



Community Management of Child Friendly Spaces Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement, Uganda - Case study -

A case study collaboration between the Interagency Learning Initiative (ILI) on community-based child protection mechanisms, the Community Child Protection Exchange, and TPO Uganda.

The Government of Uganda has a liberal refugee policy (UNHCR, 2003) whereby refugees are given freedom of movement within the country. Most refugees live in large settlements across Uganda where they are provided with a small plot of agricultural land.

In 2017, some 68% of refugees in Uganda (UNHCR, Jan. 2017) were from South Sudan.¹ Ongoing conflict in South Sudan has resulted in an influx of refugees over recent years, with more than 1 million South Sudanese refugees estimated to be living in Uganda in 2017 (UNHCR, Aug. 2017). In 2017, some 50,935 refugees and asylum seekers were documented as living in Kiryandongo settlement (4% of the total number of refugees living in settlements in Uganda) with 18,005 having arrived since December 2013 from South Sudan. Many of these people have returned for a second time to this settlement having gone home after the signing of the Sudan peace deal in 2005. The newly formed state of South Sudan in 2011 saw ethnic clashes as well as border fighting with Sudan which descended into civil war in 2013. Broken ceasefires, economic collapse and famine in many parts of the country continue to this day. There are also smaller numbers of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi in the settlement.

This case study tells the story of how a Ugandan NGO, the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation Uganda (TPO Uganda), has involved the community in creating Child-Friendly Spaces to protect children in this complex and ever-changing environment.

This case study is part of collection of work undertaken in 2017/18 to document interesting or promising examples of community-based child protection in Tanzania and Uganda. The examples can provide insight into how different understandings of and approaches to community dynamics in various contexts can help support deeper community engagement for child protection.

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¹ This figure could be higher as many refugees from South Sudan have entered Uganda since this data was collected.



Young children take part in early childhood development play and learning provided at a Child-Friendly Space in Kiryandongo settlement (June, 2017)

Child-Friendly Spaces - a common child protection intervention in humanitarian contexts

Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) are a common global child protection model in emergency and displacement contexts, and can be used to deliver key services such as education and psychosocial support (PSS) in refugee and displacement camps (Ager et al., 2011; Global Protection Cluster et al., 2011). This includes the Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement where this case study is based.

A 2012 review of evidence of the impact of child-friendly spaces (Ager, A. & Metzler, J., 2012) highlights that overall there is insufficient evidence regarding the specific outcomes and impacts of CFS interventions. Despite this, there is some evidence that CFS can “*improve protection outcomes, such as increased sense of safety and decrease in sexual exploitation and rape* (p. 6)”. They also report “*positive psychosocial outcomes for children and/or the wider community* (p. 6)”. There is also some evidence that parents and caregivers linked to CFS have increased knowledge and awareness of child protection concerns and of available services.

To add to this, Wessells and Kostelny (2013) emphasise that, “*CFS make their greatest contribution when they are implemented in a manner that supports community mobilization and the engagement of informal resources that are contextually appropriate and well-positioned to support children and families over the long term, well beyond the crisis and recovery periods.*” (p. 31). Whilst this particular observation provides valuable guidance for CFS programming, community involvement is not easily achieved or always understood (Wessells & Kostelny, 2013; Child Frontiers, 2015).

With this challenge in mind, this case study has used a typology (see Table 1. below) developed by the ILI (Benham, 2008) and discussed in detail in Wessells (2009) to show how TPO Uganda has employed approaches which facilitate the engagement of the community in CFS.

Table 1.

Four different means of engaging with communities and the resulting level of community engagement for each.

Category	Description	Ownership level
1	Direct implementation by agency: The agency is a service provider; community members are beneficiaries.	Low
2	Community involvement in agency initiative: The agency is a promoter of its own initiative, a planner and a trainer, and community members are volunteers and beneficiaries	Low to moderate
3	Community owned and managed activities mobilized by external agency: The agency is a catalyst, capacity builder, a facilitator of linkages, and a funder after community ownership has developed. The community members are analysts, planners, implementers, assessors, and also beneficiaries.	Moderate to high
4	Community owned and managed activities initiated from within the community: The agency is a capacity builder and funder, and community members are analysts, planners, implementers, assessors, and also beneficiaries.	High

TPO Uganda’s CFS programme in Kiryandongo began as a Category 2 approach: *“the agency is a promoter of its own initiative, a planner and trainer, and community members are volunteers and beneficiaries”* but our observations of the CFS work in Kiryandongo showed that TPO Uganda is aiming for enabling action similar to that of Category 3: *“The agency is catalyst, capacity builder, a facilitator of linkages, and a funder after community ownership has developed. The community members are analysts, planners, implementers, assessors, and also beneficiaries”* primarily by facilitating the sharing of power through a Centre Management Committee (CMC). This is therefore a useful example of how the local community has been meaningfully involved in a CFS programme, and how this approach has the potential to lead to stronger protection and PSS outcomes, as well as greater sustainability.

The Child-Friendly Spaces programme in Kiryandongo refugee settlement

Kiryandongo settlement is divided into clusters – each cluster has an elected community leader. TPO Uganda has established 8 CFS; one in each cluster. Each CFS comprises a large brick building, toilets, a playground, and soccer and netball fields enclosed by a fence. The buildings are brightly painted by a local artist and have been stocked with basic early childhood development (ECD) learning material for young children as well as games and books for older children.

The TPO Uganda CFS are busy, happy places and good examples of a holistic approach to providing education, child protection and psychosocial support to the children and teenagers who use them. Each CFS is used as a formal ECD learning centre in the morning hours. Primary school-level children then attend from 2.00pm to play games, do craft activities and have discussions. From 4.00pm, the adolescents arrive after school to play soccer and netball and to take part in various activities such as focus groups (which are discussions about life issues), craft work (often to earn money) and playing games. Some centres also run income generation activities for children who are not in school.

Ager & Metzler’s 2012 review of evidence discusses how difficult it is to involve adolescents in a CFS. However, the TPO Uganda CFS appear to have achieved a level of success in relation to this through their use of adolescents as volunteers with younger children and also by involving young people in the Centre Management Committees. This is discussed in more detail below.

A social worker employed by TPO Uganda can be found at the centre in the morning. He or she then spends the afternoon making home visits to mobilise the community or to deal with specific child protection cases. There are also two ECD teachers who are from

the community who are trained and employed by TPO, as well as a group of volunteers (often adolescents) from the local cluster community who work as community mobilisers or facilitators.



Two boys play soccer at a Kiryandongo settlement CFS (June, 2017)

Asking children about the Child-Friendly Spaces

We used a drawing activity to find out how the primary school-aged children felt about the CFS they attend. The children drew the CFS and talked about what they had drawn. The children showed us that they saw the centres as places of protection and psychosocial support for children. Their drawings were full of life and colour. All of them drew friends and most also drew the teachers and the social worker, suggesting that they were important people to them.

“I come from home every day to the centre. I play with friends here. I am happy coming.”

“We do many playing here. This is my friend and this one and this one.”

“This is teacher Kevin, teacher Gloria and here we play Ludo.”

Above: Children’s comments when drawing and talking about their CFS in Kiryandongo (June 2017)



Young children drawing their Child-Friendly Space at Kiryandongo (June, 2017)

Wessells and Kostelny (2013) describe how a CFS can be protective by simply providing a safe physical and emotional space. A CFS also provides opportunities for social integration with peers and can help children build relationships with caring adults. Additionally, group activities can help reduce social isolation and can support healing through craftwork and play (Wessells & Kostelny, 2013). These descriptions resonate with the drawings and comments made by the children we met in Kiryandongo.



A child and local volunteer in a CFS playground in Kiryandongo (June, 2017)

The TPO Uganda approach - PSS, counselling, and mental health services

TPO Uganda is an organisation with a psychosocial and mental health mandate with extensive experience and expertise in supporting children and adults through the trauma of war. The TPO CFS are designed to not only provide general support to children and their families, and the building of social networks, but also as a means of providing other mental health services within the context of war trauma. This includes identifying children and caregivers who may need psychological assessment and therapy.

The social workers at the CFS can refer a child or caregiver(s) for psychological assessment to a clinical psychologist employed by TPO Uganda for individual therapy. TPO Uganda uses a mix of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and other approaches, including group therapy sessions, to help children and adults cope with war-related trauma. For those needing less clinical support, the social worker also provides individual, home-based counselling with the help of local community volunteers (often from the CMC – see below). One important aspect of TPO Uganda's approach is that counselling is provided by local professionals who have a deep understanding of the local culture.

This model of PSS and mental health services aligns with recommendations by the UNHCR on community-based protection in emergency settings (Martin-Achard, Joanian, Ventevogel 2017). In this case, a multi-layered service and support approach is suggested based on a pyramid of interventions that starts at a base level of basic services moving up through focused psychosocial support to clinical services at the apex. See figure 1.

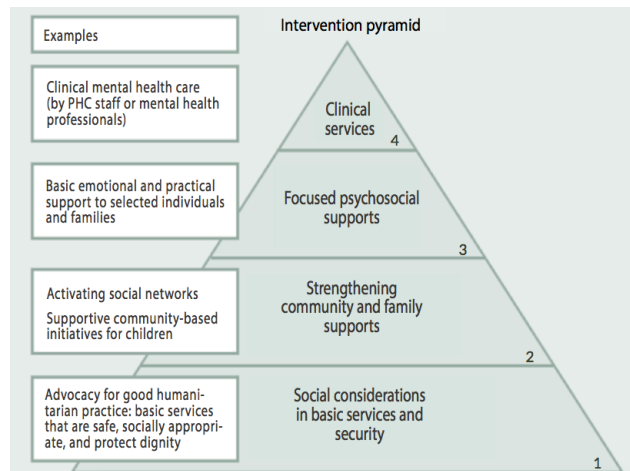


Figure 1. Taken from Martin-Achard, Joanian, Ventevogel (2017 p.5)

In Kiryandongo, both the afternoon CFS activities with primary school-aged children and the evening groups with adolescents include what the staff call 'Focus Group Discussions'. This is where psychosocial topics like *"How am I feeling?"* and *"How to deal with stress and fear"*, as well as lifestyle issues such as gender and sexuality, are discussed.

The CFS is also a focus for child protection – the social worker, volunteers and CMC provide parent/caregiver education about protection issues. They are also the first point of referral for a protection case. The settlement has a number of Child Protection Committees (CPC) which play an important role in identifying children at risk and referring cases. The social worker employed at each CFS by TPO Uganda works with the CPC when a case is referred.

This model of CFS programming is commonly found in many humanitarian contexts, however, a stand out aspect of the TPO Uganda programming in Kiryandongo is the extent to which community members are involved in these processes through the Centre Management Committees. This aspect is discussed in more detail below.

Community involvement – the role of the Centre Management Committees

While the CFS were being built, TPO Uganda community mobilisers engaged with the local cluster leaders, held community meetings and explained the purpose of the CFS, emphasising that the CFS belonged to the cluster community. The community was then asked to elect a CMC comprising men and women. Once the CFS was set up and running, TPO Uganda also selected a young man and a young woman to become formal members of the CMC and to represent the views of young people.

All of the TPO Uganda staff we spoke to agree that the CMC are key to the provision of quality PSS and protection services at the CFS.

"With the CMC you get the trust of the community. Sometimes parents may not come directly to us (as social workers) but they can go to the members of the CMC because they are from the community. If you don't involve parents you put this wall up but we cannot always get parents to come to meetings if we call them. But the CMC they are there, they are always moving in the community, they know what is happening, so they are allowing you to get to know the community and the children get the benefit." (TPO social worker, Cluster N, CFS)



The CMC of the CFS at Cluster H alongside the TPO Uganda ECD teachers and social worker (June 2017)

One of the roles of the CMC is to manage the CFS infrastructure, *“The building belongs to us so we make sure it is kept well...we supervise any new buildings and we keep the playground safe for the small children”* (Chairperson of Cluster N CMC).

An example of CMC ownership and involvement in the management of the infrastructure is that the Cluster N CMC organised for a large tent structure to be set up so that the two ECD classes could be taught in separate spaces, allowing the children to concentrate better. In this case, the parents had raised the need for two separate ECD spaces with the CMC which then subsequently approached UNICEF for the provision of the tent, as well as overseeing the building work. However, the CMC are responsible for more than managing the CFS infrastructure, as the CMC also manages any interactions with parents/caregivers. The CMC is what the TPO social worker at Cluster N calls *“our convincing tongue”*.

Another example of CMC involvement is that the ECD teachers had identified the need for morning porridge for the children and, through the CMC, had begun engaging with parents/caregivers about contributing a small amount of money or portions of maize meal. All of the CFS now have enough money to start giving morning porridge to the children. The CMC also talk to the parents about other issues, *“The children were coming late to the ECD centre so we talked to the parents – we visit the parents and talk to them”* (Chairperson of Cluster N CMC).

To add to this, we, as researchers, also observed an interaction which illustrated how the CMC works as a mechanism which can hold the service provider TPO Uganda accountable to the community. As we finished our meeting with the CMC at one of the cluster CFS, a CMC member asked the TPO Uganda social worker why the centre had opened a week late after the holidays. The social worker explained that the staff had attended a training course. A request was subsequently made by the CMC to plan any trainings during the holidays in future, so that centres would not open late.

CMC members are also involved in the everyday life of the centres. For instance, one of the CMC members coaches football, while another gives health education and teaches children about their Sudanese heritage.

“Within the centre we also do a lot – we monitor, organise and gather the children and we talk with them about personal hygiene, that they come here clean and at home they stay clean. We also play with them. We also gather here and we have a traditional drum and we teach them the dances from Sudan here. They learn about their home.” (CMC member, Cluster E)

In this way, members of the community also take on the role of significant caring adults from the community (beyond the TPO Uganda staff) who children can relate to. They also provide links to the children’s own heritages, which helps build a sense of belonging, all of which TPO sees as important aspects of PSS and healing for refugee children.

In addition, CMC members also provide direct PSS. They described how they monitor the children’s emotional health during their visits to the CFS. Parents also come to CMC members for help, *“And often they (parents) report to us or even come and ask. It is free for them. We are not paid. We are known in the community”* (CMC member, Cluster H).

“[We give] counselling around trauma. We used to listen and help children and parents – we are doing counselling. We visit homes. We understand people so we help. Some of these children they have no parents, they miss their parents. Some are also separated and unaccompanied minors, we also assist them and guide them so they can go on with life. We as a CMC also do that. We guide these children without parents.” (JCMC member, Cluster H)

“As for the committee, let me begin from the community side not at the centre. We are always counselling the parents – we tell them that children develop in different ways – emotional and physical. We also talk to them to make sure the girls go to school. We go door to door because sometimes when we call them for a meeting they don’t come and later when we get a home that has problems we go direct to them.” (CMC member, Cluster E)

The members of the CMC also play a key role in child protection. For example, they educate parents on broader child rights issues. The quotes below also show how members of the CMC have taken on the role of child protectors and carers, and it is clear that this has become part of their identity in the community: *“They know us in the community as people who care for children”*.

“We teach our parents we must not go for early marriage – how must we be in this world – this is about life and the right way to live.” (CMC member, Cluster E)

“There are some parents who came with different children and some not biological children, their brother’s child. Now when they came here some parents began to mistreat those children, they have so little to share. Parents are also stressed from war so maltreatment happens.” (CMC member, Cluster E)

The descriptions of home visits and education of parents have the potential to be interpreted as interfering or controlling, but our sense from meeting the members of the CMC is that this work is not undertaken in a censorious or admonitory manner. The members of the CMC recognise that parents have challenges they are trying to deal with. For instance, one of the volunteers highlighted to us the links between war trauma and

stress, and child abuse and neglect. His comments quoted above show his empathy and understanding of parenting as a refugee.

This section goes some way to show how the externally, TPO Uganda-initiated CMC structure attached to each CFS has evolved towards something which can demonstrate a level of community ownership. This sense of ownership is reflected in the way the CMC and volunteers talk about the centres below.

*"The boys were playing football below the food distribution point but I just told them 'Let's go to the centre to play – they have (goal) posts there now' and they said, 'No that is a TPO centre!' so I said, 'No, it is **your** centre!'"* (CMC member and football coach, Cluster H)

"At the centre we always tell them this is your centre we are just here to monitor you – we are like your sisters – feel free – do what you want as long as you don't harm anyone." (Volunteer mobiliser and facilitator, Cluster N CFS)

Volunteers and teachers come from the community to support and be supported

The CFS recruit volunteers from the community. These volunteers are often young people who have attended the CFS, and who themselves may have been introduced to the life of the CFS centres as a way of protecting and supporting them. For instance, staff from TPO Uganda will often intervene by talking with families to ensure that young women especially can access volunteering and training opportunities.

"I was so lonely at home and unhappy. My parents did not want me to come to the centre, they wanted me to work at home, but social worker Anna did go to talk to them and said that I had opportunities here. So now I have trained as an ECD teacher and I am so happy. Sometimes my family still talks about staying at home to work but I do have a small salary now and they are happy for that. I feel free here and I love the children." (ECD teacher)

"My family came here when there was violence in Kenya in 2013. I came to the centre to make friends but I am now an animator volunteer. I go into the community and encourage girls to come to the centre. I like being part of this because I learned a lot. Since I joined here I have been able even to talk to other people. I have learned that even girls they have a voice to talk to other people. And there is nothing we cannot do – what boys can do we can do. Also, what I have is that we have a lot of knowledge – we didn't know how to handle children – we could teach but it is different to handle them. It has been really important for me. My family really like it because you interact with other people and learn from them and you have friendships and you go even higher than you are." (CFS volunteer)

"S had such a difficult time. She was alone here her mother died some years back and then she fell pregnant and she was so depressed. She came to the centre as a teenager but stopped coming when she fell pregnant. I went to see her and said she must come to be on the CMC as she writes very well – she is very clever. Now she is so much better – she joins in with the other girls who make bead bags and she feels useful." (TPO social worker)

The ECD teachers at the CFS are recruited from the CMC volunteers. They then go through a formal training course at the Ugandan Government training college nearby. The photo below shows a young man from Sudan who has been in the settlement for five years and is now an ECD teacher. He has been through the ECD training and is now planning a career in child psychology.



*"I have been able to work with children here.
In my future I am hoping to know more about how to work with children and child psychology."
(ECD teacher)*

TPO Uganda's approach is also to facilitate capacity building of volunteers, CMC and staff through ongoing training. In the quote below, a young ECD teacher in Cluster H describes what he learned at a recent training on recognising abuse, and how to use the formal referral system.

"We went through training to recognise a child who has trauma and we learned that if a child isolates themselves them at ECD level or if he or she is acting badly maybe it is because of negligence at home or a child is being beaten. I learned how to talk to the child and if they cannot tell you then you have to make a follow up at home to find out exactly what is wrong with child. Then we learned how to refer." (ECD teacher, Cluster H CFS)

Working towards inclusivity and belonging

Each CFS CMC includes men, women, and a teenage boy and girl. Additionally, in Kiryandongo settlement, like many of the other refugee settlements in Uganda, there is a specific cluster for vulnerable people which includes people living with a disability and those who are chronically unwell. For this reason, these groups of people are not represented in the clusters which we visited. It was also not possible with the time available to establish the extent to which other marginalised members of the community are included in the CMC. But within each cluster it is clear that one of the key characteristics of the CFS and community involvement is that TPO Uganda has strongly worked towards inclusivity of all children and their families. Again, it is the CMC which play an important role in this approach.

Ethnic inclusivity is an important consideration in this particular settlement. The conflict in South Sudan has multiple, complex causes but part of the narrative that refugees bring with them is the ethnic divisions, particularly the enmity between Dinka-speaking people and Nuer-speaking people. In response to this, all of the members of the CMC we spoke to see the CFS as places for building peace. Importantly it is the involvement of the CMC that has allowed the centres to address the issue of ethnic conflict. CMC members believe that the CFS play an important role in teaching and showing children from a very young age how to get on with each other, and they hope

that when the children eventually go back to South Sudan they will go with different attitudes which can help promote peace.

“As we know, tribal conflict is a root cause of the war that made people come to Uganda. Some come as a Nuer and they say the root cause was Dinkas. Through peace building you show that it is administration and not a tribal conflict, we are all human and have same blood if Dinka, Nuer, Acholi and must all promote peace in our country. We are teaching the children here and their parents.” (CMC member, Cluster H)

“When children are gathered here – they play football and when here they make friendships quickly and they are very happy when they are playing. Long ago there was conflict among them but this day there is friendship. They learn to be friends – this programme is very good.” (CMC member, Cluster N)

“There was a time when there was a serious fight at the centre between adolescent boys because most of the time this community here when a Dinka child touches a Nuer child it involves everyone – really everyone comes to fight. So, Anthony and Deng really helped us a lot. Because they understand the community better than us, they lived here. At the first the children said this centre was for the Nuers and the Dinkas would not come here. But we moved around door to door with a volunteer and told them this centre is not for Nuers or for Dinkas – it is for every child. We treat everyone the same so now by evening you will see the boys who are coming two Dinka boys, two Nuer boys. In our football team there are Acholi and Dinkas. It took us going out door to door with members of the CMC.” (TPO social worker, Cluster N)

All children from all backgrounds are clearly welcome at the CFS. It was noticeable that even those with the dirtiest clothes and faces (often because of extreme poverty) appear relaxed and happy at the centre and accepted by everyone, although we did observe a social worker gently sending home two small children who arrived in their underwear, to get dressed.

In a specific example, the little girls in the photo below proudly show us their dolls. They arrived at the centre at 1.00pm, after the ECD children had gone home, and asked to play with the dolls. They sat in a corner singing songs to their “babies” and they were left to play. The little brother was also welcomed and it was clear that these children felt relaxed and at home in “their” space.



Young girls and boys play independently at a CFS with their ‘babies’ (June 2017)

The parents we spoke to all noticed this acceptance of all children and appreciated it. They also emphasised the role the centre played in their children's education. Parents also told us that they felt welcome at the centre too.

"My child was learning at Victoria (a centre in the local town) but there were so many children there that he was not seen. So, I thought let me bring him here to the centre and they are so kind. He is learning so much. I ask him to tell me the colours and even in English he knows. He runs to school every day now." (Father, Cluster E)

"My child is here at the centre and he has many friends here. He is learning a lot and we as parents too. The teachers did tell us to play with them and ask them about school. I do that. I feel I can come to visit the centre too – I am welcome." (Mother, Cluster H)

"Last year two of my children were here at the centre but now they have gone to P1. The one who was here could not draw but he is now drawing very well. And we do feel like the centre allows all children to be happy. They do make friends here." (Father, Cluster N)

Getting adolescents, especially girls, to attend the CFS has been a challenge. One of the volunteers (a young woman from Kenya) talked about how it had been difficult initially to get parents to allow their teenage girls to attend but the CMC members helped the social workers to encourage parents to send their girls.

"The girls from South Sudan...it was so difficult for them to come to the centre because the parents believe when a girl is 14 she must stay home...they knew if the girl comes to the centre she will mix with boys. But we worked with the CMC and tried to sensitise and make them aware and the CMC told parents they are supervised and there are a lot of activities. Now we are receiving a lot of girls in the centre." (Volunteer at CFS)

Furthermore, the social worker at this same centre also talked about the important role that the male CMC members played in mentoring boys, *"At first we had only ladies as volunteers and as the social worker but we realised that we needed men to talk to the boys. So the men from the CMC come to visit regularly and talk to the boys, especially in the focus group discussions we have."* (TPO social worker)

These kinds of approaches to inclusivity in these CFS, especially where ethnic divisions and tensions are present, recalls recent work by psychological theorists who have sought to widen and deepen the definition of PSS. For example, psychologists in Hamber & Gallagher (2015) suggest that psychosocial practices can go beyond the counselling of individuals to also foster changes in the broader social context, especially in the area of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is defined by Hamber & Gallagher (2015) as a process that changes intercommunity relations (i.e. *"people-to-people relationship building work"* (p. 12)) and institutions (namely, *"changing institutions of justice or building new democratic or participative social or community structures"* (p. 11)) to prevent violence in the future. This understanding of peacebuilding and the potential of psychosocial practices to move beyond the individual resonates strongly with the views of CMC members and the potential of the CFS to help foster peace by allowing children to experience a different narrative, one where children live harmoniously alongside each other.

Power is shared

TPO Uganda reflected with the researchers on how it has achieved good community engagement when so many other organisations find this aspect of community-based work so challenging. One key observation which emerged was that the sharing of power with the host community plays an important role in helping achieve greater community ownership and engagement.

TPO staff have a deep respect for community members and also believe that they can manage the CFS. There is the sense that power and the responsibility for running the CFS and protecting children are shared equally between TPO Uganda staff members and the CMC. This power sharing is partly a result of the purposeful recruitment of social workers who understand and subscribe to the idea of sharing power with the community. We discussed with TPO Uganda management how the notion of power sharing and the ability to uphold this value in day-to-day working situations can be challenging, and that it is something that they need to monitor. For example, often young people who are professionally trained (especially if they have struggled through poverty to get there) want to express their professionalism by taking power over the community members. It is not always easy for them to share power. TPO Uganda noted how capacity building is an important activity which helps instil key values such as power sharing, and which should follow the formal professional training of staff. However, this is currently a challenge for TPO Uganda as it struggles to secure adequate funding to undertake capacity building which targets values such as these.

Another characteristic that we noticed in the TPO Kiryandongo office was a lack of hierarchical thinking. There is a sense of informality and camaraderie between the staff who all appear to share a common goal and consider themselves equal to each other. This power sharing within the staff makes power sharing between staff and community members an extension of an existing working culture.

Conclusion

Challenges do still remain in terms of strengthening community ownership even further, and it is not clear to what extent the momentum and key activities would continue were TPO Uganda to withdraw from Kiryandongo. Complete ownership by the community (which would correspond to Category 4 in Table 1.), especially in a community with all the complexities of long term displacement, is a process which needs additional time, learning and the testing of strategies.

Despite this, the CFS approach in Kiryandongo refugee settlement is still a good example of a holistic approach to providing support and protection for children. Meaningful community mobilisation has been prioritised by TPO Uganda from the very beginning, primarily through the formation of the CMC, combined with considerable capacity building and the acknowledgement that power must be shared if community ownership is to be fostered. As a result, the CFS in the Kiryandongo settlement seem to be relevant to the children and families from the community and provide a number of important protection and support services.

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