

Case Study: Livelihoods and Child Protection

Papua Koala is a seaside town of 40,000, including 10,000 recent returnees from exile in a neighboring country. After 20 years of civil war, peace has returned to PK but infrastructure is deteriorated and wage jobs are scarce, especially for returnees. PK district is rich in timber and mineral resources, but the economy is weak and many workers are idle or only able to find work sporadically. Farm land is plentiful, but few returnees have the requisite skills. Most people are struggling, but returnees are generally worse off than the rest of the population, and are subject to discrimination and violence in the community. Returnee families report they eat only 1-2 meals in a day, and school attendance is dismally low, especially for girls.

This is a highly gender-stratified society, but with so little formal employment opportunity for men, women have been forced to take on the new role of breadwinner, working in the informal sector. Little data exists, but returnee women and girls say they fear GBV in the community and in the home.

Adolescents and youth (10-24) make up nearly half of the PK population. Most adolescents are already economically active: some help with the mother's home-based piecework, others sell goods in the market or at traffic lights. Nearly 1/3 of adolescents and youth are out of school, and find work hauling sand from the beach, or clearing land for farmers. Girls often become domestic servants for better-off families. Returnees complain about high rates of teen pregnancy. NGOs have found little success in attracting adolescent girls to their programs, even when the programs are set up specifically for girls. Youth gangs roam the streets at night, and the community tends to have a negative image of young people.

In focus group discussions, returnee women, men, girls and boys identified livelihoods assistance as their highest priority. Luckily, a large donor has awarded grants to six INGOs for livelihoods programs.

You are on the livelihoods staff of an INGO that has just opened a Papua Koala field office in response to the influx of returnees. With your livelihoods mandate from the community and the donor, what steps will you take to ensure better outcomes for the children in this community? What specific approaches will you take to address the needs of the various groups? What actors will you work with to ensure success? How will you prove that your projects are working?