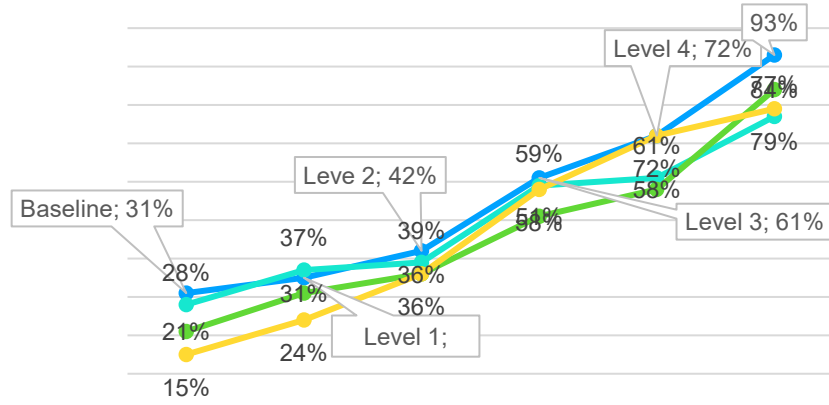
	Baseline	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Theme A	47%	62%	65%	78%	89%	91%
Theme B	52%	60%	67%	74%	83%	83%
Theme C	35%	47%	54%	68%	75%	82%
Theme D	11%	25%	21%	39%	62%	71%

Below is a list of the Helsinki tracked POE FAL Basic signs that were tracked from baseline to the end of the cycle.

- i) Theme A: - Learners know how to prevent common diseases like Malaria, diarrhea etc
- ii) Theme B: - Learner participates in any group meetings such as church, VSLA group meetings etc by e.g. Organizing for meetings, mobilization etc
- iii) Theme C: - Learner gives opinions / contributes to discussions in larger family and community meetings
- iv) Theme D:- Learner keeps / writes records of e.g. business, expenses that they make/ shopping lists, budgets etc

The compiled Helsinki POE FAL Basic results for both years showed that there was steady progress in the results obtained across all the 4 thematic areas for the two years with exception of thematic area D which experienced a slight drop in results at level 2 in the year 2023 dropping from 25% at level one to 21% at level 2. This was because the learners were still adopting the practice of record keeping, budgeting and making of budget lists.

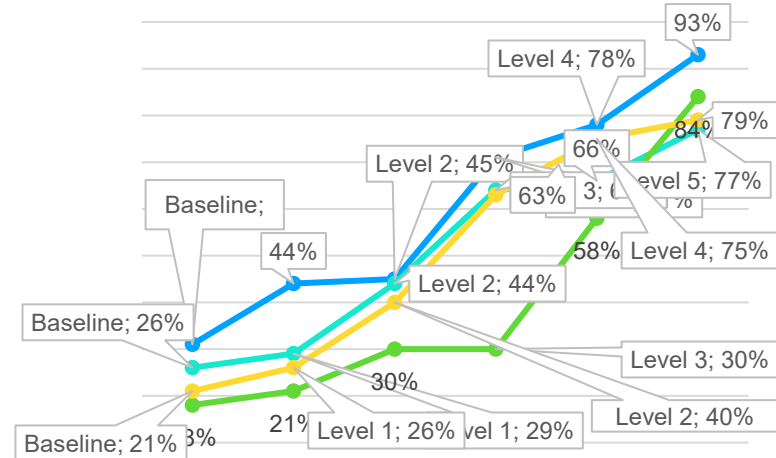
EFA BASIC 2022



	Baseline	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Theme A	31%	35%	42%	61%	72%	93%
Theme B	28%	37%	39%	59%	61%	77%
Theme C	21%	31%	36%	51%	58%	84%
Theme D	15%	24%	36%	58%	72%	79%

Theme A Theme B Theme C Theme D

EFA BASIC 2023



	Baseline	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Theme A	31%	44%	45%	71%	78%	93%
Theme B	26%	29%	44%	64%	66%	77%
Theme C	18%	21%	30%	30%	58%	84%
Theme D	21%	26%	40%	63%	75%	79%

Below is a list of the Helsinki tracked POE EFA signs that were tracked from baseline to the end of the cycle.

Thematic area A: -Learner able to understand and follow medical prescriptions / expiry dates in English

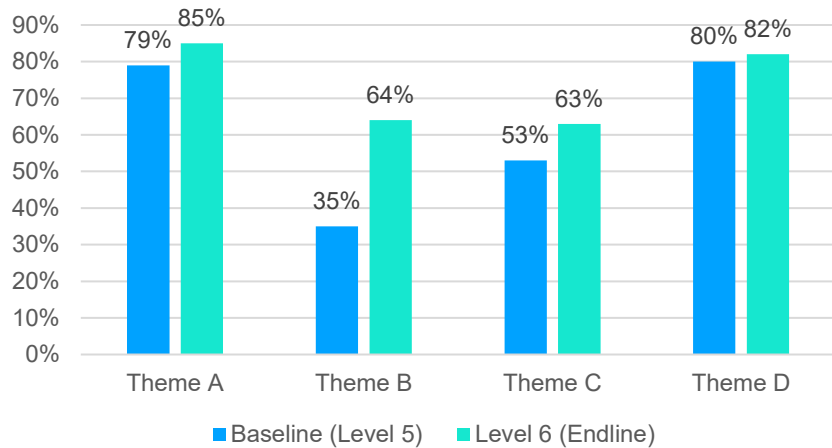
Thematic area B: - Learner participates in any group meetings such as church, VSLA group meetings etc by e.g. Organizing for meetings, mobilization etc

Thematic area C: - Learner gives opinions / contributes to discussions in larger family and community meetings

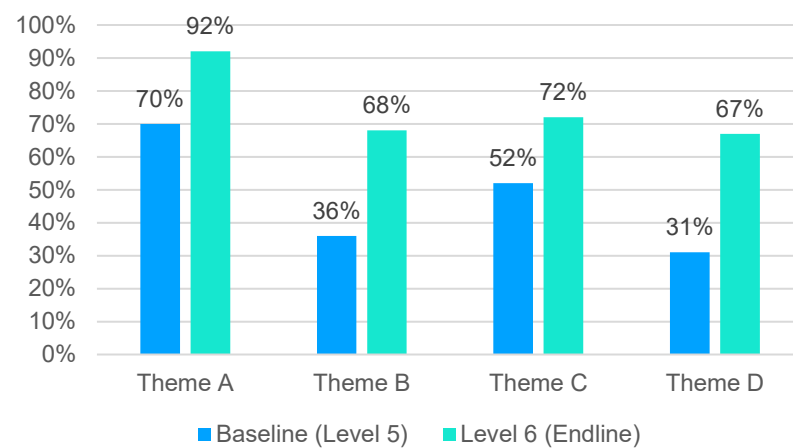
Thematic area D:- Learner keeps / writes records of e.g. business, expenses that they make/ shopping lists, budgets etc

Results obtained showed a progressive achievement of results/ changes realized among participants for both years across all POE levels from Baseline to Level 5 (Endline). This is shown in the graph/ table above. Some of the other 2023 POE signs that were tracked are listed in Annex I under Annexes.

FAL Continuous 2022



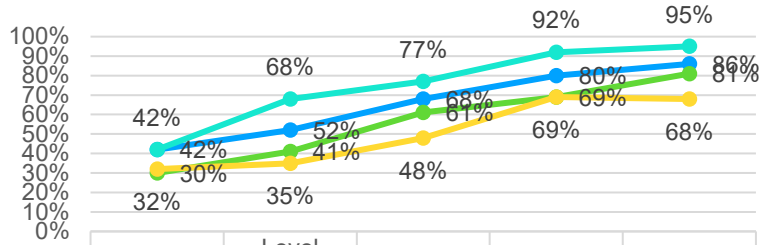
EFA Continuous 2022



Analysis on the FAL Continuous results showed an improvement in performance when comparison was made with baseline results. For example Theme A showed improvement in performance from 79% at baseline to 85% at level 6 (Endline) - realizing a 6% increase/ improvement. This is quite significant considering that the learning period for continuous groups is shorter compared to the basic learning courses. It also showed that the learners had at least attained more knowledge on top of what they had already learned from different places, partners and even FRC courses- for those that attended basic courses thus explaining why the % at baseline is quite high. Same thing was also seen for the other themes- Theme B rising from 35% to 64% -increasing by 29%, Theme C rising from 53% to 63% having 10% increase, Theme D increasing from 80% to 82%-having the lowest increase of 2%. This low performance at theme D is at times due to the fact that some POE signs are a little high or hard to achieve quickly like; *'Learners being able to create jobs for others'* might not be easily achieved within the short period of the course. Also, when it comes to consistently planting trees- some learners especially refugees do not have access to land to enable this.

The same was also observed for EFA Continuous 2022 results- where all themes registered an increase in performance with theme A- showing a 22% increase, Theme B having 32% increase, Theme C having 20% increase and finally Theme D having 36% percent improvement making it the highest performing theme- which was the contrary to the FAL continuous participants. This could be because most of the EFA participants are more enlightened and are more involved or actively participate in economic activities compared to the FAL continuous participants who are just beginning to practice some of the acquired skills like proper record management of their business, gaining confidence to start up businesses among others.

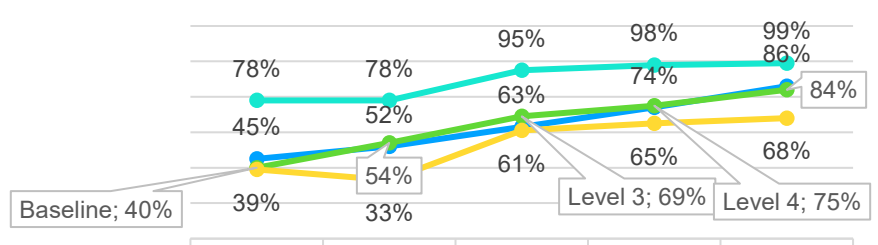
POE Business Skills cycle I 2022



	Baseline	Level 1&2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Theme A	42%	52%	68%	80%	86%
Theme B	42%	68%	77%	92%	95%
Theme C	30%	41%	61%	69%	81%
Theme D	32%	35%	48%	69%	68%

Theme A Theme B Theme C Theme D

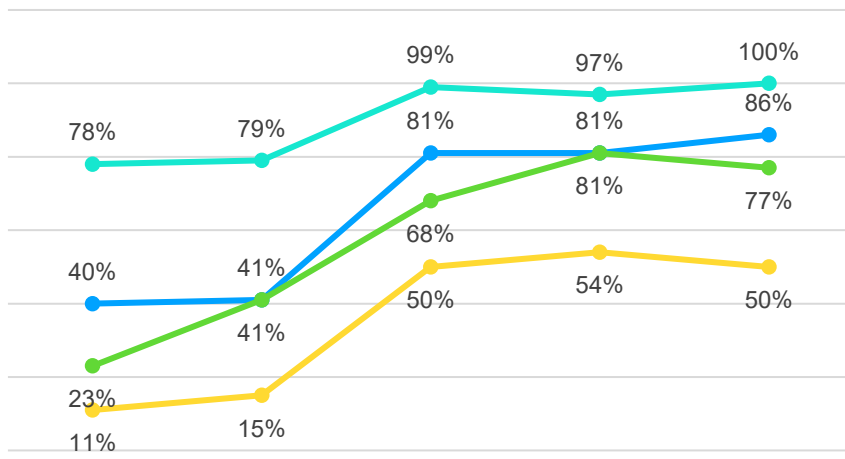
POE Business Skills Cycle II 2022



	Baseline	Level 1&2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Theme A	45%	52%	63%	74%	86%
Theme B	78%	78%	95%	98%	99%
Theme C	40%	54%	69%	75%	84%
Theme D	39%	33%	61%	65%	68%

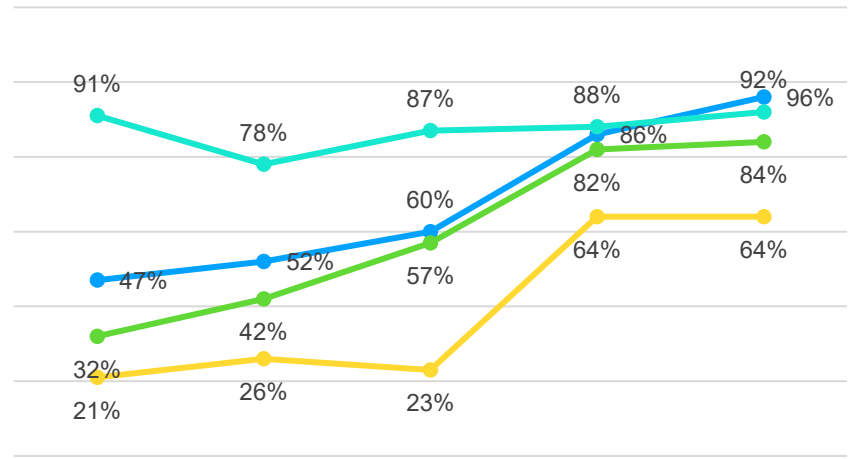
Theme A Theme B Theme C Theme D

POE Business Skills Cycle I-2023



Theme A Theme B Theme C Theme D

POE Business Skills Cycle II-2023



Theme A Theme B Theme C Theme D

The Analysis of Business skills POE results for the year 2022 showed that apart from the slight drop in results that was observed in thematic area D-(Improved Economic Resilience) at level 5 in cycle I and also in cycle II in thematic area D- at level 1&2, there was progressive performance across all the other remaining thematic areas for both of the two cycles. The best performing theme for both cycles was theme B-(on Social Cohesion, communication, culture and participation) scoring 92% in cycle I at level 5 (Endline level) and 98% at cycle II (Endline level). The least performing theme that was observed in both cycles was theme D as indicated in the graph above. (*The changes experienced by the learners are highlighted in the document attached as Annex I in the Annexes*). In 2022 low performance was experienced at level 1&2 under theme D because the sign was too early for learners to experience change hence explaining why it only scored 33%. The sign measured at this level was –*‘members begin to acquire assets e.g. livestock, bicycles, mobile phones etc’*. In 2023, the decline in performance in theme D at level 5 was also seen with other POE signs that measure self- reliance where e.g. *‘participants have created jobs for themselves and others’* scored only 36%, then also *‘members able to afford quality education for their children’* which got only 42% among others. Below is a list of the Helsinki tracked POE signs for Business Skills that were tracked from baseline to the end of the cycle for each cycle:

Thematic area A: - Participants are conscious about their personal financial management e.g. have control over unnecessary/ unplanned expenditure, save regularly, pay loans on time, budget, plan etc.

Thematic area B: - Participants appreciate and respect social -cultural differences among themselves

Thematic area C: - Members confidently give business advice to other colleagues

Thematic area D:- Members begin to buy or acquire assets e.g. livestock, bicycle, mobile phones

Another qualitative indicator the project measures is the “Recorded improvements in social cohesion (inter/intra communities’ social interaction)”. Analyzed results obtained for the year 2023 POE Level 5 (Endline) FGDs that were conducted during Learning cycle II showed that social interactions among participants had improved where for example in most refugee locations like Kiryandongo, it was reported that the learning participants were now more supportive of one another. They did this during various difficulties that they go through in life like loss of loved ones- where they offer emotional and material support such as counselling unlike before. Besides this, community meetings had helped communities unite and had enabled them present common challenges that they face like insecurity, issues related to access to water like breakdown of boreholes etc. and solutions were got for such challenges. Peace was therefore promoted in solving some of these challenges as well. Some of them had further gone on to promote forming of Peace groups which were being used as a platform to peacefully solve cases through different ways like dialogue. Furthermore, due to the existing learning groups and social interactions within communities and families, women were now being accorded more respect and recognition which had in turn created peace in homes and had also enabled respondents to manage homes well unlike before.

Also, the reduction in food ratios had also encouraged refugee communities to work together to enable them get more food to take care of their families e.g. through digging in groups. Results on other indicators are discussed in the IPT table below.

INDICATOR PERFORMANCE TRACKING TABLE (IPTT) -2022-2023

	Indicators	Target - 2022	Achieved -2022	Target- 2023	Achieved -2023	program Target	Base -line	Overall performance	% Progress made	Level of Progress	Comment
Intermediate Outcomes											
1	Overall number of participants	16,350	18,803	17530	19,631	66,000	0	38,434	58.2	In progress	Achieved above 50% mid project
2	Program participants showing signs of empowerment in their increased resilience capacity related: 1. aspect of life skills 2. social and cultural aspects, communication. 3. psychological aspect, e.g. self-confidence and self-esteem; 4. economic aspect / improved access to livelihood opportunities										Results presented in the narrative and illustrations above
3	Recorded improvements in social cohesion (inter/intra communities' social interaction)									In progress	Qualitative data- Refer to narrative above

	Indicators	Target - 2022	Achieved -2022	Target- 2023	Achieved -2023	program Target	Baseline	Overall performance	% Progress made	Level of Progress	Comment
4	% of participants to programme activities equipped with skills to improve their economic resilience at the end of the programme / Percentage of learners who graduate disaggregated by refugee, host community, gender, age and disability	75%	83% 7,675/ 9227	75%	72% 6500/ 9067	60%	0	78%	78%	In progress	Performance dropped in 2023 by 3% below the 75% project target. This was because the FAL standardized exam was done for the first time during the year. However, overall progress was made. Target of 75% was achieved. Fortunately, program target of 60% was achieved in both years.
5	% of participants to programme activities able to get access/improve income opportunities minimum 6 months after training	55%	47% 399/855	55%	52% 554/963	55%	28% 512 /1,818	52% 953/ 1,818	52%	In progress	Results show that both years did not achieve set target. In 2022 the indicator failed to achieve target by 8 %points while in 2023 it underperformed by 3 %points against the set target. However, overall results for both years shows an increase of 24 %points in the number of learners who established businesses by the end of the course when compared to baseline figure of 28%.
	Indicators	Target - 2022	Achieved -2022	Target- 2023	Achieved -2023	program Target	Baseline	Overall performance	% Progress made	Level of Progress	Comment
6	Percentage of graduated business skill learners able to diversify their income source / meet sudden expenses due to emergencies (crop failure, covid, theft, fire, sickness), disaggregated by refugee, host	40%	75% 637/855	40%	62% 595/963	40%	35% 631 /1818	68% 1,232/1 818	68%	In Progress	Overall average for both years shows that the Indicator over achieved by 28%points and targets were met for each of the years. This can be explained by the fact that most of the participants that enroll for the business course already have businesses and interest in

	community, gender, age, disability.										establishing more businesses. Besides this, the course encourages participants to set up businesses.
	% of participants recording increased meaningful and active participation in their communities (e.g. to local committees, and the like)	50%	69%	50%	75%		54%	71%	17%	In progress	Results show that all the learning courses registered an increase in the number of participants that reported having meaningful and active participation in their communities. This is therefore reflected in the overall performance as well- where a 17%point increase was recorded.
	<i>FAL Basic</i>		67%		68%		44%	68%	24%		
	<i>EFA Basic</i>		63%		69%		38%	66%	28%		
	<i>FAL Continuous</i>		65%				57%	65%	8%		No groups in the year 2023
	<i>EFA Continuous</i>		73%				67%	73%	6%		No groups in the year 2023
7	<i>Business Skills</i>		78%		87%		63%	83%	20%		
	% of participants who put in practice climate adaptation/mitigation measures/practices	30%	54%	30%	59%	30%	0	57%		In progress	Learners in all the diverse learning courses achieved beyond the set % target of 30%. Most of the participants have atleast adopted two or more of the practices like tree planting and no longer cut down trees. This is because they now know the disadvantages of cutting down trees.
	<i>FAL Basic</i>		50%		57%		22%				
	<i>EFA Basic</i>		56%		65%		36%				
	<i>Business Skills</i>		56%		56%		35%				
	<i>FAL Cont.</i>		53%				41%				No groups in 2023
8	<i>EFA Cont.</i>		53%				41%				No groups in 2023

	Indicators	Target - 2022	Achieved -2022	Target- 2023	Achieved- 2023	program Target	Baseline	Overall performance	% Progress made	Level of Progress	Comment
Immediate Outcome I											
	Number of participants to the diverse courses provided by the programme disaggregated by refugee/host, gender, age, disability.	7000	18,575	7,010	17,429	24,300	0	36,004	148.2	In progress	First time Learner participants to FRC courses over achieved beyond target by 11,822. With regards to disaggregated data, all achieved target with exception of elderly both in 2022, 2023 and persons with disabilities in 2023 attained the set targets as indicated in the table. All the VSLA participants in 2022 were previous and there were no online computer courses in 2022. This was so because during the first year of program implementation (2022) all participants are counted as first time participants explaining the high number achieved.
	<i>Learners</i>		17,421		15,911	21,510	0	33,332	155.0		
	<i>Instructors</i>		531		146	700		677	96.7		
	<i>Leaders</i>		623		418	300		1,041	347		
	<i>VSLA</i>				620						
	<i>Online computer course</i>				334						
	<i>Women</i>	70%	74%	70%	77%						
	<i>Youth</i>	25%	31%	25%	28%						
	<i>Elderly</i>	5%	3%	5%	3%						
	<i>PWD</i>	5%	6%	5%	4%						
9	<i>Host</i>	20%	22%	20%	24%						
10	% of learners who have acquired new functional skills (basic ability to read, write and make simple calculations in in their own or other language, i.e. English, small business, rights literacy, life skills etc.)	75%	83% (7,675/9227)	75%	72% (6500/9067)	75%	0	78%	78%	In progress	Performance dropped in 2023. This was because the FAL standardized exam was done for the first time during the year. However, overall the target of 75% was achieved .
11	% of learners attending more than one course provided by the program (Uganda and Ethiopia).	30%	1%(223/17,644)	30%	4%(706/16,617)	30%	0	929/34,261	3 %	Not in progress	Target not met in both years. This is because all participants in the first year of implementation are considered to be first time as explained above and most of the learners that enroll are receiving FRC intervention for the first time.

											However, this will improve with performance of the subsequent years- (2024, 2025) where we expect more numbers of previous learners though not the targeted 55,720.
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	---

	Indicators	Target - 2022	Achieved -2022	Target- 2023	Achieved- 2023	program Target	Baseline	Overall performance	% Progress made	Level of Progress	Comment
	Output 1.1. Awareness on right to education and functional education raised to primary and key programme stakeholders.										
12	Active participation to technical working groups and networks (Uganda and Ethiopia)	3					2			In progress	Qualitative data-captured in Narrative reports. Participation in EIE, INGO networks, Partners and Education sector coordination meetings
13	A.1.1. Number of refugee and host community leaders, who advocate for right to adult education as part of basic human rights.	120	623	130	508	780	0	1131	145 %	Achieved	Indicator has already overachieved beyond the set target by 145%. This is because FRC keeps working in different locations that have totally new leaders.
14	Number of adult education campaign events organized to mobilize leaders/general population to advocate rights of refugees/host community and vulnerable groups (women and PWD).	4	4	4	4	16	0	8	50 %	In progress	Qualitative data- Literacy Day, Women's Day, Refugee Day, International Disability Day , Days of activism against GBV, World Aids Day etc where FRC participates every year. More information on this is available in the quarterly reports.

	Indicators	Target - 2022	Achieved - 2022	Target- 2023	Achieved- 2023	Program Target	Baseline	Overall performance	% Progress made	Level of Progress	Comment
	Output 1.2. Learning materials/ curricula developed/revised and tailored to learners' needs and requests.										
15	A.2.1. Number of FRC materials revised or new developed.	FAL Training Kit and uniform exam	None		FAL Curriculum materials and Uniform exam	2	0	Business Skills Curriculum is being worked on and WFP Financial Literacy materials have also been worked on	Progress has been made in development of all the targeted materials meant to be developed.	In progress	FAL materials have been developed, WFP materials have been developed The Business skills curricula is also being worked on and will be ready by end of the program. Testing of the Business skills curriculum is supposed to commence before end of the program.
	Output 1.3. Voluntary peer facilitators/instructors trained and able to deliver courses independently										
16	A.3.1. Number of instructors and facilitators trained in FRC in-house trainer program, disaggregated by refugee, host community, gender, age and disability.	320	475	280	398	1100	0	873	79 %	In progress	Achieved 79 % by project mid-point. This is because during the first year of implementation, almost all instructors underwent training thus raising the achieved numbers. This number will keep coming down in the

												subsequent years of implementation that is 2024, 2025.	
17	A.3.2. Percentage of trained volunteer instructors & facilitators who, are able to facilitate courses independently.												The programme has exceeded its targets for the indicator for both years. This is because of the trainings provided by FRC and experience attained by some of the instructors over the years.
	FAL/EFA	80%	88%	80%	94%		82%	91%- average	9 % points.	In progress			
	<i>BUSINESS SKILLS</i>	80%	91%	80%	100%		0	96%- average	96%	In progress			The programme has exceeded its targets for the indicator for both years. This is because the trainings provided by FRC and experience obtained by some of the business instructors over the years has made them become better in the delivery of the learning course.
	Indicators	Target - 2022	Achieved - 2022	Target- 2023	Achieved- 2023	Program Target	Baseline	Overall performance	% Progress made	Level of Progress	Comment		
Output 1.4. Disability and gender inclusive education courses (functional, financial and rights literacy, language, life skills) for target people of concern are provided.													
18	Disability strategies adopted	5	None	5 new child care spaces, FAL training disability friendly materials	10 Child minders recruited	20	0	10	50 %	In progress		Aspect of childcare spaces was reviewed due to limited resources. As a result, the aspect of Child minders was instead adopted.	

	Number of FRC staff and peer facilitators trained on disability inclusive education										In progress	Results show that the indicator (specifically on instructors trained) has so far achieved above 50%. This is due to the efforts put in place by FRC.
	Facilitators	180	275	160	69	600	112	344	57 %			
19	Staff	5	2	5	0	20	11	2	10 %		In progress	Progress on staff training still slow however target can be achieved in the next coming two years. FRC plans to do more in the remaining two years.
20	A.4.1. Overall number of individuals, who have participated for the first time in any capacity, disaggregated by refugee, host community, gender, age and disability./ Number of learners attending diverse courses provided.	15,730	17,644	16,920	16,617	55,720	0	34,261	61 %		In progress	Indicator achieved targets for both years.
21	% of enrolled learners who attend at least 60% of given learning sessions	x	5680 /9541	x	5731 /9067	x	0	11,411 /18,608	61%		In Progress	Indicator achieved targets for both years.
	Indicators	Target - 2022	Achieved - 2022	Target- 2023	Achieved- 2023	program Target	Baseline	Overall performance	% Progress made	Level of Progress	Comment	
22	A.4.4. Completion rate (graduated + those attended minimum of 60% of lessons) of participants per learning course, disaggregated by refugee, host community, sex, age and disability.	70%	87%	70%	86%	70%	0	87%- average performance	87%		In progress	Indicator has achieved the set target for both years.

23	A.4.5. Number of VSLA groups formed among FAL, EFA or Business Skill learners.	95	12	145	67	335	0	79	24 %	Not in progress	Indicator might not be able to achieve the set annual target at the end of the 4 years This is because the budget for these activities was quite limited thus limiting the support that FRC could offer the VSLA groups. For example, FRC was not able to provide the Kits that the groups needed making it hard to implement this. Also, the option of getting other partners to take on the groups was also not forthcoming. Very few partners were willing to support these groups formed by FRC.
24	A.4.6. Number of VSLA members, disaggregated by refugee, host community, gender, age and disability.	2500	242	4350	1,607	8700	0	1,849	21 %	Not in progress	Same as above

Key

		Indicator performing according to set target or has already achieved set 4 year target
		Indicator so far has achieved set targets for some years though did not achieve target in some in some years
		Indicator likely not to achieve set program target

3.3 Changes Experienced by Project Participants Resulting from Project Activities

The second mid-term evaluation question looked into the impact the project and especially the gaining of literacy and numeracy skills had had on the participants and their households. The changes experienced were majorly those that the project had intended or targeted to achieve, thus indicating that the project was on course with regards to realizing its set objectives.

3.3.1 Initial Situation

Limited Life Skills

Majority of the basic FAL participants reported that they could not read, write or count before they joined the learning course. The EFA basic learners on the other hand mentioned that they could not speak or understand English and could not read or write in English while the business learners had limited business management skills like record keeping, skills needed to write out business plans among others. Not having these skills made life difficult for them where; one of the participants from Kyaka revealed that she found a lot of difficulties when she travelled simply because she could not read road signposts. Others mentioned that they could not use their phones without help/ assistance from other people, could not support their children with homework nor read the notices/ circulars and report cards that schools gave to their children to bring to them, could not read the dates or tell time, could not read or understand immunization cards, could not read and understand medical prescriptions. Also, some confessed that they were carrying wrong hospital books when going to the health facilities simply because they could not read nor write their name. They would instead carry books for other family members like the sisters, brothers or mother's books etc. A learner from Umoja Ni Uguvu FAL basic Learning group in Kyaka confessed that:

" I did not know how to read and write...when I am told to go to the hospital I could go with my mother's book because I could not read my name."

Another respondent from the EFA continuous course in Kyaka also explained that:

"...I joined a saving group and was always nominated to be secretary but feared because I didn't know how to read and write."

The EFA learners mentioned that not knowing English had made it hard for them to express themselves or communicate with the other communities during meetings. Others reported that it was hard communicating with other people especially the host community in the market, when accessing services from the health facilities etc. and as a result could not understand the health facility staff. One of the participants when asked whether the translators in these facilities have been helpful mentioned that the translators that helped to translate at times did not do so accurately hence causing even more frustration. Some of the participants also pointed out that they did not understand the news being read on TV simply because they did not understand/ know English.

Some of the EFA participants also mentioned that they did not even know how to greet in English following the different timelines of the day like; Good morning, Good Afternoon or Good evening.

Besides this, some didn't know the importance of greeting their neighbors or people in the community while others did not know how important education was or didn't appreciate education.

Furthermore, when it came to numeracy skills many revealed that they didn't have these skills when they joined the FRC learning course and as a result most basic learners were unable to count either in the local language for FAL basic learners and in English for EFA basic learners. Therefore, they were not able to do business on their own while others could not even tell or write their age. One FAL Basic respondent from Ayilo mentioned that:

".....I could take my chicken to the market but didn't know how to bargain and didn't know money." Due to their innumeracy some of the participants were not able to keep records of their businesses and it was worse for those who could not even read and write. The lack of numeracy skills had limited most of them from exploring various livelihood opportunities in their localities and the few that had some IGAs were not managing them well hence explaining the short life span of businesses that were started before.

Some of the respondents also mentioned that they had also lacked skills and knowledge on other topics such as personal and household hygiene (e.g. Could come to learn with dirty clothes, didn't know how to use sanitary facilities while some were practicing open defecation, others did not know how to properly take care of their children etc.). Others didn't know much about modern / climate smart farming like planting in rows-(many were broadcasting), kitchen gardening, didn't know much about farming seasons, how to prevent crop pests and diseases. Also, others could not make business plans, had no knowledge about VSLAs, and how to make eco-stoves among others. One of the instructors during the FGD pointed out that she did not have any knowledge on how to make briquettes. The instructors also did not have the skills needed to teach adults-they could not scheme or do lesson plans.

Others were not practicing certain financial management practices like saving, budgeting, planning and as a result most of them kept rotating in the same cycle of financial stress and failure to achieve target goals. This came out across all the participants irrespective of the learning course that they were in. One respondent during the discussion mentioned that they used to misuse money that they used to get by drinking and buying alcohol with their friends simply because they did not have knowledge of financial management and certain financial skills.

Self-confidence, Improved relationships and participation in leadership

With regards to social cohesion, one of the FAL instructors during the discussion mentioned that most of the participants did not have conflict resolution and problem-solving skills at the beginning of the learning course hence making it hard for them to relate to each other (spouses included) and tolerate other communities. She went to explain that many of the course participants were involved in so many quarrels and conflicts with their neighbors in the community. Others were always backbiting and fighting each other hence negatively affecting the aspect of social cohesion.

Also, some of the participants confessed during the discussions that they found it challenging to share problems with others or with their colleagues and this was due to various reasons such as lack of trust.

When it came to seeking leadership positions, some of them feared doing so while others who had taken up these positions were struggling because they lacked certain skills needed to fulfill

their mandates like reading and writing skills etc. This was attested to by one of the leaders from the host community in Kyaka who said that:

“People did not know that i was not educated...people nominated me knowing that I know everything...when it reached time for serving, they realized they had voted someone who doesn't know how to read and write...this encouraged me to go for knowledge from adult education. As a leader when I reached the class people thought I had gone for other issues but myself internally I knew what took me there and the instructor always put much emphasis on me that me as a leader I shouldn't be absent from there any day..... As leaders if you're not educated people see that you have no importance to them so for us as leaders with me as an example, I was given a post as a local defense but was fearing to go and arrest an educated person.” [KKFGDLH1]

The limited skills that they had eventually affected their confidence to seek leadership positions or to serve in positions well. Further on low self-confidence some of the participants from both the sampled regions revealed that they used to attend community meetings but could not say anything because they did not have the confidence or feared to stand before other people. Others went on to explain that they even did not understand what was being discussed because they did not know English affecting their ability to actively participate in the meetings.

It should be noted that the limitations/ challenges listed above were some of the reasons that participants presented as factors that motivated them to join FRC learning courses such as; challenges in accessing services because of inability to read, write, speak in English, count among others, constant conflicts in relationships, poor home hygiene management, failure to fully serve in leadership or in business because of limited reading and writing skills etc. All these made them realize the need to of having these skills thus pushing them to enroll for FRC course.

Figure 8: Photo Showing project participants (respondents) responding to questionnaire Interviews-Left in Kyaka II Settlement, Right in Adjumani.



3.3.2 Changes Experienced by Project Participants Attributed to Project Interventions

This section presents the changes registered by the project participants resulting from FRC project interventions. The changes are presented following the thematic areas in the Pathway of Empowerment consolidated tool- looking at the different statements and signs that are in the tool.

3.3.2.1 Acquired Life Skills, Knowledge and Change in Practices

Gained Literacy, Numeracy and Communication Skills (Speaking abilities in English)

Majority of the respondents appreciated the fact that they were now literate (able to read and write) which skills were helping them now access several services. This was voted by many of the FAL Basic respondents as the most significant change in majority of the groups that were engaged in the FGDs. When respondents were asked why this had been voted as the most significant change, they explained that one cannot do much without knowing how to read and write. They mentioned that they were now able to write their names and read/identify their names from a list and also read other people's names. The other changes that were presented included ability to count, ability to calculate loss and profit, ability to now interpret and understand immunization cards where; survey results showed that 88%, (1305/1487) were now able to do so. This same change was also observed and presented by the Kyaka Settlement commandant as well who mentioned that it was one of the visible changes that most of the FRC participants were testifying to when they interact with them especially the refugees.

Still on the aspect of literacy, some of the respondents further explained that the FRC had also helped give an opportunity to the elderly who had dropped out of school or did not have an opportunity to learn how to read, write, count or speak English. Those who had also dropped out of school for different reasons were now provided with the opportunity to go back to school through these Adult learning courses provided by FRC. Therefore, most respondents felt that FRC learning courses (especially basic learning courses) had helped bridge the gap between the literate and illiterate in the community. More people in the communities were now literate and this was mainly because of FRC intervention. This was testified to by one of the leaders in Ayilo I who pointed out the overall impact that FRC learning courses have had over the years in their communities where he explained that; previously in 2014 there were many people in the community who could not read and write so when one received a message/letter they at times had to move to their neighbors to seek for someone who could assist in reading and writing for them. This trend according to him has now significantly changed. *"Most people in the community are now able to read, write and count atleast in majority of the families and to him this is because of the existence of FRC learning classes that have been held over the years."* [AAYIFGDL4]. As a result, most of the project participants who participated in the mid-term evaluation revealed that they could now record their age, count money, start business, manage business well, read the bible, understand immunization cards- can now read the dates of return, read what is written on the immunization card, understand medical prescriptions given from the health facilities among others.

The increased number of people in the communities who can now read, write, count, understand and speak English is now making leaders some communities in the North reluctant to use interpreters during community meetings. One of the leaders in Ayilo I reported that the as leaders were reviewing the aspect of continued use of translators during meetings. They felt that using interpreters was a waste of time since very few community members now days do not understand English. He argued that going forward they plan to stop the use interpreters and all this is because of FRC adults English courses that have been going on in the community over time. He explained that by doing this, they also want to encourage those that are still struggling to join the FRC EFA course.

For the EFA learners majority appreciated that fact that they were now able to understand and speak/communicate in English with other people in the community. Besides this, some of the respondents (especially FAL and EFA basic learners) explained that being able to read, count and write had helped ease movement from one place to another. They were now able to travel on their own- guided by road signs showing direction and written names of different places on posters. Instructors from Ayilo mentioned that this had also helped to reduce the number of accidents within the communities.

More to this, some of the learners were now more knowledgeable about forex exchange and were able to exchange currency on their own. An instructor from Nyumanzi explained that,

"... one of my learners learnt some English with how to exchange currency. She went to Juba someone took her like house maid. Then by that time they told her they are going to pay her in Pounds she went there and the pound dropped and the dollar was high. So the woman tried to convince her that she pays in pounds instead of dollars. But because she had learnt how to exchange money she refused the pounds and requested to be paid in dollars. Then she called me and thanked me, that if i had not taught her she was going to end up working for nothing." {ANFGDI04}

Supporting Children in school

Many respondents during the discussion mentioned they were now able to support their children in school using the skills that they had attained. Indeed, supporting children in school was voted as the second most significant change especially by the women. The learners explained that they were now helping children do their homework, which to many of them was the reason why they joined the FRC learning courses. Others were happy because they now could read and understand their children's report cards and school circulars. One of the EFA continuous learners from Kyaka 2022 reported that,

" I now understand how to read the report card...now I have began to help my children with homework when they come from school...." [KKFGDLNR5]

Besides this, being part of these learning courses has also made most of them appreciate education more and even their own children are happy and feel motivated seeing them go to school to learn as well. One of the EFA basic learners 2023 from Ayilo I explained that: *"Am now able to send my children to school because i know the importance of*

education. ...After attending the school, now my children are motivated to go to school after seeing my certificate.”[AAYIFGDLNR9]

Improved business and financial management among participants

One of the changes mentioned by the participants because of the interventions was that they were now doing business with confidence due to the business knowledge that they had attained, unlike before. The business skills training respondents mentioned that they for example now ensured that they always first write a business plan before setting up any business- a new practice that they did not have before. Other respondents reported that they were now using the knowledge that they had acquired to make budgets for their families, were planning, saving etc. As a result, some of them confessed that the improved saving habits, planning and budgeting were now making it possible for their families to have more than one meal a day which was not the case before. Furthermore, others explained that they were now doing market surveys which helps inform them when to sell their commodities at a higher price. Also, some appreciated the fact that they were now able to identify a good location for business and they were now considering this as something very important when setting up business. One business learner from Akuodriko learning group 2023 in Ayilo I reported that: ” *I have been able to identify a good location for my business ... I now save money in a VSLA group and now am able to save for a specific thing in the family. I have bought goats and chicken from the savings. Am also able to assess the market. If the market price is low i can fast store and sell when the prices are high. Am also able to remembers the creditors of the business.”* [AAYIIFGDLNR7]

Improved Hygiene, sanitation and nutrition among participants

Aspects of hygiene, sanitation and nutrition are some of the topics captured by the FAL curriculum that is taught to the learners –(both FAL basic and EFA basic) during the first three months of learning cycle. It is from these learning sessions that the learners are expected to put what they have learnt into practice by for example; setting up drying racks, rubbish pits, latrines etc in their homes and also change in some practices as explained below.

At a personal level, majority of the respondents, especially the FAL basic learners, reported that there were now sensitive about their hygiene, especially when they move to attend meetings with other community members. Many were now wearing clean clothes when coming to meet others, first bathed /cleaned themselves after work in the gardens before going to attend class, were combing their hair, were now taking boiled water, were washing hands after using the toilet among others. Sanitation had also improved in homesteads where some of the learners that did not have sanitation facilities such as latrines, hand washing facilities, drying racks, rubbish pits etc at the start of the cycle were now having them. The survey results obtained indicated that 69% (1174/1,692) of the respondents had hand washing facilities in their home steads. With regards to sweeping their compounds, analyzed survey findings indicated that 89% were now doing this daily/more often. This showed that the learners had adopted the new practices.

One of the leaders from Pagirinya commented that the number of households that now have latrines had increased compared to the previous years and according to him FRC

has contributed to this. One EFA Basic breast-feeding mother from Ayilo I Emmanuel Learning group 2023 also testified that, “...am now able to clean my breasts before feeding my baby to ensure the health of my baby.” [AAYIFGDLNR9].

Such improved hygiene practices among participants has helped reduce the frequency and number of people getting sick in these households hence cutting on costs spent on medical bills.

With regards to acquired knowledge on nutrition, majority of the learners appreciated the knowledge shared on this through the learning courses because of the impact it has had on their families. Respondents testified that they now knew the different types of foods and importance of a balanced diet and as a result had adjusted their feeding habits e.g. try not to eat only one type of food repeatedly. One of the instructors from Nyumanzi testified to this when he mentioned that: “....Secondly they know about nutrition- which food will give u energy etc. They know because whenever they go to the market when am selling, if u tell them to buy cabbage they will tell u lunch time we ate cabbage. [ANFGDI04]. Survey analysis indicated that 93% of the respondents had kitchen gardens and majority of these 65% were cultivating vegetables for mainly home consumption. The vegetables have helped supplement food at home and even income for some obtained from the excess vegetables sold in the markets. The income obtained from sale of vegetables has enabled them to buy other types of foods hence enabling the adoption of having a balanced diet in families.

Changes in the use of free time

Participants reported that many of them spend most of their time learning, unlike before where they would be idle and did not have anything that would engage them. One of the host community leaders in Kyaka attested to this when he reported that: “In my area there were many drop outs that did not go for schools but they have got a chance to learn under FRC and it has made them so busy you cannot find people walking for nothing...they are gathered under the shade learning. KKFGDLH1.

Also, one of the FAL continuous learners in Pagirinya mentioned that: “.....this (FRC course participation) has reduced the free time which was always used for drinking.” APFGDLNR14. This has also helped awaken the minds of the beneficiaries. Some of them, especially the instructors, reported that they were now more creative and innovative like developing learning materials, organizing things at home etc. in their free time.

3.3.2.2 Changes related to Economic Status

Improved access to various Opportunities (e.g. IGAs-jobs, further vocational trainings etc)

Some of the respondents also reported that they were now able to tap into various opportunities like seeking employment opportunities in various institutions like AFOD as interpreters, counsellors, Village Health Teams (VHTs), support staff etc. using the certificates provided by FRC as well as the new skills they had gained that is ability to read, write and speak English. One of the instructors in support of this explained that,

“ I have taught many people in the community. I see others performing, others are interpreters here in UNHCR, others are working in other organizations so this makes me feel very proud and good because that was my target and vision I had before we started.” [KKFGDI01].

These skills have made it easy for them to work with other business partners/ agents-(for those that had set up business) as well. One of the settlement leaders in Kyaka told an example of a former EFA learner who had moved to UK and who said that the English language skills he had gained via the course had helped him to integrate better into his new community and even to find employment. Some of the well performing learners who completed FRC courses have also been offered job opportunities with FRC as voluntary instructors and have been able to deliver lessons independently after having received training. These opportunities have helped them earn some money through the tokens provided to volunteers which they have used to sustain themselves and their families e.g. pay school fees for their children, access quality health care, renovate their houses, provide basic needs, buy assets such as land, animals to rear, startup businesses e.g. like one instructor in Nyumanzi who has set up a photo studio after paying for himself to be trained on Videography and Photography, etc. One of the former EFA Basic learners in Kyaka 2022 revealed that: *“When I finished level one I went to level two...after this I went to FRC to ask for a job and I was given. I also applied to be a VHT using the FRC certificate...and at home the change came after getting the first salary from FRC. I bought land and constructed a house, I bought some pigs and some chickens. When I was working like a VHT, I used my small English to give the referral forms. [KKFGDLNR1].*

Another instructor from Nyumanzi also mentioned that she had been appointed to teach other teachers in formal education on how to scheme and do lesson plans using the skills she had gained as FRC instructor. She explained that: *“...then last time they called me in school and they said uuh last time we heard your teaching adults can u first teach us about such things in school. I said uhh how am i going to teach such a thing for me i teach adults they said let us see the adult teachers and the pupil teachers let us see who is going to be the best. Then they gave us to do a lesson plan, scheme of work and develop learning materials they gave us a topic on vegetation. I developed well my materials. They never knew i could do such a thing then they called me to bring my counter book where i always do my lesson plan and scheme of work. Even then they called some teachers to bring their scheme of work and lesson planning. Then they said u can be a headteacher, but i refused because i told them am not a professional teacher. Then the headteacher called me and asked me to train the teachers for two weeks on lesson planning and scheme of work using the skill that I got from FRC” [ANFGDI04].* The instructors appreciated the fact that they had gained these teaching skills and were now teaching adults. Some were now being hired on a personal basis to offer their teaching services to different adult clients. Some learners too were using the knowledge attained from these thematic trainings to also make some money for themselves like for example one FAL Basic learner in Nyumanzi who according to one of the instructors was making briquettes in his home and was selling them (3 briquettes for sh. 500) to hotels. He then used part of the money that he got to buy an ox plough. He is also contributing to the conservation of the environment by doing this.

Some interested FAL and EFA learners have also been encouraged to form Village Saving and Loans Associations (VSLAs) and through the VSLAs learners have gained access to financing for their businesses/ IGAs as most financial service providers are non-existent in these remote areas. As a result, many were now borrowing money from these VSLAs for boosting their businesses like for agriculture-(buy seeds for e.g. vegetable gardens), adding stock to their shops etc. Some were using this money to meet family basic needs and educate their children or buy school requirements for them. The profits made from setting up businesses and income got from agriculture have in turn been saved back into these VSLAs which has helped some of these VSLAs flourish.

Access to Vocational opportunities and other trainings

Some of the project participants both in Southern and Northern regions mention being able to access opportunities in other vocational training institutes using the certificates offered to them by FRC. They were able to use the skills acquired in FRC as a base to access other trainings.

One of the leaders in Ayilo I explained that: *“There are people who came, learnt and are now progressing to vocational studies like bakery and hair dressing and with that it is a positive change and success. The number is big because those who registered are 120 and 20 are from the FRC class. The most demanded for vocational course is hair dressing.”* [AAYIFGDL4].

Another leader from Pagirinya explained that: *“..... previously u want to join tailoring school so u can't join because u cant write the numbers and so when FRC introduced teaching how to read and write many people joined. They were able to join vocational schools where they learned carpentry, bakery and other skilling programs.”* [APFGDL5].

Other learners had even gone on to join formal education, especially in government schools. One of the leaders from Pagirinya reported that about 10-15 learners had registered into primary education by the end of 2023. There were also some cases of this in Kyaka where some learners who had completed FRC learning courses had now completed primary seven and had crossed to secondary despite the financial challenges that they were facing in terms of school fees.

Agriculture is now seen as a business

Based on the data there has also been a mindset change towards considering agriculture as a business. Majority of the respondents are practicing agriculture but have not been managing it as a business. A change in attitude towards this has made many respondents realize that agriculture can bring in income for the family if managed as a business. They thought business could be done in another way like selling of retail goods-(shops), selling cooked food in restaurants etc but not agriculture. Most were not having any agricultural business records. One Business Skills learner from Akuondriko group 2023 in Ayilo II reported that: *“...Am now doing agriculture as a business and am able to get over one million in a season. Am able to meet my expenses without looking for help.”* [AAYIIFGDLNR7]

The learners and instructors were also using the knowledge that they had acquired through the FAL and EFA courses on Climate change to change certain habits that they were previously practicing like destruction of the environment through tree cutting, use of poor farming methods etc thus leading to low productivity. With the knowledge acquired, most of them are now more involved in restoring the environment through, for example planting trees, advocating for the preservation of the environment in their communities. Others are using energy saving technologies like echo stoves while others have adopted the use of Climate Smart Agricultural technologies like mulching, digging terraces, planting in rows and use of organic fertilizers among others. One of the instructors in Ayilo *I mentioned that I was trained in briquette making, I taught my community members so that we can protect the environment together.* [AAFGDI02]

3.3.2.3 Improved Social Cohesion (Relations), Participation, Communication and change in Attitude

The training materials and curriculum used for training FRC participants have different aspects and content related to living in harmony with others in the community, aspects of problem solving, conflict management, importance of participation in community meetings and events among others. It is from this that participants are able to attain various skills/abilities in relation to this thus explaining the changes experienced like;

Increased participation in community meetings/ gatherings and in leadership

Results showed that most respondents were now actively participating more in community events, community meetings, learning groups, trainings etc compared to before they joined the FRC learning courses. According to the respondents, some of them were now active mobilizers of different meetings because they now reported understanding what was being communicated during the meetings that were held in English. They also could now read and write thus were able to register their names and sign on their own which was not the case before. This made them gain confidence to actively contribute in these meetings. Survey results also depicted the same findings where 95% of the survey respondents mentioned that they participated in community activities. When asked whether they actively speak /give opinions in these meeting results showed that, majority reported doing this either often or sometimes (46 % for both).

Some of the learners have even gone ahead to stand for leadership positions in the community and in different groups such as VSLAs. They now hold positions of secretaries, chairpersons, treasurers etc. in different committees like borehole committees. All this has made them gain more respect and love among community members compared to before and the work that they do in the community is highly appreciated. It should be noted that the skills acquired enabled learners form VSLA groups and also carry out leadership roles and responsibilities with ease. e.g. take group records – savings, loans etc which they were not doing before, write letters of recommendation for their community members among others.

Change of roles in the community-(including change in gender roles)

The data analysis also indicated that there was a positive change in attitude towards women taking up certain roles in the community like leadership roles, as well as the inclusion of women in family affairs e.g. in decision making, financial control, planning etc especially in the North because of women's improved literacy and numeracy skills. This has in turn created more opportunities for them, for example in business.

One of the leaders from Pagirinya pointed out that: “ *...there are also changes in women roles. Some of them have been nominated as secretaries in the Block and some as treasurers in VSLA because they know they now have the knowledge from FRC they know how to write. [APFGDL5]*

Previously in Dinka, Madi and other target communities men were not comfortable seeing women take on leadership roles in the community or even controlling resources at home or participating in family decision making. This was majorly because they looked at them as people who were illiterate and were supposed to stay at home to take care of the family. Everything including leadership roles was to be decided on by the man. But this trend has kept on changing based on the observations shared by the respondents. According to the respondents, some of the men in the North were now comfortable voting for a woman as their leader which was not the case before at the baseline. Besides this, most women are now more involved in planning for their families with their husbands like the children's education etc. are involved in deciding how family resources are utilized and also contribute towards resources of the family through the businesses that they are now doing using the knowledge and skills that they have attained from FRC learning courses. All this has been made possible because of their husbands change in attitude towards this.

Some of the instructors who had received modular training as well as been trained in thematic areas such as SGBV, disability etc. by FRC had now become activists or advocates for these in their communities. They were also being contracted by other partners to sensitize communities on these. Two instructors from Kyaka and Nyumanzi testified to this where; they mentioned that they were now SGBV activists in their communities and they have also been hired by different partners to support handle some SGBV cases in their communities.

Change in attitude-Reduced discrimination against people with disabilities

The project thorough incorporating different thematic topics like disability, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) into the FAL and EFA curricula and learning materials had helped learners understand and have a positive mindset change towards these topics. During the mid-term evaluation the learners mentioned that they now socialize with persons with disabilities and support and treat them like other people in the community. The trainings have helped instructors offer proper support to persons with disabilities during their learning sessions where for example most of them were now able to identify learners with disabilities and support them during learning sessions by making those who cannot see things from a far sit close to the blackboard or sit far away for those that are long sighted or cannot see things that are near them, giving more time or remedial

lessons for learners that have mental challenges such as slow learners or time takers etc. They have also referred some of the learners with certain disabilities to receive further management or proper medical treatment at health facilities. They have also ensured that they promote inclusion in the leadership structures of the learning groups where one of the instructors mentioned that,

“For the people with Disability, when i was fast called to come and work with FRC, the first thing we did was to select the leaders and the person with disability was put as one of the leaders to be the representative of the class and she felt honored. She thought in the class she could not be selected. But now she feels disability is not inability. They are now equal.”

Figure 9: Photo showing Refugee Welfare Community (RWCs) leaders participating in an FGD in Kyaka II Settlement -FRC office



Promotion of unity among communities

Project participants appreciated the fact that they were now able to live with other people in the community including the host community. According to the leaders, FRC learning courses had helped bring people from different backgrounds and communities together. This helped bring unity and love amongst the learners in the communities both in the South and North. On top of this, many of the learners made friends with one another in the learning groups. As a result, most of them were now working together more compared to before when people used to discuss along tribal lines. This has therefore helped to reduce conflicts in the communities thus promoting social cohesion. A FAL Continuous Learner from Pagirinya further mentioned that,

" there is peaceful co-existence among communities. We are now able to request for land from the host and plant vegetables which we sell and get money. This is because we study together with the host." [APFGDLNR14].

Decline in Conflict

Apart from new positive relationships created through the project the mid-term evaluation results also indicated that there were now less conflicts in the community compared to before and this was mainly because participants had been empowered with knowledge and skills on conflict resolution e.g. on mediation, negotiation etc. One of the Instructors from Pagirinya attested to this when they reported that,

".....but at fast when i begun to move for this training i got skills for solving issues. There was a time my neighbor was fighting with the husband I feared also. I went there eeh i thought of all those things which they taught me in the training. Then i begun to talk to these people, i was fearing i thought i was young but then i talked to themwe were three and I settled the issue." [APFGDI03].

Respondents also reported reduced misunderstanding within households where- there was now less fighting in the families specifically between husbands and wives.

Improved communication between spouses

Also, communication between spouses had improved and this was mainly due to change in behavior. Learners are now calmer when talking to their spouses, are more patient and are able to listen to their spouses more unlike before. This has helped reduce misunderstandings in the households, reduced quarrels and fights. A statement was shared with married/cohabiting survey respondents on whether 'they and their spouses handle issues amicably'. They were required to select one option that is whether they agree with the statement or not and results showed that 68% (869/1274) did agree with the statement which is 'they do handle issues amicably with their spouses'. This shows that atleast more than half (most) were having peace in their homes, a confirmation of what was shared in the FGDs. This was attested to by one of the instructors from Nyumanzi who reported that,

"one thing i have observed from my learner, she told me by the time she had not joined the class she didnt know how to talk to the husband but she has now learnt and now days they are longer fighting, there are no more quarrels." ANFGDI04.

One instructor also commented that the gossip and backbiting among learners especially female learners too had the reduced.

Thematic Area C-Improved Self Esteem and Confidence

The acquisition of skills such as reading, writing skills and ability to communicate in English among others has boosted participants confidence. They are now able to express themselves before others during community meetings. Besides this, they are now more respected in community and can also confidently teach others what they have learned. The fear of standing before crowds of people is no more. One female EFA Continuous Basic 2022 respondent from Kyaka reported that:

“I can now introduce myself...now even in my family I can try to teach the children how to count in English. Right now, I can understand what people can say. I can join the competition to apply for jobs even if I don't have a job now. [KKFGDLNR5].

They are also able to negotiate in English when they go for shopping in the markets.

Besides the changes mentioned in the above categories community leaders also mentioned that the improved literacy, numeracy and language skills have helped them to communicate with the community members and other stakeholders. Some of the leaders from the North reported that they no longer look at hiring translators as a priority. According to them, there has been less use of translators compared to the past. One of the leaders from Ayilo I revealed that,

“In the beginning in 2014, everything needed a translator but now it is a little bit reducing.”

[AAYIFGDL4]

Other partners as well do no longer struggle when they ask communities to sign for themselves.

Figure 10: Photo showing Instructors in Adjumani (Pagirinya settlement) participating in an Instructors FGD



Improved level of 'Independence'- (Able to access services without any assistance)

Majority of the respondents also mentioned that they could now access services such as health services, financial services etc. on their own as they are now able to read, write, understand and speak English. One of the host community leaders during the discussion in Kyaka testified that:

“the course has equipped the elderly with reading and writing skills -it has been much important for the elderly on the ground. I had elders who were not understanding anything but can now go to the bank and sign for themselves.” [KKFGDLH1]

Another FAL Basic respondents from Umoja Ni Nguvu 2022 learning group in Kyaka went on to report that,

"...this time when they called us to sign I was able to sign and read...can try to write letters." [KKFGDLNR4].

Also, an instructor from Nyumanzi revealed that,

"...I even taught them letter writing. There was one mother who was in my class. She wanted to be reinstated on Holy communion and the Priest told her that the husband has to write a letter but he refused so she instead wrote it herself, signed and took to the priest and they accepted. [ANFGDI04]

3.4 Relevance and impact of the Adult Education project in comparison to illiterate and innumerate groups

The Mid Term Evaluation took on the experimental evaluation design where a Randomized Control Trial (RCT) was undertaken. This involved sampling of participants from locations where FRC has been conducting Adult Education interventions since 2022 -that is Kyaka, Pagirinya, Nyumanzi, Ayilo I & II as the treatment group while the Control group (participants) comprised of those that are from locations where FRC had just started intervening (less than two months) that is in Baratuku and Elema in Adjumani. It should be noted that Baratuku mainly comprises of the refugee community that is mainly the Dinka while Elema has got a mixed community of different tribes such as the Kuku/Bari and Madi. Results from the two categories of participants were compared and findings obtained showed that;

Relevance of the Adult Literacy curricula

Findings obtained fortunately indicated that what the control group wanted to learn during the learning course was already captured in the curriculum and other teaching materials (for both settlement and host community). Some of the things that they wished to learn included: how to read and write, Health education- e.g. Hygiene and sanitation, co-existence with other communities, Kitchen gardening (mainly presented by the host community), business management etc. Findings on the same from the leaders from both control locations that is; Elema and Baratuku was not so different from what other community members had presented though they presented a longer wish list. They too were interested in seeing their communities learn about Health education- especially sanitation around the home, how to read and write especially in their local languages so as to access other opportunities like other vocational skills trainings, how to speak English among others. The other additional things that they wanted to see them learn or do was learning to co-exist with other people (learn to love other people for the sake of peace with their neighbors), learn more about GBV, qualities of a good leader among others. Most of the things that they wished their communities to learn were a response to some of the major challenges that they were facing in their communities like the high number of GBV cases that was experienced in both of the two locations, the effects of alcoholism experienced by most families, effect of early marriages (which is a major problem

affecting young girls) among others. This therefore showed that the project was relevant (including the trainings materials being used) and met its targeted objective.

Relevance of the skills gained through the Adult Literacy courses

Expected results/ changes and assumed benefits of attending the learning course that the control groups wished to see were similar to the changes presented as achievements attained after attending the learning course by the treatment groups in all the treatment locations. For example participants in the control groups wanted to travel on their own after learning how to read sign posts, learn how to read, write and speak English so that they are able to communicate with other people in the community, access opportunities like jobs using the certificates given to them at the end of the course, support their children with homework, access medical services on their own with ease, manage their own businesses, Access financial services on their own with ease among others. Participants in the treatment groups were presenting the same as some of the benefits that they had attained as a result of attending the learning course.

Impact of the Adult Literacy courses

The challenges faced by the control participants in Baratuku and Elema due to limited literacy skills were the same challenges that the treatment group faced before they started learning in the different groups. Some of these included: difficulty in accessing services from health facilities due to language barrier, inability to travel on their own, inability to do business due to language barrier and limited business knowledge, inability to read and write which limits them from doing other vocational courses. The leaders and community members also reported that there were so many people within the community that did not know how to read and write. The challenges reported by the control group due to illiteracy and innumeracy further confirm the positive impact the adult literacy training has had on the treatment group.

Comparison group baseline findings

Access to services

The Random Control Trial also helped to provide a baseline on different aspects such as access to services by the communities in the new locations where the Adult Education project was to be implemented by FRC and findings obtained showed that communities were already accessing some services such as;

- i) Education services - Communities mainly had access to only formal Education from government institutions in both locations. None of the locations had a partner that was providing Adult Education interventions. The partner (GRS) that was providing vocational and a bit of Adult Education training in Elema was no more because the project had closed.
- ii) Health services- There was only one government supported health facility in Elema which was serving both locations. Unfortunately, the services offered were insufficient to meet the demands of the wider community. Therefore, community

- members (who can afford private services) have been forced to rely on privately owned clinics-which have helped to supplement this.
- iii) Access to water- Communities (i.e. host and refugee communities) in both locations have water points in different areas / blocks in form of boreholes and solar pumped water-(specifically in Elema) and this is supplemented by the River Nile especially when solar or borehole pumps became non- functional or dry up. Unfortunately, water supply in Baratuku was at times irregular especially during the dry season causing boreholes to dry up. Elema did not face any challenge with regards to access to water.
 - iv) With regards to access to financial services, the communities were only able to access mainly mobile money services and VSLAs.

Nutrition

With regard to the number of meals that most households have per day, results indicated that most households were able to afford only one meal a day. The evaluation also went on to establish if households had kitchen gardens and results showed that majority of households in both locations did not have this.

Participation

When it came to participation in community activities results showed that most were doing this and were involved in activities such as clearing of roads, cleaning of the community center specifically in Baratuku, cleaning of water points. Some of them participated in events such as sports (-e.g. Tournaments such as football, rope pulling etc which is done specifically in Elema), cultural events, weddings/ marriage ceremonies, drama competition.

With regard to participation in family decisions, results obtained from both locations showed that most of the household decisions were made by the males especially financial decisions. There were just a few households where women participated in decisions making. These were mainly households where men had neglected their responsibilities and only focused on drinking alcohol everyday. This was mainly seen in Elema settlement.

Also, when it came to participation of women in leadership evaluation results showed that women were free to stand for any position in the communities including top leadership positions like chairperson position. The men also had a positive attitude towards women taking on leadership roles. They felt that women were good leaders because they are usually tough and cannot be easily swayed.

Economic Aspect

The evaluation also took time to understand sources of income for most of the people in both communities and results showed that most were involved in agriculture - digging (casual labor), selling firewood and grass, Business (involves selling of tomatoes, onions, charcoal, brewing alcohol, selling silver fish etc). However, the evaluation also observed that some women in Elema settlement were not able to do business because of their

husband's negative attitude towards this. Most of the husbands were only comfortable with their wives doing farming.

Modern farming Practices

Findings obtained on this showed that most people had very limited knowledge on Climate Smart Agriculture-(specifically the modern farming techniques). This is because majority of the communities have not been exposed to these trainings and have very limited access to inputs. Participants reported that they were still broadcasting cereals like maize. Fortunately, the respondents had lots of interest in learning these new technologies and some revealed that they had seen how some few members in other communities were planting for example maize in rows and were also trying to copy the practice.

Coping mechanisms for sudden expenses or shocks

Results on this showed that majority of the participants looked up to their immediate family, neighbors and other community members as their support network in overcoming shocks. VSLA groups were also looked at in high regard in supporting and enabling the affected victims come out of these shocks.

Figure 11: Leaders of Baratuku and Elema Settlements participating in the Leader's FGD in Adjumani



3.5. Success factors and Challenges Hindering Project Progress

The evaluation also looked into the factors which contributed to the successful implementation of the project as well as hindering factors. The following section introduces the findings related to these. Information on this was obtained from FRC learning participants and other project stakeholders that is; instructors and leaders during the Focus Group Discussions held with them.

3.5.1. Success factors that contributed to the achievement of project objectives

Commitment exhibited by some learners towards attending learning sessions

The interest, passion and commitment that some of the learners had towards learning played a big part in the attainment of project successes. Some of the learners were committed to attending lessons on the days that they had selected or agreed on. Having this learning days agreed upon and time helped to prevent the clash of other activities in the learner's schedules thus making the learning time convenient for everybody. They also ensured that they sit for the exam at the end of the cycle.

Material support

Availability of learning materials e.g. books, pens, learner's guides, chalk, blackboards, charts, markers, kitchen garden seeds etc which were provided by FRC helped to ease learning for the learners. Some of these learning guides and books enabled the learners to revise or learn on their own during their free time. Jerrycans were also provided by FRC which were used to store drinking water for the learners. Provision of Kitchen Garden seeds helped the project achieve various results on e.g. improved nutrition and income which was reported by the respondents among others. Provision of tree seedlings to the learners by FRC also made the tree planting activity realise results on this. Some of the seedlings were donated to FRC by other partners like LWF and Adjumani district Forestry department in Adjumani.

Condition of learning facilities

Existing learning shelters and sitting materials e.g. Benches and Taplins given by FRC and the community helped to give a conducive learning environment for the learners. Communities offered churches, schools etc as shelters for the learners. These sheltered learners from harsh weather like rain, sunshine during learning and had where to sit as learning was going on hence enabling them to concentrate more in class.

Volunteer instructors

Availability of FRC trained voluntary instructors who were able to deliver the content to the learners enabled learning to take place and also mobilize community members to join the learning groups. These were able to teach at least 3 days each week and follow up the progress of their learners.

Active engagement of leaders

The role played by the leaders as well also helped the project get the right instructors and helped in the mobilization of the communities to join FRC learning courses. The created awareness and enabled interested learners to join the learning groups.

Support from family and friends

Also, the support and encouragement from family members like the children, spouses and friends in the community motivated learners to attend FRC lessons. One respondent revealed that her children helped support her learn numeracy and also took care of the family during her absence (as she attended class) when they came back from school. Another respondent from the EFA Continuous class in Kyaka explained that having some friends in class who could speak some English made it easy for her to also improve her English Speaking abilities. They were able to practice English with them.

3.5.2. Challenges faced by the project

Competing livelihood and household priorities

One of the most outstanding challenge that was faced across all locations was the aspect of low attendance especially among the refugees. This was mainly due to the reduction of food rations or removal of some learners' names/ households from WFP food lists. This made it hard for them to concentrate on learning since they now had to find other means of survival for their families. A few of these who tried to make it for the learning sessions attended the lessons when they were hungry. As a result, some of them had to go look for jobs or other opportunities far away from the learning center hence affecting their class attendance.

The planting season (rainy season) also kept the learners busy in the gardens for the whole day especially for the host community hence forcing learners to prioritize farming over learning.

Competing priorities and demands at home also made it hard for the learners to fully give time to learning and concentrate in the learning sessions. Their children had several school demands like scholastic materials and other health demands which they have to meet hence forcing the learners to look for other alternatives to help them meet these demands. Some of the alternatives include looking for IGAs that do not give them time to attend the learning sessions. This has even been made worse by the ever- increasing cost of living.

The other reasons that were presented for absenteeism for both the instructors and learners included funerals, long distance from home to the learning center, sickness/having sick family members who need to be attended to among others.

Reduction in Learning materials provided by FRC

This was making it hard for the learners to cope especially now that they had competing priorities such as buying food for their families and the high cost of living that they have to deal with as well. One of the learners from Kyaka explained that, " *previously they used to give us six exercise books and one pen but this time we are seeing 1 book and a pencil.*" The reduction in the budget had also affected implementation of some of the project activities like debates.

Inadequate learning facilities

Respondents also mentioned that they faced the challenge of limited access to toilets/ latrines during learning sessions. Most of the learning centers did not have places of convenience so they have to rely on the mercy of neighbors around. The harsh weather as well in form of heavy rains also affected attendance; especially for groups that did not have learning shelters or whose shelters were partly open (had no walls). This forced them at times to shift elsewhere for shelter or abandon learning completely thus affecting attendance.

Limited land for farming

Limited access to farming land especially among the refugees made it difficult for the project participants to implement some of the project activities like tree planting, putting in practice some of the Climate Smart technologies among others.

Poor attitude of some community members towards Adult Education

Some of the communities still had a negative attitude towards Adult Education especially in the North due to limited knowledge that they have about Adult Education. Some members according to the respondents made fun of the Adult Education learners asking them why they did not focus on learning when they were still young in school rather than now when they are adults overwhelmed with so many challenges. This had even resulted into stigmatization of some learners by the community members leading to some losing interest in studying thus dropping out of the learning course.

Non-inclusive learning facilities and materials

Some of the learners had different forms of disability which limited their learning in class. One example was a learner from Kyaka who mentioned that she was not able to see clearly what the instructor writes on the blackboard despite the various initiatives that the instructor had done to support her during learning sessions. This was even made worse by the fact that some of them had not accessed health services to correct these disabilities and this was because some of them did not know where to go, lacked transport to move to the health facility or had no access to these services. Furthermore, a few of the learning shelters were also hard to access due to long distance.

Figure 12: Photo showing one of the instructors in Pagirinya participate in drawing a stickman (a participatory tool) that was used in the discussion with guidance from M&E Team



4. Lessons Learnt, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents the lessons learnt, conclusions obtained from the findings and recommendations put forward to better the project as shown below.

4.1 Lessons Learnt

Foundational skills are critical for daily functioning

Before the intervention, many participants lacked basic literacy, numeracy, and English communication skills, which significantly hindered their ability to navigate day-to-day life, such as reading road signs, using phones, understanding prescriptions, and supporting children's education etc. Also, with regards to financial illiteracy, many lacked knowledge on financial planning, saving and budgeting resulting into poor financial decisions and inability to grow and sustain IGAs. However, this changed when the skills were acquired. Life became easier for many and were now able to do several things on their own including making the right financial decisions. In summary the lack of these skills limits one's opportunities in life.

Different innovations needed to overcome the challenge of low attendance

There is need for FRC Adult Education implementing teams (instructors, AEOs and Team leaders) to become more innovative when dealing with the aspect of absenteeism or low attendance because this is something that we are going to keep seeing over and over especially during such times when most partners are cutting down their budgets e.g. specifically meant for food for the refugees and the ever increasing cost of living. The search for food or other means of survival by the learners will continually be a competing priority for them and yet attendance of learning sessions is crucial for one to fully understand and grasp the different foundational levels that are taught in the different courses. Some of the innovative ways for example will include; adjusting the learning time to the time that best suits all learners, having remedial lessons, teaching more days a week so as to compensate for the lost days among others.

Language and Confidence Boosts Civic Participation

Inability to speak or understand English constrains one from engaging meaningfully in public activities like standing for leadership positions. However, learning English and developing confidence or self-esteem enables more community members, including women, to participate in meetings, understand discussions, and even seek leadership roles they previously feared.

Financial Literacy Improves Household Stability

The other lesson learnt was that Skills in budgeting, saving, and planning play a big role in helping households better manage their finances and plan for more sustainable ways of survival. It is through this that they can increase their food security, reduce unnecessary expenditures and conflict. Aspects of financial stress resulting into conflict or family break is usually reduced.

Inclusivity and Motivation Are Key to Learning

Learners joined the different learning courses for diverse reasons such as; education or knowledge gaps in e.g. business skills, faced leadership challenges, poorly managed conflicts due to limited knowledge in conflict management acceptance irrespective of the condition that they come with etc. All these reasons acted as motivation factors for them to learn. In the end, the Adult learning courses offered by FRC helped impart these needed skills to them and their lives have changed due to this. Behavioural change was also realized from this. This therefore shows that adult learning programs must be responsive to participants' life realities.

Community empowerment benefits all stakeholders

The ability of learners to communicate and understand English had reduced reliance on translators in some locations, eased operations for other development partners, and enhanced coordination at the local level. Therefore, work has been made easier when working with communities unlike before where the language gap was a problem and even signing of items distributed by individuals was a problem because some community members did not know how to read and write. Even the acquired interpersonal and conflict resolution skills have enhanced social cohesion as well. Communities are now able to socialize and integrate easily than before.

Attitude Shifts Drive Social Change

Finally, the exposure to knowledge or trainings on certain specific topics such as; disability inclusion, SGBV, gender equality, environment among others eventually leads to a shift in attitude and drive to social change. Positive gender role transformations begin to happen for example as it was noted, particularly with men accepting women's participation in leadership and decision-making at home.

What can be improved

The respondents were also able to list down some of the things that they felt the project needed to improve which include;

1. Merging of either 2 or 3 learning groups (especially those that are near each other) during graduation to enable the learners meet others. This according to the respondents will help bring about more sensitization about Adult education and also improve the attitude of other community members towards Adult Education; especially when they see many people graduating from these classes.

2. There should be clear communication by FRC staff on all changes that happen in the project especially reductions on items that are distributed to the learners resulting from budget cuts e.g. starter packs etc to avoid suspicion and conflict between the instructors and the learners.
3. The project should have some appreciation gifts like soap that is meant to be given to all learners irrespective of whether they have graduated or not. This is to appreciate them for the boldness and decision that they have made to step out from the community and come and learn as an Adult. Also, majority of the respondents suggested that the soda that is given to learners during graduation be converted to soap. Soap according to them can be shared by the whole family hence enabling them to also enjoy the fruits of having someone attend the Adult learning course.
4. On the aspect of livelihoods, respondents requested FRC to provide more support to project participants under the livelihood component e.g. business skills learners in form of start up capital or boosting of businesses especially for outstanding learners. Respondents also suggested that the skilling component be brought on board to enable the learners achieve their full potential. Still on this, it was also suggested that in order to better implement livelihood activities, instructors whose learning groups are within reachable distances should form a group and set up a demonstration garden that all learners from these different groups can use to learn.
5. Respondents requested that FRC improves on the timing in the distribution of the vegetable seeds. Sometimes the seeds have been distributed late-that is past the planting season or when the rains are about to end making it hard for them to use them immediately.
6. The leaders and instructors requested that if possible FRC provides some facilitation for the leaders- that can be used to motivate them. This can be in form of little items like soap, books etc.
7. Finally, respondents, specifically the leaders in the North requested that FRC comes up with a separate project targeting specifically the youth-and not just have them mainstreamed in the other projects. This should be designed to address some of the numerous challenges that the youth face. According to them, the youth population keeps growing each day and most of them have had formal education (are literate) but lack skills that can be used to generate income for themselves.

Good practices that FRC should continue with

The evaluation also went ahead to establish from the respondents some of the good practices that they observed and appreciated that FRC should continue doing for the continued good and further success of the project. Some of the practices that were identified included:

1. Having refresher Trainings offered to instructors (especially the old instructors) by FRC on different teaching content e.g. modular trainings, different thematic trainings among others. These according to the respondents helps perfect instructors skills and provide updates to different changes that happen.
2. Provision of learning and teaching materials for both the learners and instructors. This helps to facilitate learning.
3. Rewarding of best performing learners with different rewards such as soap.
4. Continue to provide vegetable seeds to the learners so that they can use them to plant their vegetable gardens. This helps supplement food and income for the learners
5. Continue to have continuous courses (FAL and EFA continuous) every year.

4.2 Conclusion

All in all, findings showed that the project was in line with regards to achieving majority of its set indicator targets and objectives of the projects. The interventions conducted had made the participants realize a number of changes as individuals, in their households and communities at large. Positive behavioral change and change in practices for a number of participants had been achieved thus improving the quality of life for them and their households. Most of the participants had also achieved a great level of empowerment which had boosted their self esteem or level of confidence. This as a result had made them to actively participate and contribute towards the development of their families and communities. Findings obtained from the Mid-term evaluation concludes that:

Project is addressing key identified gaps and objectives of the project

Most of the changes experienced by the learners that have completed are related to the assumed changes that were expected in different thematic areas in the Pathway of Empowerment (POE) measurement tool; showing that the project was achieving its core objectives. Participants have experienced significant changes at individual, household, and community levels particularly in improved literacy, communication, behavioral change and livelihood-related skills among others. Also, expectations of what participants wanted to learn at the start of the course is in line with the achievements that the project and project participants have got or achieved thus showing that what was taught is relevant, has been captured in the curriculum and is aligned to the interests of the learners. The same findings in terms of expectations from the project were also obtained from the control groups that the study engaged.

There is need for more sensitisation about Adult Education in different communities

The study concludes that there has been some relaxation or a bit of laxity especially among the community leaders towards sensitisation of Adult Education in their communities. This has resulted into continued negative attitude of some people in the communities towards this and stigmatisation of learners in some areas. Most people in the communities still do not understand or know much about FRC's Adult learning courses and how they contribute towards the development of an individual and community at large. This has been made worse by the competing demands that leaders have from other partners that they work with.

Limited commitment towards fulfilment of supervisory roles by the leaders

More to this, most of the leaders had also relaxed on their supervisory roles due to at times other competing tasks and roles required from them by other partners that are working in their jurisdictions. There was need for FRC to continuous keep reminding them about their supervisory roles with regard to learning in the different learning centres in their locations.

Holistic Adult Education has high potential for positive impact:

The FRC project demonstrates that literacy programs that also integrate life skills, business knowledge, and civic education can lead to meaningful transformation across various facets of beneficiaries' lives. They are a catalyst for individual and community transformation. The content taught touches various dimensions such as; social, economic, educational etc creating a ripple effect across households, communities, and institutions. The ripple effect eventually brings about empowerment translating into employment, entrepreneurship, participation in community activities and leadership etc.

The project has helped to improve social inclusion and equity

Furthermore, the evaluation also concludes that the Adult Education project had helped improve social inclusion and equity among learners and communities where they reside. It is through this that some groups of individuals such as the women have been able to boost their confidence/self-esteem and are participating in some leadership activities or take on some roles. It has also helped change negative attitudes among some communities towards certain aspects in life such as disability and how to treat persons with disabilities, peaceful co-existence, women participation in family decision making to mention but a few.

Sustainability

With regards to the aspect of sustainability, apart from the trainings that ensure continuity of knowledge provided by FRC, some of the best performing participants capable of doing advocacy and have passion for adult education can be identified to champion specific thematic activities like Kitchen gardens, SGBV advocates, Environmental advocates etc even after FRC withdrawal.

Figure 13: Photo Showing participants sharing changes experienced after completing the course using Crossing the River Participatory tool in Kyaka



4.3 Recommendations

More sensitisation about Adult education needed in Communities

There is still need for more sensitisation about Adult Education in different communities where FRC has presence. This will help counter the negative attitude that some people still have about it. Having this done will help ease work for all the implementing teams and even encourage more learners to join the learning courses. The leadership in the communities needs to be engaged more on this by FRC staff in the different locations so that this is continually done rather than have it done only during group formation in the learning cycle. Some of the leaders have not been effective in doing this. Most get caught up with other roles that they do as they offer support to other partners. Another approach that can be used is the use of identified Adult Education Champions in the community who can go round the communities sharing and show casing success stories. This can help overcome some of the cultural perceptions towards this.

Merging of learning groups at graduation as a strategy to improve FRC visibility

In order to save time spent by the AEOs running around during graduation days, the study recommends that where possible, graduation for nearby learning groups be merged instead of each one having their own graduation separately. This will help save on a number of things time and operational costs (fuel) inclusive. It will also help project FRC visibility and such large platforms can be used for drumming up support or massive sensitization for the project. This will eventually help improve on the community's attitude towards Adult Education.

Need for continued existence of continuous groups and learning provisions

There should be continued provision of continuous learning courses and where possible learning materials to ease learning for the learners especially during this tough economic times. Most of the project participants have had to decide on whether to use the meagre resources that they have to buy learning materials for themselves or abandon the whole idea and go for the latter. There should also be continued provision of learning shades and Taplin- which is a gender sensitive demand for mainly women especially those that are breast feeding.

Identify and strengthen Linkages to Vocational Training

Also, there is need to think through the inclusion of skilling or vocational training component (if possible) in the project so as to reap the high positive impacts or transformations that are realised at the end of it all- especially the economic impact (Thematic area D) which did not do so well in the POE findings. This can be done through Collaborations with vocational institutes that are willing to offer such services to our targeted project participants. This can be from either the private sector or government to ensure seamless transitions from literacy to skill certification and job placement.

Do more in response to disability issues

More needs to be done (beyond disability training) in response to the challenges being faced with regards to disability. Some of these can be increasing on the number of childminders for learning groups that have learners with so many children to enable the learners concentrate during learning sessions. The project currently in this 2024-2025) has only 10 childminders budgeted for with most settlements having only one and some none yet there were assessed groups that had many children and needed to be supported. According to some of the respondents this is insufficient. Also, other interventions need to be done to address issues on disability like for example identifying a local partner that can help provide medical support to correct some of these disabilities like visual disability among others. All this will enable us realize more results with regards to the adoption of the current disability strategy- as a project indicator.