



## VAWG and Energy in Camp-based Settings

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**Query:** What is the evidence on the links between access to different sources of energy at the household and community level and VAWG in camp-based settings? Please also look at the evidence on violence during firewood collection and in poorly lit communal spaces.

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### 1. Overview

Almost 60 million people are forcibly displaced by conflict, with 8 in 10 refugees and displaced people in camps having minimal access to energy<sup>1</sup> (Lahn and Grafham, 2015). This rapid review identifies some of the key evidence available on the links between access to different sources of energy at the household and community level and violence against women and girls (VAWG) in camp-based settings. The annotated bibliography includes general literature on the increased risk of VAWG during firewood collection and in poorly lit communal spaces (Section 2.1), as well as strategies that have been employed to improve safety including distributing handheld solar lamps and providing street lighting in camps (Section 2.2) and fuel-efficient stoves (Section 2.3). It also includes a brief summary of guidance materials, handbooks and tools used in field operations where access to firewood and alternative energy is a protection concern for women and girls, some of which include background evidence on the links (Section 2.4).

The increased risk of VAWG when collecting firewood and in poorly lit communal spaces is recognised in a range of literature on gender and energy access in both camp settings and in stable urban and rural settings (see parallel query 95 for the latter). Overall, the evidence base remains focused geographically on a few examples from camps in Africa (DRC, Somalia, Kenya, Chad, and Sudan) and post-earthquake Haiti, with no examples found from camp-based settings in Asia or the Middle East. Evaluation methodologies include a combination of surveys (a few of which have included control groups), focus group discussions, and observations of how people use lamps or stoves. Differences in methodology (data collection methods, formulation of questions, types of samples) make precise comparisons difficult among the different available studies.

Few evaluation studies provide quantitative data on the impact of increasing access to different sources of energy (e.g. distributing solar lamps or fuel-efficient stoves) on VAWG incidence over time. Most studies use proxy indicators, such as frequency of firewood collection trips and time spent collecting firewood. However, these indicators are often affected by external factors, for example, seasonal changes between baseline and endline can complicate attribution. External factors such as changing security situations can also influence indicators focused on women's perceptions of their own safety. Data collection on this issue in camp-based settings is also problematic due to the challenges common to researching VAWG in humanitarian contexts: under-reporting, displacement, a

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<sup>1</sup> No access to electricity and high dependence on wood and charcoal-based fuels for cooking

breakdown of systems, and safety and security issues<sup>2</sup>, coupled with the issue of underreporting due to firewood collection outside camps being illegal in many countries (Lahn and Grafham, 2015).

Key findings from this query include:

- Several of the reports reviewed as part of this query highlight facts and figures (see box below) which suggests that women and girls are at increased risk of sexual harassment and violence in poorly lit communal spaces and when collecting firewood in camp-based setting (Gunning, 2014; Lahn and Grafham, 2015). However, the original sources of these statistics are often not publically available, so it is not possible to determine the quality and rigour.

**Violence during firewood collection and in poorly lit spaces: facts and figures**

- DRC: 90% of women in displaced households had experienced some form of harassment, violence or rape while collecting fuelwood in the forests (Mercy Corps, 2009)
- Dadaab (Somalia–Kenya border): young girls were frequently attacked while searching for firewood commonly on the outskirts of the camp, exposing them to increased risk (Save the Children, 2013).
- Chad: in 63% of households surveyed by UNHCR, family members have experienced problems when collecting firewood (cited in Lahn and Grafham, 2015)
- Darfur: of the 500 women and girls receiving treatment from Médecins sans Frontières after sexual violence, 82% of the rapes had occurred when they left camps in search of firewood, water or grass for animal fodder (ENERGIA/DFID, 2006).
- Haiti: teenage girls surveyed by the UN Stabilisation Mission said that they were afraid to use latrines at night because of the lack of lighting. 75% of respondents in a HelpAge survey reported that having a light on at night made them feel more secure (cited in Jewell, 2011).

- Energy issues have been gradually incorporated into global humanitarian responses and are largely situated within protection activities, catalysed by the creation of the Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) initiative (Bellanca, 2014). Several guidance materials, handbooks and tools have been produced on safe access to firewood and alternative energy in humanitarian settings (see Section 2.4).
- Interventions have focused on technological solutions, such as solar lamps and fuel-efficient stoves. Evaluations of interventions that have introduced lighting and stoves in camp settings typically find that:
  - Women and girls report in focus group discussions that lamps or stoves are important personal resources that they use on a regular basis and feel safer as a result.
  - However, the most rigorous evaluations involving control groups, for example the distribution of handheld solar lamps in two camps for people internally displaced by the Haiti earthquake, find that women’s perceptions of their own safety remain the same or worsened after the lamps were distributed, due to broader security concerns that cannot be solved by a stand-alone lamp distribution (IRC, 2014).
  - There is some qualitative evidence from focus group discussions to suggest that the provision of stoves helps to mitigate transactional sex for cooking fuel and reduce domestic violence (WFP, 2013).
- Most evaluations conclude that the root causes of VAWG are complex and cannot be addressed by the distribution of energy products. Findings suggest that firewood collection provides a

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<sup>2</sup> DFID (2013) *Violence against Women and Girls in Humanitarian Emergencies*, CHASE Briefing Paper, London: DFID. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/271932/VAWG-humanitarian-emergencies.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271932/VAWG-humanitarian-emergencies.pdf)

convenient context or location for rape, but should not be viewed as its cause (CASA Consulting, 2010).

- As such, it's important to include the distribution of alternative energy sources as part of a more comprehensive, long-term risk-reduction package that addresses the cultural characteristics and practices that perpetuate VAWG and tap into community-based protection strategies (e.g. collecting in groups or with community patrols, avoiding night-time firewood collection).
- Much of the discourse remains overly simplified and focused on 'technological panaceas', leading to an unquestioned assumption that stoves reduce rape (Abdelnour and Saeed, 2014), ignoring the complexity of local contexts. For example, women also sell firewood for income, suggesting the need for fuel-efficient technology to be accompanied with alternative income generation activities.
- Likewise, there remains some concern that the relationship between light and protection is more complex than 'more light = more protection', and poorly designed lighting interventions may increase protection risks, for example, by attracting people to leave their homes at night to walk through poorly lit areas to visit illuminated communal areas on the other side of camps (Perkins, 2015).
- Interventions to date have focused mostly on energy products, rather than energy services (Bellanca, 2014). This query has found a need for further research on the potential benefits of situating the provision of energy products within a broader focus on systems and context at the camp-level, and to work in a coordinated way with protection actors to provide security, build income-generating skills and address underlying cultural/social norms that perpetuate VAWG.

## 2. Annotated bibliography:

### 2.1 General literature on the links

**Gunning, R (2014) *The Current State of Sustainable Energy Provision for Displaced Populations: An Analysis*, Research Paper, London: Chatham House**

[https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field\\_document/20141201EnergyDisplacedPopulationsGunning.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field_document/20141201EnergyDisplacedPopulationsGunning.pdf)

This research paper by Chatham House focuses on the evidence of the benefits and impact of sustainable energy access for displaced populations, drawing on literature reviews and interviews carried out between July and September 2014, in addition to feedback from a workshop held in September 2014. Overall the paper finds that:

- Large numbers of people in camps lack adequate access to sustainable energy, and this has a negative impact on their lives. Specific reference is made to women and children who are shown to be vulnerable to health and safety risks linked to the collection of fuel.
- A 'significant' body of literature documenting cases on the ground supports this correlation; a Save the Children report on the Dadaab refugee camps on the Somalia–Kenya border found that young girls were frequently attacked while searching for firewood commonly on the outskirts of the camp, exposing them to increased risk<sup>3</sup>. Similarly, in 2009 Mercy Corps surveyed displaced households in DRC and found that 90% of women had experienced some form of harassment, violence or rape while collecting fuelwood in the forests<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Save the Children (2013) *Unspeakable Crimes against Children: Sexual Violence in Conflict* (London: Save the Children)

<sup>4</sup> Mercy Corps (2010) 'In Congo, Saving Trees and Lives', 23 April, <http://www.mercycorps.org/articles/dr-congo/congo-saving-trees-and-lives>

- The provision of sustainable energy can reduce the negative impacts felt by current strategies employed in camp settings (including violence, a lack of economic progress, and negative environmental impact). A case study example from the World Food Programme in Kenya found that a reduction in the frequency of firewood collection may lead to a reduction in the vulnerability to GBV<sup>5</sup>.
- However, the evidence base for these findings is “patchy, unsystematic and often anecdotal” (p.2) and the lack of literature evaluating the benefits of alternatives is in “stark comparison” (p.21) to the range of literature available on the issues.
- Information is largely focused on improving cook-stoves, which have been shown to be ‘appropriate, accepted and used correctly by users’ (p.2), and can result in a reduction of fuelwood collection trips. It is noted that solar lanterns are becoming part of standard kits.

**Bellanca, R (2014) *Sustainable Energy Provision Among Displaced Populations: Policy and Practice*, Research Paper, London: Chatham House**

[https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field\\_document/20141201EnergyDisplacedPopulationsPolicyPracticeBellanca.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field_document/20141201EnergyDisplacedPopulationsPolicyPracticeBellanca.pdf)

In another research paper on sustainable energy provision developed by Chatham House, examples of projects implemented by not-for-profit actors and the private sector are assessed in order to draw out learning on “progress” and “persistent weaknesses” within sustainable energy provision. In a section entitled “IASC and SAFE: energy from a protection perspective” attention is given to a number of “important steps” taken by the international community, including the establishment in 1992 of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (UN, 1992) and the designation of global Cluster Leads (IASC, 2005; latest 2012). In addition, in 2007 the Safe Access to Firewood and Alternative Energy in Humanitarian Settings (SAFE) was launched by UNHCR, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC), within which the Fuel and Firewood Initiative (2006) aimed at investigating methods for reducing the vulnerability to GBV during the collection of firewood. More recently, complementary efforts led by the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (GACC) are highlighted, including the production of a strategy document, Humanitarian Engagement: Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) in Emergencies (2014), emphasising that SAFE “does not only include cook-stoves and fuel, but also lighting and heating and embraces broader behavioural and market-based approaches during the transition phase from emergency response to durable solutions” (p.10).

Overall findings emphasise:

- Implementation of energy projects requires specific capacity and expertise, but implementing bodies frequently lack resources to employ suitable personnel.
- Coordination among relief actors and local authorities is weak.
- Current interventions led by humanitarian agencies are focused on addressing energy needs through the distribution of products, “[t]his approach seems narrow because satisfying energy demands often requires consideration of value chains both in the surrounding environment and in the socio-cultural context (the energy delivery model)” (p.2).

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<sup>5</sup> WFP (2013) *WFP SAFE Project in Kenya: Kakuma Fuel Efficient Stoves and Gender Based Violence Study Report*.

Lahn, G and Grafham, O (2015) *Heat, Light and Power for Refugees Saving Lives, Reducing Costs*, London: Chatham House.

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/publications/research/20151117HeatLightPowerRefugeesMEILahnGrafham.pdf>

This Chatham House report for the Moving Energy Initiative<sup>6</sup> is the first ever global analysis of energy use among the almost 60 million people forcibly displaced by conflict. The report notes that about 80% of people living in refugee camps have minimal access to energy (no access to electricity and high dependence on traditional biomass for cooking). It observes there is “widespread documentation”<sup>7</sup> (p.11) of the risk women and girls face when leaving camps to collect firewood, including physical or verbal aggression, theft of property, rape, or attempted rape. It cites UNHCR reports showing that in 63% of households in Chad, family members have experienced problems when collecting firewood. However, the report also notes the difficulties of measurement, as firewood collection is illegal in many countries, and sexual violence is stigmatised and women are often discouraged from reporting incidents for fear of being ostracised in their communities.

ENERGIA/DFID Collaborative Research Group on Gender and Energy (CRGGE) (2006) *From the Millennium Development Goals Towards a Gender-Sensitive Energy Policy Research and Practice: Empirical Evidence and Case Studies*, March 2006 <http://energia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/49-From-the-millennium-development-goals-towards-a-gender-sensitive-energy-policy-research-and-practice.pdf>

This DFID-funded synthesis report on gender-sensitive energy policy research includes a section on violence against women in the energy sector. From the literature, it identifies two main situations whereby women collecting firewood outside of their homes and villages are at increased risk of sexual violence and harassment:

- Women suffering sexual violence and harassment from forest guards in protected forest areas. For example, in Ethiopia women fuelwood carriers have been harassed and forced to pay bribes to be able to collect wood and risk sexual assault.
- Women being attacked when they venture out of refugee camps to collect firewood. For example, of the 500 women and girls receiving treatment after sexual violence from Médecins sans Frontières in West and South Darfur (October 2004 - February 2005), 82% of the rapes had occurred when they left camps in search of firewood, water or grass for animal fodder.

The report also highlights two examples of case studies<sup>8</sup> reviewed where electrification has led to improved safety for women and girls:

- The adoption of solar home systems in Kerala, India led to a reduction in men’s drinking as they were able to undertake basket-weaving in the evenings.
- Improvement in family relations and bonding in Uganda and the Philippines as a result of electrification and men staying home to watch television with their families in the evenings.

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<sup>6</sup> The Moving Energy Initiative is a ground-breaking new project by Chatham House, DFID, GVEP International, Practical Action Consulting, UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council. It aims to meet the energy needs of displaced people in a way that reduces costs, is safe, healthy and respectful, benefits host communities, and where possible creates opportunities for income generation and knowledge transfer.

<sup>7</sup> The report cites documents produced by the Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC), as well as the figures from UNHCR in Chad and Médecins sans Frontières in Darfur.

<sup>8</sup> Eight case studies were produced using both qualitative and quantitative data and gender analysis by members of the Collaborative Research Group on Gender and Energy (CRGGE)

## 2.2 Lighting and solar lamps

IRC (2014) *Lighting the way: The role of handheld solar lamps in improving women's and girls' perceptions of safety in two camps for internally displaced people in Haiti*, New York: IRC. <http://www.safefuelandenergy.org/files/IRC%20Haiti-Solar-Light-Evaluation-Research-Brief.pdf>

This research brief by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) shares the findings from a study undertaken in two camps in Port-au-Prince, Haiti for people displaced during the 2010 earthquake. The study evaluated the impact of the distribution<sup>9</sup> of handheld solar lights on women's and girls' perceptions of their own safety in these camps. The study involved a baseline survey with 875 females aged 14 years+ before the lamps were distributed (August 2013), three monitoring surveys conducted every other month, and an endline survey (April 2014). In addition, focus groups discussions were conducted with 80 participants at baseline and endline, as well as safety audits to capture changes in the observable physical camp environment at night. Key findings from the study include:

- 95% women and girls reported using the handheld solar lamps at least once a day and said they would recommend them to friends. Women and girls reported using the lamps for a wide range of daily activities: cooking, to light their way to the toilets, to light their homes and vendor stalls, for studying/reading, or to charge their mobile phones.
- Lamps replaced more hazardous forms of lighting - like candles or kerosene lamps – potentially reducing the risk of fire and the negative health consequences of burning kerosene indoors.
- However, solar lamps did not help women feel safer or more secure in the camps. The handheld lamps did not address women's primary safety concerns (generalised crime, violence and mistrust, including sexual violence and harassment). Women's perceptions of their own safety remained the same or worsened six months after the lamps were distributed. Women in one of the camps - Camp Sinai - reported a decrease in their sense of safety at night from 42% (baseline) to 24% (endline), which was largely attributed to broader security concerns - general physical violence, rock and bottle throwing, and gunshots.

The brief concluded that handheld solar lamps are an important personal resource for women and girls and donors should continue to support their distribution. However, the root causes of VAWG are complex and cannot be addressed by a stand-alone distribution of lamps. Instead, the brief recommends a more comprehensive risk-reduction package for women and girls in humanitarian settings.

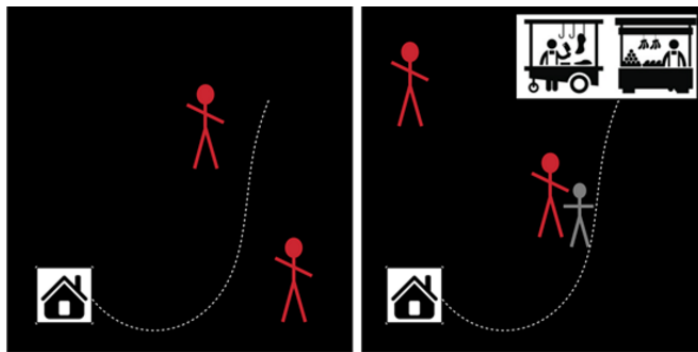
Perkins, S (2015) *Lighting impacts SGBV but not in the way you think*, Blog posting on UNHCR Innovation website. <http://innovation.unhcr.org/light-impacts-sgbv-but-not-in-the-way-you-think/>

This blog posting on UNHCR's Innovation website is by Sam Perkins - Energy Lab Manager (coordinates UNHCR's range of innovation projects). He notes the complex relationship between light and protection. Access to light is often linked to reduction of SGBV risks, both by refugees themselves and through a "natural" logic that "if a street is lit, people *feel* safer". The blog notes that dialogue around light intervention is often simplified, treating light as a "single unchanging thing" = more light = more protection. However, this is not always the case and poorly designed lighting interventions may increase protection risks.

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<sup>9</sup> As part of the US National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, the IRC with support from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), distributed handheld solar lights to all households in two IDP camps in Port-au-Prince.

The blog notes that the introduction of light to particular parts of a camp (e.g. marketplace, health centre, community centre) can attract people to leave their homes at night (see diagram). If the paths are not illuminated between homes and the illuminated areas they want to access in camp, there is a risk that lighting interventions may increase protection risks and VAWG.



**Government of Netherlands / European Commission / CARE / AusAID / DEC (2013) *Final Evaluation of Somalia IDP Support Program (SISP)***

This final evaluation report looked at the impact of the Somalia IDP Support Program (SISP) in Puntland and Mogadishu. The project aimed to improve food security, health and livelihood security of vulnerable IDPs and host communities with provision of food support (food voucher program), WASH and protection interventions, including the distribution of energy saving stoves (in Mogadishu only) and solar lights to women (in both camps) to reduce cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

In focus group discussions, women said the solar lamps helped them feel safer: *“The solar lamp has been life changing to me. in the night I am able to use it when visiting the latrine and I feel more secure and immune from SGBV in the neighborhood, since rapists cannot break into my house because of the light which is on the whole night”* (30 year old mother in Bulo Mingis camp in Bosaaso).

The evaluation reported a 37.6% increase in the number of women who feel safe. However, this was an underachievement against the logframe target of 50%. It attributes this underachievement to factors outside the control of the SISP that contributed to insecurity, including the temporary housing being easy to break into, limited police presence, and the need for more lighting of the camp streets. The 37.6% increase in women’s feelings of safety was partly attributed to the provision of solar lamps and fuel-efficient stoves, but also to water sources and latrines being sited closer to households.

Note: There are references online to ‘A Study on Effectiveness and Sustainability of Solar Lanterns in Reducing Insecurity and Gender-based Violence among Internally Displaced Persons in Puntland, Somalia’, conducted by IOM and the University of Nairobi in 2013. It was not possible to access this study. However, Gunning (2014) reported that the solar LED lanterns were highly appreciated by women, but that low reporting levels of sexual and gender-based violence made it difficult to determine the impact of solar LED lanterns.

**UNHCR (2012) *Light Years Ahead: Innovative Technology for Better Refugee Protection*, Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4c99fa9e6.pdf>**

This UNCHR report highlights how UNHCR is supporting vulnerable refugees by providing access to innovative technologies. It forms part of the Light Years Ahead Initiative – a five year campaign launched in January 2011, aiming to raise funds to distribute solar-powered street lights, lanterns, and fuel-efficient stoves in seven African countries.<sup>10</sup> Following the pilot of the Light Years Initiative in three countries, the report highlights the findings from a UNHCR survey:

- 60% of respondents feel safer using the bathroom at night.

<sup>10</sup> Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, the Sudan and Uganda.

- Nearly all respondents commented that their previous source of lighting was a fire hazard and a health hazard to their families.
- 100% of respondents are able to use the solar lantern safely.
- 96% of all respondents now go less often to collect cooking fuel each week.
- 86% of respondents said the new solar lantern now allows them to study at night, something they could not do before.

**Jewell, J (2011) 'Ending isolation: solar solutions in Haiti', Humanitarian Practice Network**

<http://odihpn.org/magazine/ending-isolation-solar-solutions-in-haiti/>

This article published on the Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN)<sup>11</sup> highlights that a lack of adequate lighting was an “important factor” in the high rates of sexual violence experienced by women and girls in Haiti’s camps, and was “consistently cited as a source of insecurity”. For example, teenage girls surveyed by the UN Stabilisation Mission (MINUSTAH) said that they were afraid to use latrines at night because of the lack of lighting. HelpAge International distributed 5,500 ToughStuff emergency kits in 12 districts. These kits included solar panels to charge an LED lamp. Three months after the distribution, HelpAge conducted an evaluation<sup>12</sup> with 499 (around 9%) of the beneficiaries and found that 75% of respondents reported that having a light on at night made them feel more secure. A beneficiary described in a Concern report<sup>13</sup>, Elimene Dieujust, reported that: “[n]ow that we have a light that will always work, in case there are any aggressive men in the area, I feel secure. It feels safer for me, my grandchildren and my daughter. I can look after myself because I can see now”.

**Guled, A (2013) 'Solar-powered lights help protect against attacks in Somalia refugee camps', The Associated Press, September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013 <http://globalnews.ca/news/814736/solar-powered-lights-help-protect-against-attacks-in-somalia-refugee-camps/>**

In an article published by The Associated Press, the safety concerns of women living in Mogadishu’s refugee camps are highlighted, emphasising that women often refrain from using communal bathrooms at home at night because of “the threat men armed with knives and guns pose to them”. Since the famine in Somali in 2011, the article reports that the dramatic increase in the number of displaced people fleeing both hunger and violence has been associated with a sharp increase in the number of rapes (although no figures are provided), “making the simple act of going to the bathroom a life-risking activity”. The article draws attention to the installation of 79 solar-powered lights by the Danish Refugee Council in a camp known as ‘Zone K’, which is said to have “returned life” to Mogadishu’s nights. A testimonial from a mother of four is outlined: “[i]t feels like we are starting a new life [...] Because of the lights we can come together to chat and get some fresh air. No rapist can sneak in now. It’s fully lit and better.”

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<sup>11</sup> HPN is run by the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) which is part of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

<sup>12</sup> The evaluation is not publically available.

<sup>13</sup> Concern Worldwide (2010) *Haiti Emergency Response: Distribution of 2000 ToughStuff Solar Panels with Battery LED Light and Mobile Phone Connectors and Radio Connectors*, Final Report



## 2.3 Fuel-efficient stoves

**Pattugalan, G (2014) 'Linking Food Security, Food Assistance and Protection from Gender-Based Violence: WFP's experience', *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*, Issue 60, [http://www.ifrc.org/docs/IDRL/HE\\_60\\_web\\_1%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/docs/IDRL/HE_60_web_1%20(1).pdf)**

This short 3-page article in *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine* highlights the experience of the World Food Programme (WFP). Of particular interest to this query is a description of the Safe Access to Firewood and alternative Energy (SAFE) programme. The article notes that the SAFE programme has had "encouraging results in terms of reducing women's risk of exposure to SGBV" (p.31). For example, in North Darfur, the SAFE programme includes 33 centres where women make fuel-efficient stoves and fuel briquettes, which mean that women have to go out less frequently to collect firewood and charcoal, and are therefore less at risk to sexual violence. There are also 'safe' social spaces for women in the SAFE centres, which offer training on income generation, literacy, nutrition, hygiene, and community reforestation. The article also cites the findings of the 2013 study by WFP on fuel-efficient stoves and GBV in Kenya (see below).

**WFP (2013) *WFP SAFE Project in Kenya, Kakuma: Fuel-Efficient Stoves and Gender-Based Violence*, Rome: World Food Programme.**

**<http://www.safefuelandenergy.org/files/WFP%20SAFE%20Kenya%20Project%20Kakuma%20GBV%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>**

This study by the WFP and the US State Department Bureau of Population and Refugee Movement (BPRM) looks at the impact of fuel-efficient stoves and GBV sensitisation on the exposure to risk of GBV during firewood collection in Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya. Earlier assessments by WFP had highlighted various protection risks associated with access to cooking fuel:

- GBV during firewood collection in unsafe territory around and outside of the camps;
- Domestic violence occurs in homes when there is no fuel for cooking; and
- Transactional sex in exchange for cooking fuel or for money to purchase cooking fuel.

In response, the WFP provided Jikopoa and Envirofit fuel-efficient stoves to both refugees and host communities in Kakuma, training on how to use the stoves, and GBV sensitisation. The study involved baseline and endline surveys with 5,120 host community households and 7,000 refugee households, as well as separate baseline and endline focus group discussions.

The study concluded that there was a reduction in firewood consumption, with fewer trips to collect firewood for both the refugee and host populations. The frequency of firewood collection was identified as an important proxy for exposure to GBV. The study concluded that there was preliminary evidence to suggest the reduction in frequency of firewood collection trips had contributed to a reduction in the risk of exposure to GBV. The frequency of firewood collection for the host community reduced from an average of 2-3 times per week at the baseline to an average of 1-2 per week at the endline for those who received a stove or a stove and SGBV sensitization. There was also a decrease in the frequency of firewood collection trips for the refugee groups who had received the fuel-efficient stoves, but attribution is complicated as the frequency also went down for the control group (who did not receive a stove). However, refugee women in the FGDs reported reduced frequency of trips thanks to the stoves, with some completely stopping collection due to the stoves.

Other key findings from the study include:

- Anecdotal evidence that the provision of stoves was helping to mitigate transactional sex for cooking fuel, with refugees reporting that the money saved by the fuel-efficient stoves being mainly used to buy fresh foods, household items, and transportations – expenditures that may have previously led women to engage in transactional sex.

- Increased knowledge about support for victims of violence and available reporting options for recipients who also received sensitisation on SGBV mitigation measures.
- Better community-based protection strategies during firewood collection were revealed during focus group discussions (e.g. collecting in groups, more involvement of men in firewood collection, avoiding night-time firewood collection).
- A reduction in domestic violence was reported by some beneficiaries during focus group discussions, due to the increased ease and speed of cooking which in turn led to a reduction in skipping and undercooking of meals (that had been associated with domestic violence).

**Tabaro, N (2014) *Cooking Fuel in Nzulo and Shasha Displacement Sites and the Surrounding Village of Nzulo An End-line Assessment Report*, New York: Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC) / International Rescue Committee (IRC) / MacArthur Foundation.**

<https://womensrefugeecommission.org/programs/fuel-and-firewood/research-resources/1132-safe-energy-great-lakes-2015>

This WRC/IRC/MacArthur Foundation report is an endline assessment of emergency stove distribution<sup>14</sup> for people living in two displacement sites (Nzulo and Shasha)<sup>15</sup> in the province of North Kivu, DRC. The assessment evaluated the changes in IDP’s living conditions after the distribution of fuel-efficient stoves and the impact on reducing exposure to risks related to firewood collection, including sexual violence. Information was collected at baseline (April/Sept 2013) and endline (December 2013) through focus group discussions (both sites) as well as an individual survey questionnaire (in Nzulo). Key findings include:

- Fewer firewood collection trips – a drop in the number of participants collecting firewood every day from 47% (baseline) to 16% (endline)
- Less time spent collecting firewood – from approximately 6 hours per firewood collection trip (baseline) to 4 hours (endline)
- However, there was no noticeable improvement in perceptions of safety and security. Respondents said security threats related to firewood collection remained high, with a small decline from 92% (baseline) to 82% (endline) in respondents reporting that there are risks associated with firewood collection. There was a small increase in women reporting that they risk rape during firewood collection from 35% (baseline) to 40% (endline).
- Other benefits include participants spent less money on buying firewood and were earning more money overall after receiving fuel-efficient stoves

The report concludes that: “It is clear that the introduction of fuel-efficient stoves is a step forward in improving the situation, but they are certainly not enough. More integrated actions need to be taken to meet household energy needs with safe and sustainable solutions” (p.20). It recommends strengthening inter-agency initiatives to coordinate across sectors (including protection, food security, livelihoods, environment, health, shelter, and camp management) through the North Kivu SAFE Working Group.

**CASA Consulting (2001) *Evaluation of the Dadaab firewood project, Kenya*. Montreal: CASA Consulting. <http://www.unhcr.org/3b33105d4.pdf>**

This evaluation of UNHCR’s Dadaab Firewood Project<sup>16</sup> contests the “widely expressed” (p.3) view held by staff at the Dadaab Sub-Office and Nairobi Branch Office that efforts focused on reducing the

<sup>14</sup> The Envirofit M-5000 wood burning stove was selected for its efficiency, cost, ease and speed of procurement, and high user uptake in similar settings.

<sup>15</sup> Nzulo and Shasha displacement sites were established in North Kivu in November 2012 as numerous families fled their homes to find refuge elsewhere.

<sup>16</sup> Initiated in 1997 primarily to address issues of rape and violence against women and girls

incidence of rape of women and girls collecting firewood were “highly successful” following a decrease in reported cases after the first firewood distribution in late July 1998. Through document review, interviews, consultations and field work, CASA Consulting recommend ‘great caution’ in drawing such conclusions, emphasising that:

- An analysis which takes into account the long-term and short-term trends related to the frequency of reported rape may suggest that incidence rose significantly in late 1997/early 1998, due to a complex combination of environmental and economic factors before returning to levels closer to those between 1994 -1995.
- Examining the differences in the frequency of firewood-related rape between periods when households were fully supplied with firewood and periods when they were not found a decrease of 45% in firewood collection rapes during periods of full firewood coverage. However, these periods also found an increase in rapes in other locations and contexts by between 78% and 113%.

The evaluation summarises that it is “difficult” to conclude that firewood provision is a “wholly successful rape prevention strategy” (p.4), with findings suggesting that “firewood collection provides a convenient context or location for rape, but should not be viewed as its ‘cause’. We cannot conclude that if women were provided with more firewood, they would be significantly less at risk” (p.4). The evaluation further emphasises the importance of finding a long-term and sustainable solution to the problems of rape and other forms of violence that addresses the “serious challenge to the cultural characteristics and practices that perpetuate them” (p.8).

**Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children (2006) *Finding Trees in the Desert: Firewood collection and alternatives in Darfur.* New York: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. [https://womensrefugeecommission.org/joomlatools-files/docman-files/df\\_fuel.pdf](https://womensrefugeecommission.org/joomlatools-files/docman-files/df_fuel.pdf)**

This report developed by the Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children investigates fuel alternatives in Darfur, which, if used in place of firewood, are described as providing a potential means of protection for refugee and internally displaced women and girls. Through group discussions and one-to-one interviews, key findings underline that:

- Using fuel-efficient technologies in isolation will not always reduce the frequency of firewood collection, as many displaced women and girls rely on the sale of firewood as their primary income earning activity.
- As such, all fuel-related initiatives must be accompanied with concentrated efforts that look to develop alternative income generation activities.
- Cooking time was identified as the most important feature of any cooking technology making women in Darfur reluctant to consider solar cookers.
- Basic mud stoves were shown to be the most fuel-efficient method and most ‘accepted’ technology reducing firewood consumption by 20 to 80 percent (though important to note they still require wood).
- Fuel-efficient stove programmes should be promoted by all protection actors in a coordinated manner to create conditions in which women can use less firewood.

**Bizarri M (2010) *Safe Access to Firewood and alternative Energy in Kenya: An Appraisal Report.* New York: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. <https://womensrefugeecommission.org/resources/document/734-safe-access-to-firewood-and-alternative-energy-in-kenya-an-appraisal-report>**

This appraisal report led by an independent consultant in collaboration with WFP and the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, explores safe access to cooking fuel in the two

refugee-hosting areas in Kenya, Dadaab and Kakuma, as well as in WFP-assisted schools in Nairobi. The report outlines that:

- UNHCR representatives confirmed the existence of 'protection risks' including GBV incidence associated with the search and collection of firewood, particularly in Dadaab.
- Women in focus group discussions confirmed that GBV related to firewood collection was "considerably higher in the 1990s than it is today" (p.22), as supported by a recent report from the Danish and Norwegian Refugee Councils (2010).<sup>17</sup>
- Women linked decreases in GBV incidence to firewood provision by GTZ<sup>18</sup> in conjunction with school-based GBV awareness raising and reporting and support mechanisms.
- Decreased GBV incidence in spite of a lack of firewood provision in Dadaab may be linked to an increase in men more commonly collecting firewood due to the long distances to firewood sites.
- However, there is an important distinction between commercial and household consumption-related firewood collection; while men mainly lead commercial firewood collection, women continue to leave camps to meet daily subsistence needs.
- Movement outside camps is very limited with refugees primarily relying on GTZ distributions. Once these distribution sites were depleted, women were shown to resort to negative coping strategies, including survival sex and child labour.

The report concludes with recommendations for WFP to take forward a 'comprehensive approach' to ensure safe access to cooking fuel in addition to 'scaling up the production and dissemination of energy-saving stoves for schools in refugee settings' (p.41).

**Amnesty International (2010) *No Place for Us Here: Violence against Refugee Women in Eastern Chad*, London: Amnesty International**

<http://www.amnesty.ie/sites/default/files/report/2010/04/Chad%20report.pdf>

This report developed by Amnesty International forms part of a research mission to the Chadian capital, N'Djamena and eastern Chad between 25 April and 13 May 2009, and calls for specific action to address continuing widespread violence against women and girls in eastern Chad. Through interviews with women and girls in refugee camps, victims of human rights violations, refugee camp leaders, and Amnesty International delegates, key findings include:

- Women and girls living in refugee camps in eastern Chad face high levels of rape and other violence on a daily basis inside and outside camps, with "particular risk" faced by women and girls leaving camps to source firewood, water and straw to tend small plots of vegetables and other crops.
- Among 88 women interviewed, researchers documented 32 instances of confirmed and highly probable cases of rape. Out of eleven confirmed rape cases, ten occurred when women left the camps to search for firewood.
- A case study describes how a group of women and girls from the Gaga Refugee Camp who were searching for firewood and were accosted by a group of armed men who claimed they had no "permission" to collect firewood and demanded they pay a fee. Amnesty International was told that those who were not able to pay, including a 13-year-old girl, Fatimeh, were "beaten" and their firewood was taken from them. The report outlines that there was implication of rape though this is not explicitly stated.

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<sup>17</sup> Danish Refugee Council (DRC) & Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) (2010), *Socio-economic and Environmental Impacts of Dadaab Refugee Camps on Host Communities*.

<sup>18</sup> Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

The report makes a specific recommendation to UNHCR to ensure refugees have enough firewood and water inside refugee camps and that patrols should accompany women when travelling outside of camps. It calls for the wider international community to adopt a comprehensive strategy to address the vulnerability of women and girls inside and outside camp settings.

**Abdelnour, S and Saeed, A (2014) 'Technologizing Humanitarian Space: Darfur Advocacy and the Rape-Stove Panacea', *International Political Sociology*, Vol 8, Issue 2, pages 145-163.**

**Abstract here:** <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ips.12049/abstract>

This study examines how an “unassuming domestic technology—the fuel-efficient stove—came to be construed as an effective tool for reducing sexual violence globally” and has subsequently been positioned as a “technical panacea for sexual violence in any conflict or refugee camp context” (p.2). The study asserts that the simplified approach of ‘stoves reduce rape’ diminishes the complexity of the ‘lived experience’ of beneficiaries and silences their voices. The study argues that this position may have “important implications for humanitarian policy, practice, and scholarship” (p.18), and concludes with a call for more research into “humanitarian advocacy, the construction and diffusion of problematizations, the emergence of global panaceas, and technologies of Othering” (p.18).

**Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) (2015) *Women’s access to wood energy during conflict and displacement: lessons from Yei County, South Sudan*, Rome: FAO**

In this article developed by FAO, the challenges of women’s access to wood energy during conflict and displacement in Yei County, South Sudan are examined. The article highlights that if the issue of access to secure and efficient sources of energy for cooking purposes is not tackled, there will be a “rapid increase” (p.57) in the risks women face due to an increased need to walk longer distances in search of fuel sources. Key findings include:

- Communities consulted emphasised that access to fuel efficient stoves (FES) and the establishment of agroforestry were key areas of collaboration between FAO and government institutions as part of SAFE project funding. A total of 20 women from women’s organisations were being trained in the construction of two types of FES: a portable ceramic charcoal stove and a stationary mud/brick stove which uses both fuelwood and charcoal as energy sources.
- The FES were shown to be low-cost and have had a “very positive impact” in improvised settlements and IDP camps, reducing the need for fuelwood and the time spent collecting it. The article notes that fuelwood collectors in Yei – often women and children – are now “much less exposed to violence and sexual assault. Beneficiaries have also witnessed nutritional and health benefits” (p.58), although it isn’t clear from the article what data this observation is based on.
- If stoves continue to be produced locally, they can provide a source of income for the women’s groups that produce them and the skills acquired can be transferred to other women.

## 2.4 Guidance materials

The following guidance materials, handbooks and tools have been produced and disseminated to field operations where access to firewood and alternative energy is a protection concern for women and girls:

- **IASC Task Force on Safe Access to Firewood and alternative Energy in Humanitarian Settings (2009) [Matrix on Agency Roles and Responsibilities for Ensuring a Coordinated Multi-Sectoral Fuel Strategy in Humanitarian Settings](#)** – This tool is aimed as a resource for field-based actors across a range of sectors, and is intended to determine key activities and the corresponding responsible agencies needed to implement an effective and multi-sectoral fuel strategy. It is divided across eight ‘entry points’: Camp Coordination & Camp Management (CCCM): Emergency Shelter: Environment & Natural Resource Management: Food & Nutrition: Health: Information, Education & Communication (IEC): Livelihoods, Development & Food Security: Protection.
- **IASC Task Force on Safe Access to Firewood and alternative Energy in Humanitarian Settings (2009) [Decision Tree Diagrams on Factors Affecting Choice of Fuel Strategy in Humanitarian Settings](#)** – These diagrams are designed to be used in conjunction with the above Matrix and address the range of fuel-related needs in the field, with a recognition that there is “no single fuel or energy technology appropriate for use in all humanitarian settings”. They present a method for determining the factors that should influence the choice of fuel strategy in a given context drawing on simple responses to local priorities, such as access.
- **The food security chapter from the new IASC GBV Guidelines: [www.gbvguidelines.org](http://www.gbvguidelines.org)** - The guidelines are design to assist humanitarian actors and communities affected to coordinate, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate essential actions for the prevention and mitigation of GBV across all sectors of humanitarian response.
- **World Food Programme (WFP) (2012) [Handbook on Safe Access to Firewood and Alternative Energy](#)** Prepared by the Humanitarian Policy and Transitions Service, this handbook has been developed to guide current and future WFP programming in addition to helping professionals understand the broader impacts of limited access to cooking fuel and how SAFE can mitigate them. It specifically guides the implementation of the SAFE initiative, drawing on the joint collaboration of UNICEF and WFP and an Essential Package of twelve integrated interventions, including the promotion and provision of improved stoves, to enhance the efficacy of school meals programmes.

### 3. References

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