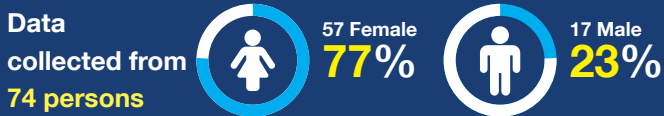


# In The Loop

## Refugee Voices Bulletin

“In the Loop” Bulletin is a bi-weekly data-driven humanitarian feedback newsletter, produced to inform organizations and local authorities delivering services to refugees, returnees, and host communities in Dadaab. Internews aims to achieve two-way humanitarian communications for closing feedback loops to support the humanitarian community’s effort to put the concerns and feedback of the affected populations at the forefront of their service delivery to enhance accountability. The Community feedback used in this report is sampled from recorded Vox pop interviews, social media highlights, one-on-one community meeting, and other feedback collected from the weekly live radio call-in shows (Bilan) broadcasted in Dadaab by Nairobi’s Star FM’s Radio Gargaar 97.1 FM. The topics of discussion for the period mapped were “Menstrual hygiene management”, “Challenges faced by women living with Albinism in Dadaab”, “Mitigating health and protection challenges that hinder girls’ education” and “Role of women in decision making during voluntary repatriation in Dadaab refugee camps”.

Internews recorded 74 cross-cutting responses in the feedback collected between the week of Dec 14, 2020 - Jan 10, 2021.



### Methods of data collection



## Menstrual hygiene management

### HEALTH

There is need for regular hygiene and the use of sanitary pads. The girls must understand what they go through is normal. They should also learn what they must and must not do. They must use clean material since the partners stopped providing sanitary pads.

**Adult, Female, Hagadera Camp**

Girls encounter challenges during their menstrual cycle, including unhygienic conditions due to a lack of sanitary pads. They do experience a lot of pain, such as back pain. I urge humanitarian organizations to provide sanitary pads to boost the hygiene of our daughters.

**Adult, Female, Dadaab**

Some girls do not understand menstruation. Mothers should help them. Organizations used to provide sanitary pads to women in the camps, but it has stopped, thus affecting women so badly. It may happen that a mother would want to buy a sanitary pad for her daughter but cannot afford it. One pack of sanitary pads costs Ksh100. Will the mother buy sugar with that Ksh100 or sanitary pad? If the family is large, both the mother and her daughters need sanitary pads. We do not know why the agencies stopped providing sanitary pads. If you visit the health facility, most of the patients seeking medical attention are young girls suffering from diseases they got due to poor menstrual hygiene.

**Adult, Female, Dadaab**

During menstruation, we feel a lot of pain, including back pain. We feel pain three days before the onset of menstruation. To ease the pain, we take pain killers. Leave alone going to school; we cannot wake up from the bed. We get water and soap, but we do not have pants and sanitary pads.

**Adult, Female, Ifo Camp**



## Challenges faced by women living with albinism in Dadaab



### PROTECTION

We can stop discriminating against people with Albinism by joining efforts both at the community and the government level. They need our support. The partners should take their part by sensitizing the community against discrimination of particular people because it hurts.

**Adult, Female, Hagadera Camp**

Discrimination against women with albinism exists. All stakeholders in the camps, including the government, community, and partners, must work together to end it. Special care should be given to them. The community leaders must be sensitized to enable them to share messages with other community members, such a step will make women with albinism feel the community cares, and they will be able to live with a great mindset.

**Adult, Male, Hagadera Camp**

Community sensitization and engaging people with albinism in community activities can be a way to shun discrimination against them. Priority should be put on capacity building community members to educate them.

**Adult, Female, Hagadera Camp**

## Mitigating health and protection challenges that hinder girls' education in Dadaab

### EDUCATION

Girls face a lot of challenges in education. Instead of sending girls to school, parents send them to the kitchen. They only enroll boys in school and take care of their needs. On the other hand, girls are forced into early marriages, with the belief that their education has no importance for the family. I, therefore, would urge parents and agencies to encourage and allow girls to get enrolled into schools.

**Adult, Female, Ifo Camp**

The barrier to girl's education is the lack of family support. Parents do not treat boys and girls equally. The boys are encouraged to study hard, but girls are prevented from doing the same. Those in school do not get enough time to study. We request special teachers for girls to build their morale, provision of textbooks, and weekly distribution of sanitary pads.

**Adult, Female, Ifo Camp**

The biggest challenge to girls' education is the lack of menstrual supplies such as sanitary pads, underwear, and soap. Furthermore, mothers encourage boys to study because they say they will work for them, while girls can only be of help in the kitchen. I urge parents to educate girls the same way as boys. I saw parents demoralizing girls; they only pay for boys' education up to University leaving girls out. They end up in the kitchen humiliated and discouraged. Authorities must come to their rescue and support girls.

**Adult, Male, Ifo Camp**

The challenges we face include inadequate learning materials. At times you cannot afford to buy a pen, without which you will be sent out of class. We also lack sanitary pads that leave many girls to stay out of school because they cannot afford to buy them.

**Youth Ifo Camp**



The solution to keeping girls in school is to provide financial assistance to poor families whose children do not stay in school due to poverty.

**Adult, Female, Dadaab**

There is no equality between boys and girls in access to education. Parents are the primary cause for the prevailing inequality. Girls have some special needs, notably now that schools are re-opening and times are hard. It is only proper for the concerned agencies to provide girls with sanitary pads, books, and pens.

**Adult, Female, Ifo Camp**

Girls have the intention of studying just like the boys but they are met with many violent circumstances such as rape, which is a big problem.

**Adult, Male, Dagahaley Camp**

## Role of women in decision making during voluntary repatriation in Dadaab

### PROTECTION

We do not have any influence on the decision-making process of repatriation. Men solely decide to register the ration card for repatriation. We women do not get the chance to make decisions and only hear of the departure time. We want our decision rights upheld and protected by the organizations.

**Adult, Female, Dadaab**

Women must be informed and involved in the decision to register for repatriation. Decisions should be made together by both partners. Otherwise, one-sided decision making will create a family problem.

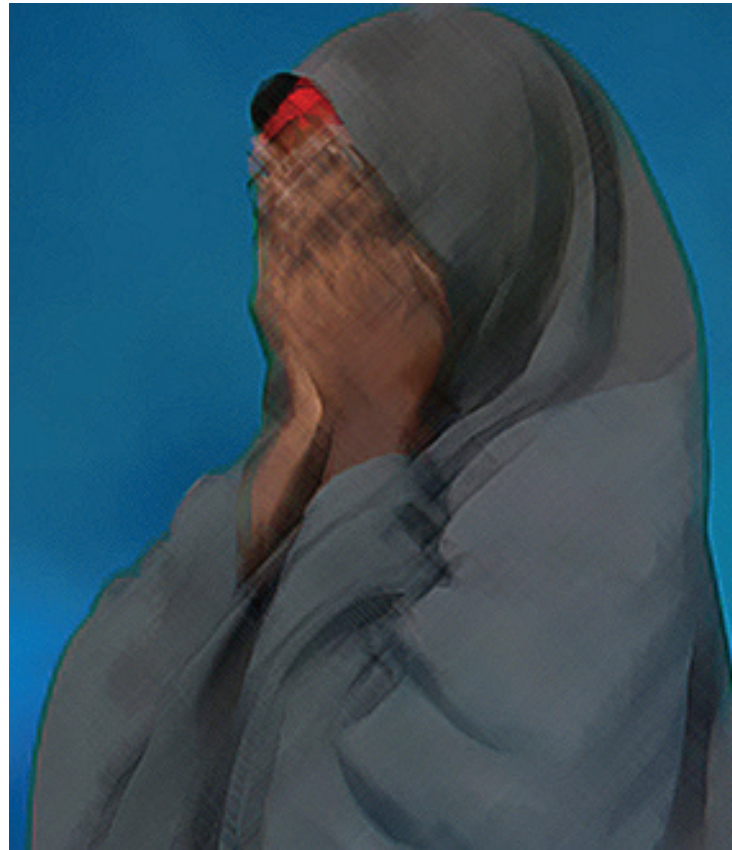
**Adult, Female, Dadaab**

It is important to involve women in any decision that the family is taking. When the family decides to go for repatriation, the whole family needs to come together and make a collective decision. Women must not be forced to decide if they are not willing.

**Adult, Male, Dadaab**

Through phone calls, residents stated that both men and women must decide for the family to return. They further highlighted that before contacting the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for registration, family members must agree unanimously and emphasized inclusive decision making. Women alleged that some men consult their wives, while others do not. Furthermore, women suggested having a separate meeting to ensure they do not get coerced to return. They claimed that most women only agree with their husbands to avoid embarrassing them, but they are not consulted on the process.

**Adults, Male, Hagadera Camp**



### CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT

We are new arrivals who lack ration cards. We are suffering because we share meals with people, which is barely enough for them. Schools are also re-opening; they are many children without a card, without which they cannot get enrolled. I would request agencies to issue cards to facilitate access to services for these new refugees.

**Informal Women Baraza, Ifo Camp**

We have registered for repatriation for close to a year; we are still at the camps with no information. We want a response from UNHCR.

**Adult, Male, Section L, Hagadera Camp**

Our alien cards have expired, the offices are closed since COVID-19 started. When will Refugee Affairs Secretariat resume work? We need renewed alien cards.

**Youth, Section E, Hagadera Camp**

### FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

The food ration we usually get is not equivalent to our entitlement. During distribution, staff under-scoop. We request UNHCR to follow up to ensure every beneficiary gets their right portion and quantity.

**Informal Women Baraza, Hagadera Camp**

### HEALTH

I am an old man with low vision and need eyeglasses. The hospital has no such services. We need help with eyeglasses.

**Adult, Male, Section L, Hagadera Camp**

There is a rumor that all the health posts will be closed; how far is this true?

**Adult, Female, Section C, Hagadera Camp**



## EDUCATION

Now that the schools have re-opened, will Windle Trust start the remedial classes for girls on weekends?

**Youth, Section J, Hagadera Camp**

Are the schools re-opening for special needs students? Are there teachers? We are confused!

**Adult, Female, Section E, Hagadera Camp**

I know of many girls who were students before schools closed. They are now wives, with no plans of going back to school. So, what plans do organizations that support education have for such girls?

**Adult, Female, Section F, Hagadera Camp**

Schools reopened; girls did not receive sanitary pads for so long. We want sanitary pads distributed to girls.

**Adult, Female, Section F, Hagadera Camp**

Girls lack parental support to further their education. Parents need to encourage and motivate their girls to stay in school and pursue their studies further.

**Adult, Male, Hagadera**

## SUGGESTIONS

### Suggestions to Partners

- A lack of sanitary pads was cited by women and girls in the camps in the period when this feedback was collected. The affected persons request agencies to provide for them where possible. They stated that agencies have not distributed sanitary towels to them for a long time now. The humanitarian actors and agencies in Dadaab could provide a schedule for when they intend to distribute the sanitary towels and give a status update of the same to keep the community in the know in that regard. This can be done through radio and other communications platform provided under the Refugee voices project and beyond. Lack of parental support emerged as the leading challenge hindering girls' education, thereby necessitating parents' sensitization on the importance of girl child education. The refugees and host community request partners to provide adequate learning material and menstrual supplies to motivate girls to stay in schools.
- Feedback gathered from the beneficiaries illustrates people living with albinism are discriminated against, something that necessitates raising awareness about the skin condition and the stigma that comes with it to humanize and normalize it.