

Community Resilience Mapping Report: Budi County

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Community Resilience Mapping Report

Budi County, South Sudan

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HOD-SS	Humanitarian Organization for Development in South Sudan
IP	Implementing Partner
PLWD	Persons Living with Disabilities
RFZ	Resilience Focus Zone
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance

Introduction

To promote and strengthen agricultural policy systems and institutions, Policy LINK in South Sudan helps to facilitate community empowerment and capacity building, in order to mobilize local resources for locally led development.

Aligned with these goals, Policy LINK carried out a Community Resilience Mapping exercise in Budi County, within the USAID Resilience Focused-Zone (RFZ) in South Sudan. The mapping exercise help stakeholders, including USAID Implementing Partners (IPs), to understand: how the community operates as a system; how community institutions organize themselves, cooperate, collaborate and make decisions in response to various shocks and stressors; what capacities exist in the community; and how the community is adapting to the shock of COVID-19.

The Community Resilience Mapping exercise reached all seven payams of Budi County. The exercise examined the various circumstances that communities have faced since independence through the current pandemic, and approaches to recovery and resilience by individuals and communities. This will give stakeholders a clear picture of what is going on in the communities of Budi County, including the kind of support that can be provided, and lay out concrete groundwork for building trust, engagement and co-creation between Policy LINK, USAID IPs and diverse stakeholders in the community.

Operational Context of Budi County

Budi County is one of eight counties in Eastern Equatoria State, falling within an area identified by USAID as a Resilience Focus Zone (RFZ). Budi County borders Lopa/Lafon County to the northwest, Kapoeta North County to the northeast, Kapoeta South County and Kapoeta East County to the east, and Ikotos County and Torit County to the west. It also shares a border with Uganda to the southeast. Budi County was created when Greater Kapoeta was divided between Kapoeta County and Budi County, named after the Buya and Didinga (Bu-Di). Budi County has poor infrastructure and the only road connecting to Juba-Torit-Kapoeta-Nadapal road is often marred by security incidents and becomes muddy during rainy season. Hence, humanitarian agencies can only access the county using MAF flights that operate twice weekly, though sometimes other commercial flights do travel to Budi when chartered.

Budi County has two distinct ecological zones. The highland payams of Nagishot and Loudo run from north to south along the eastern border with Kapoeta County. These two payams can only be accessed by foot, though recently the county authorities graded a feeder road connecting the three payams of Nagishot, Loudo and Ngauro. These highland payams are agriculturally very productive, often producing surplus crops for sale. The highlands have two rainy seasons, March–September and October–February.

The lowlands descend from the east towards the Kidepo River in the west. Five payams, Lotukei, Komiri (Chukudum), Ngarisha, Kimodong, and Ngauro are in the lowlands. These payams can be accessed by vehicles; however, during rainy season, the roads become flooded and impassable. Ngauro can only be accessed through Kapoeta South County, as there are no direct paved roads connecting the payam to Chukudum that vehicles can use. The lowlands have a single long planting season from March to September, and often experience food shortages.

Objectives of the Community Resilience Mapping

The overall objectives of the Community Resilience Mapping are:

- To enable communities to build trust and cooperate with partners to support joint local action planning

- To enable USAID and IPs to utilize evidence-based resources targeting in building resilient communities

Key Achievements

▪ Recruitment of Short-Term Technical Assistance (STTA) and training on conduct of the Community Resilience Mapping exercise

The Community Resilience Mapping exercise was delayed for close to two weeks due to overgrown grasses at the airstrip that prohibited flights. Once the community cleared the grasses, flights resumed on June 3, 2022. This unforeseen delay had significant impact on the mapping exercises. To meet the expected deliverables within a short timeframe, Policy LINK worked closely with the volunteers of one of the CSOs in Budi County, the Humanitarian Organization for Development in South Sudan (HOD-SS), to expedite the process.

The volunteers were recruited, submitted their curriculum vitae, and interviewed. Eleven STTAs were selected. Initially, the plan was to recruit nine STTAs, but due to the delay in the start of the activity, Policy LINK agreed to increase the number so multiple teams could be deployed to lead Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in the highlands and lowlands at the same time. This significantly reduced the number of days needed for completion of the exercise within the county.

The recruited STTAs were given a one-day training on the following themes:

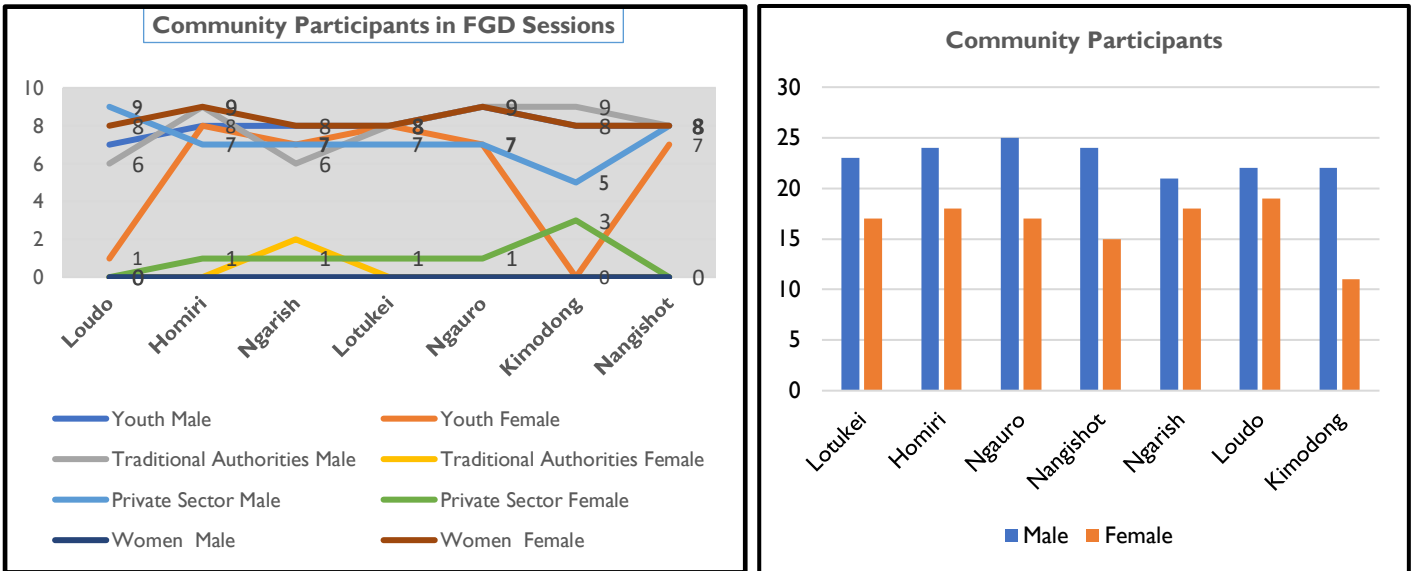
- Introduction and background about Policy LINK, including the objectives of Community Resilience Mapping
- Presentation of the FGD tool including discussions of key terms including shock, stress, resilience, disaster, and how the community mobilizers understood them
- Overview of the FGD process, including community mobilization, community participants selection criteria (representatives of women, youths, traditional authority, private sector, and persons living with disabilities); and FGD facilitation process.
- Translation and transcription of the FGD tool to the local languages of Didinga and Buya
- Logistical arrangements, including team deployment plans and refreshment for community participants



The deployment was as follows: three STTAs deployed to the highlands covering the payams of Nagishot and Laudo; another three deployed to the Buya areas covering payams of Kimodong and Ngarisha; and three STTAs deployed to cover the lowland areas of Komiri and Lotukei. In the last week of June 2022, after the first exercises in the six payams, four STTAs were deployed to cover the payam of Ngauro, which could only be accessed through Kapoeta South. Two STTAs were engaged in transcription of the recorded FGDs from the local languages of Didinga and Buya to English.

▪ **Community members' participation**

Budi County has seven payams with an estimated population of 153,314.¹ Based on the criteria set in the FGD guide to ensure inclusive participation of women, men, youth, and persons living with disabilities (PLWD), a total of 28 FGD sessions were conducted across the seven payams with 266 participating community members (161 males representing 60.5% of all the participants; 105 females representing 39.5% of all the participants). Totals of 94, 57, 57, and 58 community members participated in the FGD sessions respectively representing youth, traditional authorities, the private sector, and women's groups.



- **Lotukei** has six bomas. Due to access challenges, the community mobilization work was conducted over two days, from June 12–13, when the community mobilizers, with support of the Area Manager, met the Payam Administrator and the Boma Chiefs to introduce the Community Resilience Mapping exercise and agreed on the selection criteria for the FGD participants. Participant categories were: traditional authorities (community leaders); female and male youths; women's representatives; and private sector (business group) representatives. Four FGD sessions were conducted in two days, June 14–15, with 40 community members (23 males; 17 females).
- **Homiri** holds the administrative headquarters of Budi County and has five bomas. Most of the IPs operating in the county have their offices in Homiri. Located in the lowlands, Homiri is a strategic place for business. Community mobilizers met the Payam Administrator, Head Chief, and Boma Chiefs on the July 16 to conduct the mobilization and selections of the participants for FGD sessions in accordance with the set criteria. Due to the ongoing allocation of plots in the central town area, the FGD sessions were conducted in the span of three days. In total, 40 community members (21 males; 19 females) participated in the four FGD sessions. The main shocks mentioned during the discussions included lack of access roads, high commodity prices, and lack of alternative livelihood sources.
- **Loudo** is one of two payams located on the mountainous highlands. On June 16, the community mobilizers briefed the Payam Administrator and Boma Chiefs on the Community Resilience Mapping exercise, including selection of participants for FGD sessions according to the set criteria. The FGD sessions were conducted in span of three days, June 17–21. A total of 31 community members (22 males; 9 females) participated in four FGD sessions.
- **Nagishot** is in the highlands and is sometimes referred to as the Central Payam. It has six bomas. On June 12, the community mobilizers met the Payam Administrator and Boma Chiefs and introduced the Community Resilience Mapping exercise and the importance of community member participation. The

¹ South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics – 2017 Population Projection.

following day, the community mobilizers worked the Boma Chiefs to mobilize participants using the set criteria. As Nagishot is one of the agriculturally productive areas, the participation was delayed as community members were busy working in their crop fields. On June 14, youth and women were able to participate in FGD sessions; traditional authorities and private sector representatives participated the following day. A total of 39 community members (24 males; 15 females) participated in the FGD sessions. During the discussions, community representatives mentioned access to markets and other social services as main problems.

- **Ngarish** is located between Kimodong and Homiri Payams and has five bomas. Inaccessibility and limited access roads restricted travel to the furthest parts of the payam; subsequently only a section of the payam was represented during the FGD sessions. A total of 39 community members (21 males; 18 females) participated in FGD sessions. Despite being one of the largest payams geographically, Ngarish has only one health facility and school. Provision of basic services, including improved health facilities and education services, were among the community members' top concerns.
- **Kimodong** has nine Bomas and is located west of Chukudum, the administrative headquarters of Budi County. Kimodong is home to the Buya people and borders the Toposa, Lotuko and the Murle tribes. Like the rest of the payams in Budi County, there are limited access roads and water access is a major problem. In this payam, the community members reported high cases of child abduction and cattle raiding from their neighboring Toposa and Murle communities. A total of 33 community members (22 males; 11 females) participated in the FGD sessions.
- **Ngauro** is located closer to Kapoeta South County and has six bomas. The payam can only be accessed through a connecting road from Kapoeta South County. The community mobilizers traveled to Ngauro on June 26 and met the Payam Administrator, who scheduled a meeting with the Boma Chiefs for the following day. In that meeting the team introduced the concept of Community Resilience Mapping, discussed selection criteria, and the importance of community participation. FGD sessions were conducted June 28–29; 42 community members (25 males; 17 females) participated. The key shocks mentioned included lack of adequate potable water for both people and livestock. Also, the payam experiences periodic flooding which affects crop yields and exacerbates hunger in the county.

▪ **Meeting and Feedback from the Honorable Commissioner of Budi County**

The Honorable Commissioner warmly welcomed Policy LINK activities in Budi County. He appreciated Policy LINK's approach of engaging with all sections of the community, including traditional authorities, the private sector, women, and youth across all the payams. He endorsed Policy LINK's activity implementation and assured the Policy LINK team of his continued support and cooperation as the team continued with community mobilization and conduct of FGD sessions within the county.

Challenges

Challenges encountered during the Community Resilience Mapping included:

- There were very high expectations from the communities for Policy LINK to address the numerous problems the communities face; this expectation extends from community reliance on humanitarian actors for provision of basic services including health, education, water, and access roads.
- Cultural barriers and norms meant that most of the female youth selected to participate in FGD sessions were too shy to express the major problems affecting their communities or provide suggestions on how to better manage shocks and stressors.
- In Kimodong, the Buya community was celebrating a week-long cultural festival; hence, it took longer to mobilize community members, especially the youth and traditional authorities, to participate in FGD sessions.
- In Homiri, where the administrative headquarters of Budi County sits, numerous activities required the attention of the local government and community members, including the local government's allocation

and survey of residential plots, and training workshops organized by other IPs. These events competed for participants' time and led to delays in the FGD sessions.

- Budi County has a scattered settlement pattern, including road access difficulties in mountainous terrain, making it difficult for some community members to reach the meeting venues.
- Other programs scheduled for the same communities with different partners or stakeholders, such as Cash for Work distributions, led to delays in the FGD sessions.