



A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services

Toolset 3-A

Participatory tools to assess and discuss safety and services

TS3-A-3 – 'Safe-scaping': participatory safety mapping with adolescent refugee Somali girls, Ethiopia

Context	<p>An escalation of the political crisis in Somalia in 2007–2009 increased the refugee influxes into the Somali Region of Ethiopia. The United Nation's Refugee Agency (the United National High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]) and the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) opened several new refugee camps, with two – Sheder and Aw Barre – in the Jijiga area.</p> <p>While efforts were made by UNHCR to ensure that basic services were met, there were shortfalls in the funding and implementation capacities in the camps including for service delivery relating to water, sanitation, health, education and provision of non-food assistance, such as household items and toiletries.</p>
Implementing organisations	<p>Women's Refugee Commission (WRC).</p>
Description of good practices	<p>This exercise was undertaken in 2012 as part of a research mission, itself part of a three-year global advocacy research project aimed at enhancing the safety and resilience of adolescent girls aged 10 to 16. Following the research, the WRC planned to fund an 18-month pilot project with a local NGO in the Jijiga camps to test approaches and methodologies to best reach adolescent girls. The learning from these pilots, to be undertaken in Uganda and Tanzania, will lead to models as to how to programme for adolescent girls in emergencies.</p> <p>Focus group discussions and individual interviews were held with 86 Somali refugee adolescent girls, 24 adolescent boys and 25 refugee women and men community leaders. Individual interviews were held with girls deemed to be particularly at risk.</p> <p>Focus group discussions incorporated a participatory safety mapping exercise, in which participants in small groups of two to four drew on large sheets of paper with blue and red markers and told stories to present the drawings and their meanings. With the blue markers, participants depicted what they do and where they go during the course of their days. With the red markers they indicated where they do not feel safe during the day and night, and explained what makes them feel unsafe and why.</p> <p>This 'safe-scaping' participatory mapping method itself created a safe space within which adolescent girls or boys could discuss and reflect upon their protection risks, strategies to keep themselves safe, programme solutions and how community leaders could help improve their protection.</p>
Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls lack opportunities and support in the camps to safely develop social networks and participate in community activities. Nor are they able to move about the camps freely to build their social and economic assets, to meet their needs and those of other children, disabled parents or elderly family members who may depend on them.

- Girls of all ages have experienced and are at risk of sexual harassment, verbal and psychological abuse, female genital mutilation, rape, abduction, early and forced marriage, early pregnancy, exploitative domestic work, labour trafficking and sex trafficking. Girls also sometimes used transactional sex to obtain items to meet basic needs such as food, income, clothes, medication and transportation.
- Girls identified specific profiles of girls who are disproportionately at risk and who have access to the least social and economic support. These profiles include adolescent girls and young women who are or have been unaccompanied or separated from their parents, as well as those who are or have been:
 - Out of school;
 - Living alone;
 - Living with a 'foster family';
 - Young mothers;
 - Who have a disability;
 - Domestic workers;
 - Trafficked into domestic and other labour; and/or
 - Trafficked into sex work.
- Girls said that insecure shelters and lack of lighting at night leave them feeling like *"easy prey to anyone who wishes to do them harm"*. Boys said they feel safe mostly everywhere and at all times of the day and night in the camps. By contrast, girls said they feel safe almost nowhere or at any time, especially at night. Girls said they fear – and many have faced – all forms of verbal, psychological, physical and sexual violence during the day and night. During the day, they fear harassment and attack by *"hyenas, lions, snakes...and men"*, particularly when collecting water and firewood.
- Girls consistently indicated in the safety mapping exercise that waterpoints near mosques and on sports fields are concentrated sites of repeated harassment and abuse by men and boys who cluster in these areas. Girls said they try to walk in groups for greater safety, but that they cannot always do so.

Recommendations

Recommendations to increase girls' physical security:

- Provide substantial housing material with sturdy doors and secure locks for dwellings of unaccompanied or single girl-headed households;
- Provide adequate camp lighting, including solar lanterns, to refugee women and girls;
- Install single-dwelling latrines within the compounds of single female households;
- Locate waterpoints closer to girls' housing and away from male-dominated areas such as mosques and sports fields;
- Increase security through community watch groups with more female security guards; and
- Sensitise male security guards on dealing with child/girl protection issues, and the need for confidentiality in reporting incidents.

Other recommendations included:

- Explore ways in which the Refugee Central Committees can consult adolescent girls in community decision-making processes, particularly those related to camp management, design and security.
- Strengthen and expand the UNHCR/UN Foundation Girl Up campaign's efforts to increase girls' attendance and retention in schools through the provision of school materials, solar lamps and separate toilet facilities. Provide girls with safe spaces and 'girls only' times where they can socialise, learn new skills and support one another.

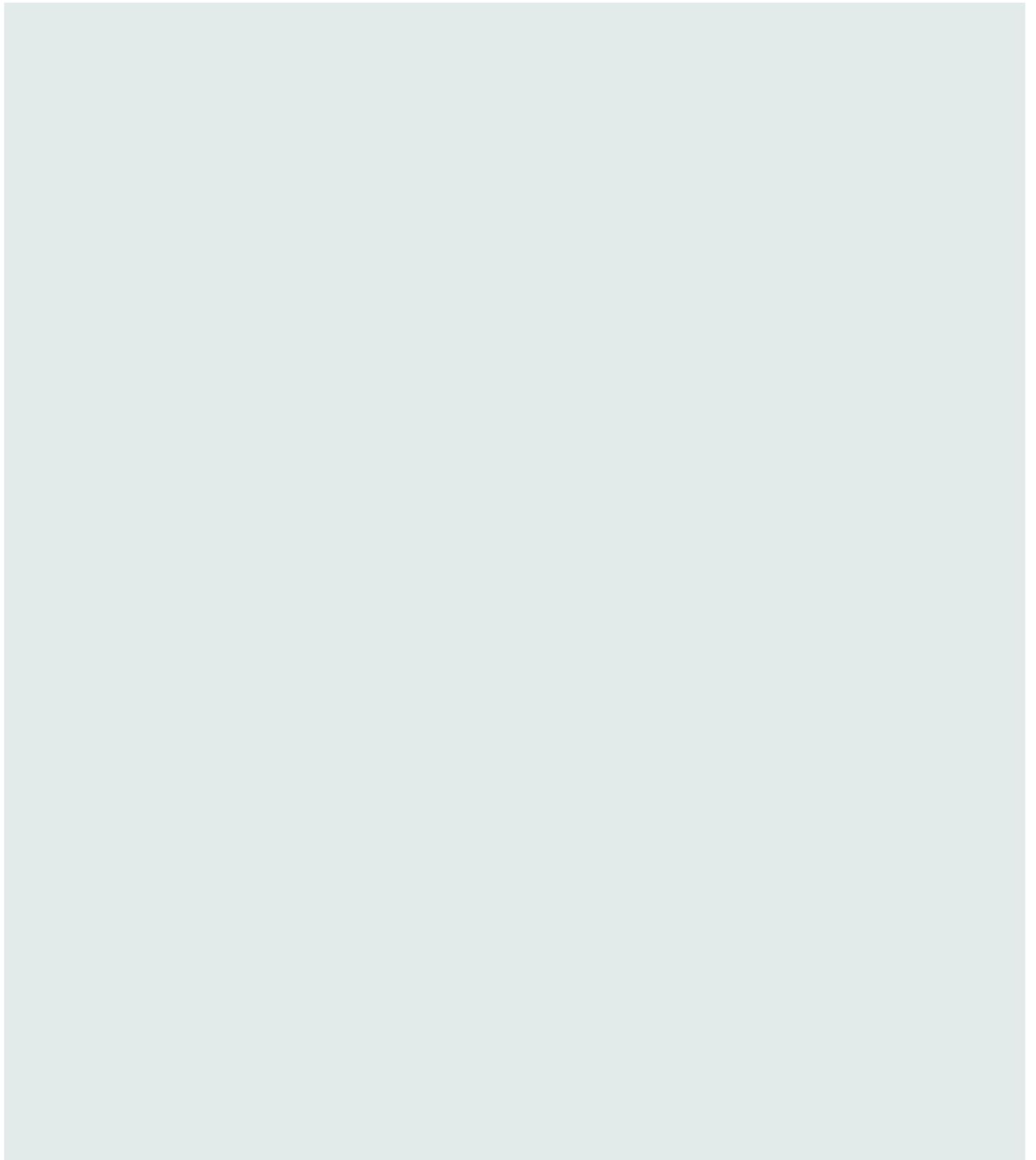
- Encourage adolescent girls to meet other girls and adult women with greater status through mentorship initiatives.

References/links

Schulte, S. and Z. Rizvi (2012) *In Search of Safety and Solutions: Somali Refugee Adolescent Girls at Sheder and Aw Barre Camps, Ethiopia*. New York, USA: Women's Refugee Commission. ([on USB stick](#))



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