

**ASSESSMENT OF THE AVAILABILITY OF SANITARY FACILITIES AND HYGIENE
PRACTICES OF FORMER INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE
RESETTLED HOMES IN LIRA DISTRICT, UGANDA**

BY

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Abstract

Introduction: Sanitation refers to the provision of facilities and services for the disposal of human urine and feces. Availability of the latrine facilities is an important prerequisite for effective control of diseases related to poor sanitation. But according to UNICEF 2008, only 59% of the world's populations had access to improved sanitary facilities by 2004. The situation of lack of basic sanitary facilities is worst in Lira district compared to most districts in Uganda especially in areas where people are resettling after a long period of displacement into the IDP camps. These people are resettling in areas that lack pit latrines and safe drinking water, leaving them prone to infections.

Objective: To assess the level of availability of sanitary facilities and hygiene practices of the former internally displaced persons in Lira District.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study. Purposive, simple random and systematic sampling techniques were employed in the selection of study areas and study units. A total of 570 households were selected to participate in the study. The quantitative data component was done using questionnaires, which were administered to the heads of households. Focus group discussion guides and observation check lists were used to collect qualitative data. There were 4 focus group discussions involving males and females. Quantitative data was analyzed by a computer soft ware to generate frequencies and associations. Qualitative data was analyzed manually. Data is presented in figures, narrative text and tables.

Results: Less than half, 264/570 (46.3%) respondents had latrine facilities and of those only

115/264 (43.5%) had complete structures. People in Orum Sub County were less likely to have latrine facilities compared to those in Ogur Sub County (OR=0.126, 95% CI: 0.085-0.185). Almost all, 258/264 (97.7%) latrines were in use and in good state of hygiene. More than half, 62.1% (161/264) of the respondents reported that it was only the children who do not use the latrines because of age. About hand washing facilities, only 11% (68/570) of the respondents had hand washing facilities. On hand washing practice, the respondents reported 94.2% (537/570) washing hands before eating, 61% (352/570) washing hands before handling food, 57.5% (328/570) washing hands after defecation, 28.4% (162/570) washing hands after handling children's feces and 28.1%

(160/570) washing hands before breast feeding.

Conclusion: The latrine coverage in areas where former internally displaced persons were resettling was low especially in Orum Sub County. Lack of latrine digging tools hindered latrine construction. Nearly all those with latrine facilities use them. Very few people had hand washing facilities and this contributed to poor hand washing practice after defecation or handling a child's feces. People do not yet appreciate the importance of hand washing after defecation.

Recommendations: Any available support to the people resettling should be in the form of equipments such as latrine digging tools and this should be followed by intense home improvement campaigns by the district health team to ensure that people have latrine facilities and are practicing good hygiene.