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Shifting policy on refugees from encampment to other models

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Question

In what contexts, and in response to what drivers and arguments, have host countries shifted from an encampment to a more relaxed refugee policy regime? What evidence is there that will help us compare and contrast the differing impacts on hosts between camps and other ways of managing refugees

Contents

1. Overview

Global situation

The world is now witnessing the highest levels of human displacement on record. An unprecedented 65.3 million people worldwide have been forced from their home. Among them are nearly 21.3 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18. There are also 10 million stateless people[1]. Refugees are people fleeing conflict or persecution. They

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[1] Figures at a Glance, UNHCR website, June 2016, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html

are defined and protected in international law, and must not be expelled or returned to situations where their life and freedom are at risk[2].

Political conflicts worldwide are, more and more often, of an extended duration, meaning that return to home countries for refugees is increasingly delayed[3]. The growing size of refugee population influxes to countries of first asylum has meant that host governments have been reluctant to facilitate local integration as it carries with it a connotation of permanence as well as security problems and resources burdens. Failure to find acceptable durable solutions have combined to result in increasing numbers of refugee situations worldwide that can be described as 'protracted'[4].

In 2014, UNHCR introduced a new policy on 'alternatives to camps', 'extending the principal objectives of the urban refugee policy to all operational contexts', whenever possible, while ensuring that refugees are protected and assisted effectively and are able to achieve solutions[5].

Overview of the report

Within this context, this paper (a 4 day literature review) discusses the important question of shifting policy on refugees from encampment to other models. It particularly focuses on what contexts, and in response to what drivers and arguments, have host countries shifted from an encampment to a more relaxed refugee policy regime. Several examples of governments moving from encampment to other methods are included as case studies in this report as well as the reasons behind this policy decision. It also considers the impact of these refugee hosting choices on hosts.

Section 2 focuses on factors that affect the success of hosting refugees outside of camp situations. It includes arguments for and against a more relaxed refugee regime and information on the alternatives to camps.

There are not that many examples of a government shifting from encampment to a more relaxed regime, however some examples are discussed in **section 3**, including Casamance refugees in Gambia and refugee hosting in Ghana, Gambia, Uganda and Lebanon. Where possible, each case study includes **information on the situation, why this regime was chosen as a hosting mechanism, the impact of this on hosts and the impact on refugees**. There are, however, many examples where encampment was not the primary solution, for example Afghans in Pakistan, and Sierra Leone and Liberia refugees in Guinea in the mid-1990s and some information is also provided on these too. Only a small number of governments, including Uganda, Mexico, and Belize, have offered local integration opportunities to refugees who cannot or do not wish to repatriate. In both developed and

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[2] UNHCR, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/refugees.html

[3] Hovil, L. and Dryden-Peterson (2003) Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda, UNHCR Working Paper No. 93, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/3f8189ec4/local-integration-durable-solution-refugees-host-populations-education.html?query=local%20integration

[4] Hovil, L. and Dryden-Peterson (2003) Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda, UNHCR Working Paper No. 93, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/3f8189ec4/local-integration-durable-solution-refugees-host-populations-education.html?query=local%20integration

[5] UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2014) UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps http://www.refworld.org/docid/5423ded84.html

developing host countries, the preference has been for temporary protection and restrictions on refugees, including channeling them into camps, pending their repatriation[6]. However, the global situation is changing and more relaxed regimes are becoming a more significant issue. For example there are more than four million Syrian refugees, around 85 per cent of whom are not living in organised settlements, but alongside members of the local population in urban, peri-urban and rural areas of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, northern Iraq and Turkey[7].

Section 4 includes more general information on the impact on hosts and refugees of non-camp hosting situations, this is only information that was not included within the case studies.

2. Factors that affect the success of non-camp hosting situations

Among others, Kuhlman's theoretical paper on the economic integration of refugees in developing countries (1991) identifies the following characteristics of successful integration[8]:

- the socio-cultural change refugees undergo permits them to maintain an identity of their own and to adjust psychologically to their new situation
- friction between host populations and refugees is not worse than within the host population itself
- refugees do not encounter more discrimination than exists between groups previously settled within the host society

Economic and social factors in the host country are important to consider when looking at more relaxed refugee policies. In countries of the global South, areas that host refugees are themselves plagued with poverty, characterised by a lack of resources and infrastructure for social services, and corresponding difficulties in accessing economic markets. In this context, analysis of the costs and benefits of local integration to host communities are critical in policy formation. Given the severity of the economic crises and the environmental degradation facing many of the major African refugee hosting countries, the basic issue that emerges is, can these countries be able or be expected to establish policies, legal frameworks and institutions which could allow the absorption of hundreds of thousands of refugees living within their territories into their societies permanently?[9] Kibreab argues that in fact host governments in Africa could not be expected to carry this burden, and he proposed local settlement structures, spatially segregated sites which could be supported by

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[6] Jacobsen, K, Local Integration: The Forgotten Solution, Migration Policy Institute, 1st October 2003,
http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/local-integration-forgotten-solution/

[7] Jeff Crisp *et al,* 'From Slow Burn to Boiling Point: a Real-Time Review of UNHCR's Response to the Syrian Refugee Emergency', UNHCR Policy Development and Evaluation Service, Geneva, 2013.
http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/evalreports/52b83e539/slow-boil-breaking-point-real-time-evaluation-unhcrs-response-syrian-refugee.html

[8] Kuhlman, Tom. 1991. "The Economic Integration of Refugees in Developing Countries: A Research Model." *Economic Integration of Refugees.* London: Oxford University Press,
http://jrs.oxfordjournals.org/content/4/1/1.abstract

[9] Kibreab, Gaim. 1989. "Local Settlements in Africa: A Misconceived Option?" *Journal of Refugee Studies.* Vol. 2 (4), p. 473

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international donors, as the optimal solution. Many countries adopted this strategy. More recent literature, however, suggests that the benefits to host communities of hosting refugees can outweigh the costs, if structures are set up in such a way as to promote joint development[10].

The 'degree of linguistic, ethnic, and cultural similarities between the host and refugee population is an important factor in the initiation of a local integration process'[11]. Sometimes very different policies have been applied for different ethnic refugee communities within the same country. Although cultural similarities make integration easier, 'the ethnicity of a refugee population should not predicate the durable solutions available to them'[12]. The length of time a refugee population has spent in a host country is another important factor. Protracted refugee situations can seem to be the most appropriate for local integration. Extended stays contribute to de facto integration, especially through language and education assimilation. This assimilation, especially strong amongst the younger generations, tend to diminish the locals' xenophobia towards the refugees[13]. The availability of inputs, particularly in the form of land available for settlement and farming, is another significant factor. As seen in Tanzania and Zambia, the abundance of land for refugee settlement provided the opportunity for their self-sufficiency.

The re-emergence of local integration as a durable solution cannot be attributed to a single factor. The political, social and economic conditions that allow for this are many and varied. It is hard to identify specific catalysts for the local integration process, every circumstance is different. What can be more readily assessed are general historical trends, political situations and global population changes. Several developments have enabled UNHCR and the international community to take a more proactive role in protracted refugee situations recently. Although a few new refugee emergencies have erupted in the new millennium (such as in Iraq and Darfur), the number of major refugee situations has diminished significantly. This has allowed UNHCR and others to focus more attention on previously neglected crises, especially protracted situations[14].

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[10] Hovil, L. and Dryden-Peterson (2003) Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda, UNHCR Working Paper No. 93, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/3f8189ec4/local-integration-durable-solution-refugees-host-populations-education.html?query=local%20integration

[11] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

[12] ibid

[13] Hovil, L. and Dryden-Peterson (2003) Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda, UNHCR Working Paper No. 93, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/3f8189ec4/local-integration-durable-solution-refugees-host-populations-education.html?query=local%20integration

[14] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

Arguments for and against using other hosting methods than refugee camps[15]

Arguments for:

- A great opportunity for economic development. The refugees constitute a new labour force with skills that can be utilised to benefit the host community by developing under-populated areas. E.g. in Tanzania with the influx of Burundian refugees in 1972, the development of land for farming in the country's remote Western periphery enabled the refugees to contribute substantially to the local and national economy.
- Long-term benefits of access to new infrastructure. The building of roads, schools and hospitals financed by international refugee aid are permanent and usually open to refugees and locals alike.
- Show of good will, solidarity, and burden sharing. It can provide host governments with international aid, whilst bolstering their status as a responsible member of the international community.
- Keeping refugees in camps violates their rights. Freedom of movement and the right to work are two fundamental human rights that are often denied to refugees confined to camp situations, sometimes for years on end.
- Refugee camps have experienced direct attacks and militarisation has sometimes become acute.
- Although local integration is not always welcomed by host governments in theory, in practice provincial authorities often recognise the de facto integration of refugee populations. For example, in pursuing a local integration programme, authorities in Sierra Leone have preferred to use the term 'self reliance strategy'. This perhaps highlights the influence of politics and public perceptions on refugee hosting policy and practice.
- Refugees in camp situations are often susceptible to disease, poor nutrition status, mental health problems, and sexual and gender based violence. In addition, these refugees are also more likely to engage in onward movements. Deteriorating conditions and a lack of prospects increase the numbers leaving the camps for urban areas, or seeking asylum in more distant parts of the world.
- There is an accumulating body of research and evidence about the negative consequences of extended refugee hosting. Situations where refugees are 'warehoused' for years on end, without opportunities for self-reliance, have been shown to trigger a number of interrelated problems. These realisations prompted further research and lobbying efforts.
- In 1999, UNHCR's Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit launched the 'Protracted Refugee Situations Project', which published a wide range of reports and papers on this issue. Subsequently there have been a number of internet-based initiatives set up, such as the 'Refugee Livelihoods Network' and the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants campaign against the 'warehousing' of refugees. Research and advocacy efforts on protracted refugee situations have also increased the dialogue on alternative approaches for this particular type of refugees.
- In protracted refugee situations, it is in fact often the case that the people concerned have never lived in their putative 'homeland'. For example, 85 per cent of the registered '1972' Burundian refugees in Tanzania was born and grew up in the host

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[15] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

state. In this context, local integration becomes the most forward-thinking and realistic refugee solution.

- Continued globalisation is a relevant factor that appears to be finally creeping into policy-makers' agendas.

Arguments against[16]**:**

- A "burden" for host countries
- Petty and organised crime has flourished in some refugee hosting areas.
- Real and perceived security threats can cause resentment and clashes between locals and refugees, diminishing chances for successful local integration.
- Refugee hosting can also take a toll on the environment. The increased use of natural resources in activities like charcoal making, fishing, firewood and thatch grass selling, and the cultivation of hillsides can have a substantial impact.
- Refugee influxes also increase competition for land and jobs, as well as pressure on infrastructure such as schools, roads and health centres.
- The blurred line between humanitarian and development aid for local integration projects has often resulted in protection 'gaps', where refugees are left without institutional and material support.
- Historically, it has proven difficult to secure funding for local integration projects. Donors are not attracted to longer-term activities encompassing refugee integration, and making refugees less visible is neither psychologically nor politically satisfying to international or national organisations.
- Local integration has been a difficult solution to sell to refugees that hold on to idea of eventually returning home. Host states also hold that by limiting the potential for local settlement and integration, there is a greater chance to promote repatriation.

Alternatives to camps

One way of relaxing refugee policy regime is local integration. This can be considered a durable solution which combines three dimensions. Firstly, it is a legal process, refugees attain a wider range of rights in the host country. Secondly, it is an economic process to establish sustainable livelihoods and a standard of living comparable to the host community. Thirdly, it is a social and cultural process of adaptation and acceptance that enables refugees to contribute to social life and live without fear of discrimination[17].

Local integration is a complex and gradual process with legal, economic, social and cultural dimensions. It imposes considerable demands on both the individual and the receiving society. Sometimes refugees gain the nationality of the country they seek asylum in. UNHCR estimates that, over the past decade, 1.1 million refugees around the world became citizens in their country of asylum[18].

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[16] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

[17] Crisp, Jeff. January 2003. "No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa." New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No.75, Geneva: UNHCR

[18] http://www.unhcr.org/uk/local-integration-49c3646c101.html

Durable solutions for refugees that do not depend on continued emergency assistance are urgently needed. Crisp (2003) writes: …the presence of so many protracted refugee situations in Africa can be linked to the fact that countries of asylum, donor states, UNHCR, and other actors have given so little attention to the solution of local integration during the past 15 years. From the mid-1980s onwards, a consensus was forged around the notion that repatriation was the only viable solution to refugee problems in low-income regions[19].

According to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, restoring refugees to dignity and ensuring the provision of human rights includes an approach that would lead to their integration in the host society. The principle of local integration is firmly established in international refugee law. The Convention acknowledged the role of local integration, focusing on the importance of citizenship in achieving durable solutions. According to Article 34 of the Convention, 'the contracting states shall as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalization of refugees. They shall in particular make every effort to expedite naturalization proceedings'[20].

The possibility of integration of refugees into their host environment is a question of concern for the international community and host governments, especially in the context of protracted refugee situations. While the impact of refugees on host populations has been explored at a theoretical level[21], 'there has been little academic research on the costs and benefits of refugee presence to host populations in a country specific context. In addition, methods to quantify levels of integration among refugee and host communities are lacking in the literature'[22].

Patterns of settlement in a continuum from integration/non-camps to segregation/closed camps (Van Damme 1998)[23] :

Urban refugees & integrated rural refugees	Peaceful cohabitation	Spatial separation	Spatial segregation
Self-settled Rwandans in Rutshuru Zaire	Rwandans in small open camps, Uvira, Zaire	Rwandans in large open camps, Goma, Zaire & Benaco, Tanzania	Rwandans in closed camps, Ngozi, Burundi

[19] Crisp, Jeff. January 2003. "No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa." New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No.75, Geneva: UNHCR

[20] Article 34 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Adopted on 28 July 1951 by the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons convened under General Assembly resolution 429 (V) of 14 December 1950; entry into force 22 April 1954, in accordance with article 43.

[21] Kuhlman, Tom. 1991. "The Economic Integration of Refugees in Developing Countries: A Research Model." Economic Integration of Refugees. London: Oxford University Press; Sorenson, John. 1994. "An Overview: Refugees and Development." In Adelman and Sorenson (Eds). African Refugees: Development Aid and Repatriation. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

[22] Hovil, L. and Dryden-Peterson (2003) Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda, UNHCR Working Paper No. 93, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/3f8189ec4/local-integration-durable-solution-refugees-host-populations-education.html?query=local%20integration

[23] Schmidt, A (2003) Camps Versus Settlements, Forced Migration Online, http://www.forcedmigration.org/research-resources/expert-guides/camps-versus-settlements/alldocuments

Rwandans in West Tanzania 1959–94 (with qualifications)	Bangladeshis in India 1971–2	Sudanes in North Kenya	Salvadorians in Honduras
Urban refugees in Uganda & Kenya	Chadians in West Sudan	Somalis in East Kenya	Cambodians in Thailand
Mozambicans in South Africa	Ethiopians in East Sudan		Vietnamese boat people in Hong Kong
	Sudanese in North Uganda		

3. Case studies where camps have not been used

There are not that many examples of a government shifting from encampment to a more relaxed regime, however some examples are discussed in this section, including Casamance refugees in Gambia. There are of course many examples where encampment was not the primary solution, for example Afghans in Pakistan, and Sierra Leone and Liberia refugees in Guinea in the mid-1990s. Only a small number of governments, including Uganda, Mexico, and Belize, have offered local integration opportunities to refugees who cannot or do not wish to repatriate. In both developed and developing host countries, the preference has been for temporary protection and restrictions on refugees, including channeling them into camps, pending their repatriation[24]. However, the global situation is changing and more relaxed regimes are becoming a more significant issues, for example there are more than four million Syrian refugees, around 85 per cent of whom are not living in organised settlements, but alongside members of the local population in urban, peri-urban and rural areas of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, northern Iraq and Turkey[25]. In 2014, UNHCR introduced a new policy on 'alternatives to camps', "extending the principal objectives of the urban refugee policy to all operational contexts."[26]. This section includes some case studies showing more relaxed regimes and the reasons behind these choices.

Africa has had many armed conflicts, civil wars and violent ethnic battles since decolonisation[27]. These conflicts, in addition to famine and other problems, have resulted in large refugee movements across, and beyond the continent. Africa has also shown some of the most open borders and welcoming policies towards refugees worldwide. There are many case studies for local integration, and they provide some examples of the benefits of refugee hosting. The success of the local integration programmes of the past may also provide a valuable opportunity to promote this and other more relaxed refugee regimes as a durable

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[24] Jacobsen, K, Local Integration: The Forgotten Solution, Migration Policy Institute, 1st October 2003, http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/local-integration-forgotten-solution/

[25] Jeff Crisp *et al*, 'From Slow Burn to Boiling Point: a Real-Time Review of UNHCR's Response to the Syrian Refugee Emergency', UNHCR Policy Development and Evaluation Service, Geneva, 2013.

[26] 'UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps', UNHCR, Geneva, 2014.

[27] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

solution for those currently displaced, especially the millions trapped in protracted refugee situations.

Casamance refugees in Gambia[28]:

Local donors and non-governmental organisations estimated that there were 10,000-11,000 Casamance refugees (registered and unregistered) living in The Gambia in 2011. The refugees are from the Casamance region of southern Senegal and they have crossed the border to settle in The Gambia as a result of protracted, low level conflict and instability. At that time, the majority of rural refugees lived in approximately 56 Gambian host villages in the Foni district adjacent to the border with Casamance. The number of host villages changed as refugees move from one village to another or to urban areas.

All Casamance refugees in The Gambia were entitled to refugee identity cards which allowed them freedom to live, work and move within The Gambia. The refugee identity card also entitled payment by UNHCR of school fees up to a ceiling level of 5000 dalasi per annum (approximately US$180). It also allowed free medical care at government hospitals and clinics.

Why was local hosting chosen over camps?[29]

Donors and local partners interviewed stated that the key challenge to supporting Casamance refugees in The Gambia was the mobility of refugees. For donors, the logistics of giving assistance would be easier if refugees were in camps (conversation, UNHCR, 31.3.11). Also, settling in host villages means that the refugees are less visible than in camp situations.

Before 2006, there were refugee camps in The Gambia at Kwinella, Bambali, Sifoe, Kitti and Basse. These camps were closed when numbers of refugees dropped. However, there was an increased influx from 2006 onwards, UNHCR considered re-opening camps at Sifoe and Kitti but the Government of The Gambia were reluctant to place tented camps near these border areas as this could attract visits from opposition members who were likely to be armed (conversations, GID November 2010, and UNHCR, November 2010). Not only would this present a danger, but it would increase fear amongst refugees in the camps. It was therefore decided to place refugees in the old camp at Bambali where some Casamance refugees had been situated before its closure (see UNHCR, 2004:7). However refugees refused to go there on the basis that it was far from their Casamance home where they could maybe recover their animals, materials and fruit crops at some point and continue to have contact with family remaining in Casamance (conversations, GRC fieldworker, June 2010 and UNHCR 31.3.11). It was in this way that Casamance refugees came to settle in host villages rather than living in camps.

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[28] All information on Casamance refugees in this section comes from the following study: Hopkins, G (2011) Casamance refugees in The Gambia: self-settlement and the challenges of integration, UNHCR Research Paper No. 220, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/4e79ef7c9/casamance-refugees-gambia-self-settlement-challenges-integration-gail-hopkins.html

[29] Ibid

Impact on refugees[30]

Refugees were interviewed and said they much preferred the advantages and future security of living in villages to camps, even though they may bring certainty of health care and education and the relative ease with which donors may provide food assistance and thus food security. Some quotes included:

- *So you will spend fifteen years in a camp. Planting a tree or having a garden. What comes after fifteen years? But if you are in a village, try some small production, you can plant some trees, oranges and mangoes, then in some time they can bring you something. If you think of [the effort] of today - when tomorrow comes, it is there.* Group discussion, Bajana - 1.12.10 11
- She said, they are not used to living in camps. *Privacy might be a problem in camps. But where they are now [in the village] it"s almost like living in their home*. Group discussion, Ndemban Jola - 22.6.10
- A camp held only a future of dependence and vulnerability as they lived in fear that one day they will be told to leave the camp with nothing: *the tree would be lost, but in the village they will have the benefit of it. In a village, he said, 'at least they can try, not to sit and wait'*.

There are other benefits of village living which respondents did not themselves identify, perhaps because they have never lived in a camp: they have freedom of movement either temporarily or permanently able to move to other locations, and registered refugees have civil and legal rights granted them by the Government of the Gambia (see Harrell-Bond, 2010:13). Whilst a camp situation simplifies and perhaps improves assistance to refugees, village living decreases dependency and begins the process of successful integration[31].

Impact on the hosts[32]

The increased influx of Casamance refugees and the larger numbers permanently living in The Gambia (as opposed to flight/return) from 2006, required international donor assistance to both refugees and to the host families with whom they were living. UNHCR appealed to WFP who began food assistance in September 2006.

Refugees arrive initially in Gambian border villages where they are received by Gambian host villagers. Some of the arrivals continue immediately to a village nearby where they

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[30] Ibid

[31] UNHCR (January 2011) Local Integration Programme: Livelihoods and Public Health Evaluation Mission in The Gambia. Dakar: UNHCR. World Food Programme (2007) Assistance to Senegalese Refugees and Host Community in The Gambia. WFP EMOP 105.72 World Food Programme (2009) Joint Assessment Mission with The Department of State for the Interior and NGOs in The Gambia. WFP, The Gambia, December 2009. World Food Programme (2010) WFP 4th Round Survey Final Report. WFP, The Gambia. Woocher, L.S. (2000) „The "Casamance Question": An Examination of the Legitimacy of Self-Determination in Southern Senegal". International Journal on Minority and Group Rights. 7:314-380

[32] All information on Casamance refugees in this section comes from the following study: Hopkins, G (2011) Casamance refugees in The Gambia: self-settlement and the challenges of integration, UNHCR Research Paper No. 220, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/4e79ef7c9/casamance-refugees-gambia-self-settlement-challenges-integration-gail-hopkins.html

know there are relatives who will host them. Others remain in the border village, perhaps remaining indefinitely or moving on at a later date when they hear of relatives elsewhere. Later, some will move to urban areas in search of work to support family remaining in the villages or to attend secondary school.

Depending on the hospitality of host villagers or even family members is an additional responsibility few hosts are able to bear easily and increases poverty and vulnerability in terms of food security, health and housing for the host family themselves.

The common factor in host villages receiving new arrivals is that hosts welcome the refugees and share food, give clothes as many refugees arrive with only the clothes they wear, and provide space in the host home for refugees to live. This may be for a day or two until the refugee locates family elsewhere, or may be for years as was the case with a substantial number of respondents.

The World Bank has identified that 60 per cent of Gambians fall below the poverty line and that the situation of the rural population is particularly unpredictable due to their dependence on agriculture. Host households themselves therefore often struggle to be self-reliant and hosting refugee families and individuals increases poverty and vulnerability for the host family themselves. For example, some houses the author of the study visited were home to over 30 individuals, with eight adults to a small room at night. Although this situation was not the majority, neither was it unusual.

Once the refugee decides they will stay in that village, the Alkalo may give land for them to build a house and to farm. Whilst this appears to offer a solution, it was very difficult for many refugees to convert this into the reality of a finished house and a good crop from which they could regain self-sufficiency.

Ghana camps – when camps become 'towns'

The situation

A study looked at the extent to which the evolution of the Liberian refugee communities in Ghana and their integration into host societies along the lines suggested or required by UN/OAU conventions simply replicate, reflect, contradict or contravene customary procedures and processes of reception and accommodation of 'strangers' by host societies. 'This is part of customary welcoming and indigenous traditions within the context of the imposition of international boundaries that divided ethnic groups of the same culture and language, a majority of those people considered 'refugees' in 'foreign' countries today may have their roots and family members in those countries, examples being contemporary Liberian refugees in Guinea or Sierra Leone or Togolese refugees in Ghana and this is also why many refugees head for these places with familiar roots'[33].

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[33] Owusu, M (2000) Reluctant Refugees: Liberians in Ghana, The Journal of the International Institute, Volume 7, Issue 3, http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jii/4750978.0007.302/--reluctant-refugees-liberians-in-ghana?rgn=main;view=fulltext#N1

Situation for refugees[34]

'More than half the total number of Liberians who fled the war in Liberia to Ghana before peace was finally restored in July 1997, for a variety of reasons - including the prevention of overcrowding - chose to live outside the refugee camps, with Ghanaian or Liberian friends or relatives, but they visited the camps regularly to check on friends and family, to socialise, to collect mail or for the official interviews held only at the camps for those seeking resettlement abroad.

As conditions in the camp improved and more basic social services - water, electricity, health clinics, schools, etc. - became readily available to residents, the Buduburam camp especially began to attract more and more Liberian refugees from Cote d'Ivoire. As quality of life improved in the two camps, they were deservedly designated in UNHCR circles as sub-Saharan Africa's "4-star and 5-star" camps, respectively.

Visitors to Buduburam 'camp' find it indistinguishable from a typical Ghanaian town of its size. The camp community is lively, has an internal democracy and is run by an elected Liberia Welfare Council (eight men and two women). There is no evidence of the makeshift tents that provided shelter for residents in the first three years. They have been long replaced by permanent structures; made of bricks, cement blocks and wood, with corrugated iron/aluminum roofing. Signs of commerce are evident everywhere, and the main street bustles with life as one walks through the 'camp.'

The Liberian refugee camps in Ghana studied are the Buduburam camp (14,000 population) in the Gomoa district of the central region, located about 35 miles from the national capital Accra, on the Accra-Winneba trunk road, and the Sanzule-Krisan camp (2,000 population) in the eastern Nzema district of the western region, located about 20 miles from Elubo, Ghana/Cote d'Ivoire border town respectively'.

Why was this the case?[35]

Providing assistance to Liberian refugees in Ghana initially posed some problems. When the first refugees landed on Ghanaian soil, evacuated by Ghanaian vessels, Ghana had no refugee law. It was not until 1992 that refugee law, providing for the establishment of the Refugee Board and spelling out the rights and duties of refugees among others, was passed. So for two years the government could not accord them refugee status. This was compounded by the fact that there was no state agency competent enough to handle refugees. It was also unclear to various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) whether the Liberians could be designated as refugees at all given the peculiar circumstances of their arrival; the government was, as a result, slow in seeking international assistance for the refugees.

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[34] Owusu, M (2000) Reluctant Refugees: Liberians in Ghana, The Journal of the International Institute, Volume 7, Issue 3, http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jii/4750978.0007.302/--reluctant-refugees-liberians-in-ghana?rgn=main;view=fulltext#N1

[35] Owusu, M (2000) Reluctant Refugees: Liberians in Ghana, The Journal of the International Institute, Volume 7, Issue 3, http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jii/4750978.0007.302/--reluctant-refugees-liberians-in-ghana?rgn=main;view=fulltext#N1

Impact on hosts

In the early and subsequent years assistance for the refugees fell largely on the institutions of civil society: the generosity of ordinary Ghanaian families, traditional rulers obligated by custom to provide help to strangers in their midst and the Christian Council of Ghana among others[36]. But soon, in addition to the UNHCR, there was massive response from the international community and NGOs - the European Union, Ghana Red Cross Society, National Catholic Secretariat, World Vision International, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the Salvation Army, Caritas Internationalis, the Echo Club of Japan, the Assembly of God Relief and Development Services and the Lutheran Evangelical Church are among the organisations that helped transform the Liberian camps into habitable and thriving communities[37].

A UNHCR study sought the views of the host population at the Buduburam Refugee Camp in Ghana on issues regarding the potential local integration of refugees currently at the camp[38]. The main objective was to explore socio-cultural issues within the host community and to consider some of the specific policy challenges that affect local integration of refugees from the perspective of the host population. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect and analyse data. Three main areas were covered in the instruments used to generate data – socio-cultural, economic and political.

How to move to a more relaxed refugee regime?

Overall, therefore, the study points to a number of policy implications. First, 'it highlights the need to adequately engage the host population in any discussion surrounding the possibility of local integration in order to ensure broad consensus. If this does not happen, then local integration as a durable solution is unlikely to be sustainable. Furthermore, the host population, as the findings have demonstrated, are not a homogenous group and their different opinions need to be taken into consideration and understood'[39]. Chambers (1986) observed with regards to the impact on host communities of hosting refugees, for decisions concerning local integration it is important to disaggregate the host population so that the interests of various segments are sufficiently served[40]. The starting point is for the host country to clearly state its position regarding the issue of local integration: allowing refugees to integrate requires deliberate policies that are clear and unequivocal both in their intention

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[36] Owusu, M (2000) Reluctant Refugees: Liberians in Ghana, The Journal of the International Institute, Volume 7, Issue 3, http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jii/4750978.0007.302/--reluctant-refugees-liberians-in-ghana?rgn=main;view=fulltext#N1

[37] Owusu, M (2000) Reluctant Refugees: Liberians in Ghana, The Journal of the International Institute, Volume 7, Issue 3, http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jii/4750978.0007.302/--reluctant-refugees-liberians-in-ghana?rgn=main;view=fulltext#N1

[38] Agblorti, S (2011) Refugee integration in Ghana: the host community's perspective, UNHCR Research Paper No. 203, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/4d6f5f3f9/refugee-integration-ghana-host-communitys-perspective-samuel-k-m-agblorti.html

[39] Agblorti, S (2011) Refugee integration in Ghana: the host community's perspective, UNHCR Research Paper No. 203, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/4d6f5f3f9/refugee-integration-ghana-host-communitys-perspective-samuel-k-m-agblorti.html

[40] R. Chambers, "Hidden losers? The impacts of rural refugees and refugee programmes on poorer hosts", *International Migration Review,* 20(2), Special Issue: Refugees: Issues and directions, 1986,

245-263. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12267850

and implementation, and that are aimed at not only legitimising the process but more importantly giving it the necessary legal backing. In addition, the camp administration's relationship with the host population needs to be evaluated and taken into consideration. In practice, the camp administration is at the forefront of implementing any policies relating to refugees. It serves as the lens through which host populations assess the policies of both government and UNHCR.

'To the extent possible, the camp administration at the Buduburam camp should endeavour to create the necessary conditions that facilitate the performance of their mediating duties between refugees, the host population, government and UNHCR. In order to remove the mistrust that has soured relations between the host population and camp administration, there is a need for periodic meetings between the two groups, possibly through the initiation of a third party such as UNHCR. This dialogue will restore trust and at the same time clarify issues regarding the benefits of local integration to the host communities. Issues of access and use of resources in the camp have also attracted the attention of the host population and are likely to be one of the areas for conflict between the host population and the camp administration. Whether real or perceived, addressing these issues as they arise is important for mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence, key ingredients in any refugee context. Periodic meetings could further create the necessary platform to address some of the issues. Furthermore, refugees need to be given more information regarding the issue of local integration. There is an urgent need for greater clarity over how this process might take place, including access to land and livelihoods, the anticipated timescale of any local integration process and the assistance that will be provided. Only when refugees have the necessary information can they make informed choices. While admitting the challenges confronting government as far as refugee issues are concerned and the fact that decisions on local integration are difficult to arrive at, it is also important for government to demonstrate its commitment by first putting in place the constitutional body responsible for refugee issues through the appointment of a substantive chairman. In addition, the government needs to be clear on its stance towards local integration and not give off mixed messages in this regard. In particular, clear guidelines for implementing local integration, including readily available information for refugees, is vital.

Key to the implementation of local integration as a durable solution is the legal framework of the host country that would allow for such a process to take place. It is this framework that legitimises the integration process and is therefore regarded as the starting point for any debate on local integration. Where this framework is lacking refugees have inadequate access to social and environmental resources but, more importantly, such access, if any at all, does not have legitimacy. Although Ghana has opened its doors to refugees since independence, most notably during the refugee influxes of the early 1990s, successive governments have been reluctant to promote the idea of local integration for refugees. As in other refugee hosting countries in the global south, security implications and the resource burden of hosting refugees are the main reasons advanced for this stance. As a result, the government has given mixed messages regarding its commitment to local integration. On the one hand, a source from the Ghana Refugee Board maintains that the government is committed to the integration of refugees locally, although the source could not give any precise policy prescription by government to promote the process of local integration. Yet on the other, public statements made by politicians contradict this'[41].

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[41] Agblorti, S (2011) Refugee integration in Ghana: the host community's perspective, UNHCR Research Paper No. 203, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/4d6f5f3f9/refugee-integration-ghana-host-communitys-perspective-samuel-k-m-agblorti.html

Uganda

Uganda has hosted refugees from various neighbouring conflict-affect countries for several decades. Refugees in Uganda are either self-settled in urban and rural areas or live in organised settlements. Some research suggests that self-employed refugees are somewhat more successful than employed refugees, but there is little concrete evidence from Uganda that current refugee livelihood strategies are successfully fostering self-reliance and sustainable solutions[42].

A 2003 report by the Refugee Law Project found that Congolese refugees were choosing to stay with host families because some of them had relatives in the area, some could better manage their livelihoods in the border areas than if they went to camps and some wanted to be able to return home easily[43]. The presence of contacts among the host population, whether directly (through family affiliation, for instance) or more indirectly, or through wider ethnic affiliation and a common history of displacement, means refugees have the option of staying with host communities rather than in camps[44].

Impact on hosts

The perceived resource burden that accompanies refugees is one of the central factors that inhibits the adoption of policies that promote local integration, this study addresses the benefits to local communities of hosting refugees, through the specific lens of primary education. It also explores ways in which stakeholders can work together to promote shared and simultaneous development in refugee and national communities and recommendations are made for the adoption of policies that promote national development through the local integration of refugees[45].

The above paper mentions the following factors as being key for a more relaxed refugee regime:
- The impact of legal structures on local integration
- Local settlement structure for refugees in Uganda

A previous GSDRC report from 2013 on refugees' relations with host communities found the following[46]:

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[42] Rohwerder, B. (2016). Sustainable livelihoods in Ugandan refugee settings (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1401). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/HDQ1401.pdf

[43] Hovil, L. (2003). *Displacement in Bundibugyo District: A Situation Analysis*. Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 10. Retrieved from: http://www.refugeelawproject.org/working_papers/RLP.WP10.pdf

[44] Hovil, L. (2007). Self-settled Refugees in Uganda: An Alternative Approach to Displacement? *Journal of Refugee Studies, Vol.20, Issue 4,* 599-620. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fem035

[45] Hovil, L. and Dryden-Peterson (2003) Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda, UNHCR Working Paper No. 93, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/3f8189ec4/local-integration-durable-solution-refugees-host-populations-education.html?query=local%20integration

[46] Rohwerder, B. (2013). *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Internally displaced persons and refugees' relations with host communities* (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1032). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/hdq1032.pdf

The people living in the border regions of Uganda share a similar language and culture and cross-border markets to the refugees from the DRC and therefore reportedly feel an affiliation with and are often related to them (Hovil 2007, p.614). The Ugandan Red Cross found that many community members actively encouraged refugees to remain in the local community by inviting their relatives to come 'home' (Ugandan Red Cross expert comment). DR Congo: IDPs/refugees' relations with host communities

A 2003 report by the Refugee Law Project found that some locals were benefitting economically from the presence of refugees so were happy to have them in the area as these refugees had arrived with money and/or commodities (Hovil, 2003, p.11-12). In addition, local communities were sympathetic and inclined to help the refugees (ibid). This continues to be the case today with the perception in some areas that the community stands to benefit if it hosts several thousands of refugees within its area, formally or otherwise (Ugandan Red Cross expert comment).

The 2008 unpublished Oxfam study found that the hosting relationships centre around sharing shelter, food and meals together (unpublished Haver, 2008, p.9). The relationships between IDPs/refugees and host families and communities vary widely – and can be based on informal or more formal agreements. For example, some involve informal provision to family or friends of shelter and food (unpublished Haver, 2008, p.9). Other types of hosting relationships can involve rental agreements. And others – for example spontaneous camps – require small levels of negotiations or informal arrangements (McDowell, 2008, p.7). These relationships between hosts and IDPs/refugees can become more complicated over time.

The literature indicates that relationships between IDPs/refugees and host communities are affected by four types of factors: households' physical and emotional capacity to host IDPs/refugees; IDPs/refugee contributions to host households; IDPs/refugees' impact on the community; and external factors[47].

In Uganda, research shows that on the whole, the host communities showed considerable willingness to allow refugees to live in the area. However, the sustainability and success of this was largely contingent upon the refugees being seen as a net economic benefit to the area. This was particularly important given the extra stress on resources such as health clinics and schools (Hovil 2007, p. 111).

The 2003 report by the Refugee Law Project found that this increasing demand on resources eroded the willingness of local communities to host refugees, with life becoming progressively difficult for refugees and host communities alike (Hovil, 2003, p.15).

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[47] Rohwerder, B. (2013). Democratic Republic of the Congo: Internally displaced persons and refugees' relations with host communities (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1032). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/hdq1032.pdf

The self-reliance strategy[48]

The self-reliance strategy (SRS) was jointly designed by the Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR Uganda in May 1999. It was designed specifically for Sudanese refugees living in the West Nile districts of Arua, Adjumani and Moyo, because of the long-term nature of their situation. Its goal, is 'to integrate the services provided to the refugees into regular government structures and policies' and, in so doing, to move 'from relief to development.' As Dorothy Jobolingo, Education Advisor to UNHCR Uganda states, "[w]e cannot treat it as a relief situation where we give them something to eat every day. That is not a durable solution….The SRS is not theory. It is a practical solution." It emphasises the dual objectives of empowerment and integration, in order "to improve the standard of living of the people in Moyo, Arua and Adjumani districts, including the refugees." It seeks to give refugees the ability "to stand on their own and build their self-esteem" through gaining skills and knowledge to take back home when they return, and to leave behind sustainable structures.

'At the time the SRS was written, it was envisaged that, by 2003, refugees would be able to grow or buy their own food, access and pay for basic services, and maintain self-sustaining community structures'[49]. The SRS was designed to be put in place at a district level, with OPM and UNHCR playing coordinating roles, and "[ensuring] harmonisation of policy." In order to "empower refugees and nationals…to the extent that they will be able to support themselves," the SRS outlines the integration of service delivery in agricultural production, income generation, community services, education, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, infrastructure development and the environment,. In this way, it addresses one flaw of the local settlement policy, that of parallel service delivery. It does not, however, address many of the other shortcomings. Indeed, it embraces one of the fundamental problems with traditional development: it attempts to substitute the provision of services for sustainable development based on economic growth.

This policy strives for joint development among refugees and their hosts. In this context, the simple integration of services cannot be substituted for careful planning, coordination, and monitoring of the social and economic integration of these communities. In order to achieve benefits for both refugees and hosts, conceptualising local integration through a model of development is essential.

Angola[50]

For the last 30 years, Angola has hosted a population of over 13,000 DR Congolese refugees who fled the violence of a secessionist movement in 1977. The refugees were given land in non-urban areas to settle and cultivate. They have since attained a considerable degree of socio-economic integration, and are largely self-sufficient. The vast

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[48] All information from this section taken from: Hovil, L. and Dryden-Peterson (2003) Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda, UNHCR Working Paper No. 93, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/3f8189ec4/local-integration-durable-solution-refugees-host-populations-education.html?query=local%20integration

[49] ibid

[50] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

majority of Congolese refugees have never seen their homeland. They speak Portuguese like the locals, while only the older refugees know French which was spoken in the DRC. In 2005 the UNHCR reported that "positive signs came from the authorities for the provision of legally secure local integration possibilities in the form of a permanent residence permit under the Immigration Act or naturalization under the Nationality Act."[51] In 2006, Angolan authorities made an announcement that they would finalise a local integration policy for the Congolese with the possibility of residency rights as a prelude to full legal local integration for the 90% of refugees who have indicated they would choose to remain indefinitely in Angola.

Côte d'Ivoire[52]

Liberians started fleeing to Côte d'Ivoire in 1989 when civil war broke out. At the height of the war, over 400,000 Liberians had fled to Côte d'Ivoire and renewed violent conflict caused further population displacement in 1998 and 2001. 'In contrast to many other low-income host countries, Côte d'Ivoire has allowed refugees to settle among the local population rather than housing them separately in camps. The emphasis of assistance for refugees in Côte d'Ivoire until 1997 was on care and maintenance rather than local integration. The reduced size of the refugee population has prompted UNHCR to promote the local integration of those Liberians remaining. The smaller number of refugees has meant that available funds have also diminished. Furthermore, Côte d'Ivoire itself has recently been coping with economic decline and ethnic tensions, thus reducing opportunities to integrate refugees locally. In 2006, some progress towards local integration was achieved as the Tabou refugee transit centre was closed and its 2,400 Liberian inhabitants were locally integrated in nearby villages. The Ivorian government and local officials are also working with UNHCR to transition the Nicla refugee camp into an Ivorian village, to be called Zaaglo, the name of the surrounding community'[53].

Tanzania[54]

Tanzania has been one of the most generous refugee hosting countries in Africa over the last 45 years. The government has issued several invitations for the mass naturalisation of refugees. Tanzania is a positive example of local integration and naturalisation as a durable solution. In the 1960s, refugees were naturalised as the country pursued a rural village settlement scheme, ujaama. While refugee settlements were separate from local ones, they were well supplied with services. Successes were due largely to the attitude and policies of the host government, as Tanzanian leader Julius Nyerere transformed his belief in communal economics and African solidarity into open door refugee policies. From the early 1970s, Tanzania began to respond to the request for naturalisation made by increasingly large numbers of Rwandese refugees. In 1981, approximately 25,000 Rwandese refugees were granted Tanzanian citizenship. In 2003, the government offered around 3,000 Somali

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[51] ibid

[52] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

[53] ibid

[54] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

refugees living in the Chogo Settlement permanent settlement with the possibility of naturalisation. The Government also reduced naturalisation fees from US $800 to US $50. In 2007, the government changed its approach to the Burundian refugees that have been living in planned settlements in three regions of western Tanzania for over 35 years. Authorities have recently expressed willingness to consider the naturalisation of these 'old Caseload' Burundians. The majority (79 per cent, 171,600 people) have expressed their wish to become Tanzanian citizens. The voluntary repatriation of the remaining 21 per cent (45,500 people), to run concurrently with the naturalisation, began in March 2008.

Gabon[55]

Until mid-1999, Gabon was one of a handful of African states that had little experience with refugees. However civil conflict in the Republic of Congo produced thousands of refugees in the second half of 1999. Most of the Congolese arrivals self-settled within or near existing villages in rural areas and some in urban or peri-urban areas. Little assistance was provided by international relief and aid organisations; there are no formal refugee camps in Gabon. **Ethnic similarities and substantial cross-border interactions facilitated the Congolese in settling amongst the local population.** Gabonese communities and refugees today share infrastructure such as health services, schools and water boreholes. 'The locals have even adopted some Congolese traditional agricultural practices and techniques. Despite a ceasefire, a new constitution and electoral process, voluntary repatriation to the Republic of Congo has been slow and small in scale. Since many refugees are reluctant to repatriate, there exists a good opportunity for their local integration. Although the government has agreed to work out a local integration policy, no actual steps have yet been taken. Refugees are required to carry identity documents, and currently residence permits and citizenship can be only acquired through a "long and onerous process"[56]. The Government of Gabon began issuing identity cards in Libreville in May 2007, making it easier for refugees to gain employment. A micro-credit scheme and a women's cooperative project have also been set up to promote financial independence, a necessary condition for their full local integration. It seems that the possibility of local integration for the Congolese has long been on the agenda; supportive statements were made by Gabonese officials at the 2003 UNHCR ExCom meeting in Geneva. The successful local settlement of Chadian refugees in eastern Gabon provides a further boost to local integration prospects for the Congolese, since the former integrated with little assistance from the government. The opportunity now exists to capitalise on the possibility of the local integration of the remaining Congolese in Gabon'.

Guinea[57]

Guinea has hosted many refugee populations since the early 1990s. 'Refugees from Liberia, Côte D'Ivoire and Sierra Leone were allowed to settle in local villages and given access to local welfare services. Existing local infrastructure was rehabilitated and bolstered by international relief and development programs, benefiting both refugee and the host

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[55] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

[56] Kuhlman, T., (2002). Responding to protracted refugee situations: A case study of Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire, EPAU Report. (UNHCR: Geneva), p. 12. 15 Refugees International Bulletin, (2006). Cote d'Ivoire: Support Local Integration for Liberian Refugees, http://www.refugeesinternational.org/content/article/detail/9645

[57] Fielden, A (2008) Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations, UNHCR research paper No. 158, http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/working/486cc99f2/local-integration-under-reported-solution-protracted-refugee-situations.html?query=local%20integration

populations. Over 43,000 Liberian refugees have returned to Liberia through facilitated voluntary repatriation; with 5000-6000 remaining in Guinée Forestière at the end of assisted repatriation in June 2007. 93,000 Sierra Leoneans opted for repatriation with the assistance of UNHCR in 2001-4. For the group of about 1,300 unable or unwilling to return, local integration is seen as a possible durable solution. A local assistance programme has targeted refugees remaining at the old refugee site, in addition to those settled in urban areas. The prospects for local integration of Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in Guinea are good*. Cultural similarities and common local languages and ethnicities encourage cooperation between refugees and the host community.* The legal process also looks promising; the Guinean Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization has said that refugees would be given a chance to obtain permanent residence and nationality, since these "refugees are all citizens of countries of the ECOWAS." Projects to facilitate local integration include building and rehabilitation of facilities such as latrines, bathrooms and water points. Environmental protection is also ensured through tree planting and environmental training. The primary education programme has been also shifted towards the Guinean curriculum to encourage social integration'[58].

About 200 Sierra Leonean refugees remain on the old site of the Boreah camp and cultivate the land. These refugees have received agricultural assistance such as seeds, tools and technical expertise. Another 400 refugees opted for integration into urban settings and were given skills training, education and documentation to facilitate sustainable urban integration. The official close of the voluntary repatriation exercise came in June 2004, with 3,563 refugees remaining in Liberia, for whom local integration is being sought.
A survey was taken in October 2006, in which 2,155 refugees participated. Of the respondents, about 69% (1,487) expressed the desire to become naturalised Liberian citizens and 31% (668) opted for resident alien status. The Government of Liberia has expressed its political will to support local integration, for example by the "Pact on good neighbourhood, stability and solidarity" between the Mano River Union (Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia). The pact recognised local integration as a durable solution for refugees in the region. Furthermore, the Liberian Government has agreed to offer land to the refugees to settle and farm.24 The Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) in partnership with UNHCR held a one day stakeholders' conference on local integration in February 2008. The conference aimed to present a broader perspective about the government's responsibility in the local integration initiative and also to reach a consensus on the way forward.

Afghans in Pakistan and Iran

Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan constitute the largest and most protracted refugee population under UNHCR's mandate[59]. Pakistan hosts 1,615,876 refugees, and Iran 840,158 at 1 January 2014. The majority have been resident in both countries since fleeing the Soviet War in Afghanistan during the 1980s[60].

In Pakistan, 36% of the Afghan refugee population lives in refugee camps – known locally as 'refugee villages'- and 63% in urban settings. In addition to the 1.7 million refugees

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[58] ibid

[59] The data team, Pakistan is driving out 1.5m Afghan refugees The Economist, September 16th 2016, http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2016/09/daily-chart-11

[60] *ICMC Europe,* Welcome to Europe! A comprehensive guide to resettlement*, 2013,* http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.tttp.eu/files/ICMC%20Europe-Welcome%20to%20Europe_0.pdf

registered with the government, it is estimated that a further one million undocumented Afghans live in the country. 85.1% of the Afghans in Pakistan are Pashtun, and the remainder are Tajiks, Uzbeks among others. One of the most vulnerable Afghan refugee groups is the ethnic Hazara, who face targeted killings and persecution by the Taliban and anti-Shia factions in Afghanistan. For the Hazara, and for other Afghan refugee groups, voluntary repatriation is therefore not a viable durable solution.

In Iran, prospects for local integration are limited and increasingly difficult due to the deteriorating economic situation. Refugees' movements within Iran are limited to so-called 'No-Go Areas,' and the living standards of Afghan refugees have deteriorated significantly in recent years.

Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Lebanon[61]

Palestine refugees represent an estimated ten per cent of the population of Lebanon. They do not enjoy several important rights; for example, they cannot work in as many as 20 professions. Because they are not formally citizens of another state, Palestine refugees are unable to claim the same rights as other foreigners living and working in Lebanon. Among the five UNRWA fields, Lebanon has the highest percentage of Palestine refugees living in abject poverty.

Around 53 per cent of the Palestine refugees in Lebanon live in the 12 recognised Palestine refugee camps, all of which suffer from serious problems, including poverty, overcrowding, unemployment, poor housing conditions and lack of infrastructure. Three other camps were destroyed during the course of the Lebanese Civil War, while a fourth was evacuated many years ago[62].

When the Syrian refugees came the Government responded differently: At the end of April 2013, according to UNHCR data, there were 445,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon, including both those who are registered and those waiting to be registered. There are also many thousands of refugees who have not tried to register. Government of Lebanon and UN projections estimate that there will be one million Syrian refugees in Lebanon by the end of 2013. Lebanon's population is approximately 4.2 million. Based on the official numbers alone, Syrian refugees make up 10% of the population already and by the end of the year this will rise to 20%.

The Government of Lebanon has, in many respects, pursued an admirable policy. Borders have remained open. Refugees have been allowed to settle where they like and they are allowed to work. Camps have been prohibited and refugees have settled within communities. The approach has been applauded by the international community.

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[61] Loveless, J (2013) Crisis in Lebanon: camps for Syrian refugees?, Forced Migration Review, http://www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/loveless.html

[62] United Nations Relief and Works Agency, http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon

Impact on refugees and hosts

However, it comes at a cost. Refugees are concentrated in some of the poorest parts of the country. Sudden expansion of the labour pool has pushed down wages for Lebanese and Syrians alike. Education and health services that were inadequate before are now further stretched. All available housing is full or over-full and refugees are setting up unsanitary shanty settlements. There is a perception that international assistance is going only to refugees. Tension between refugees and Lebanese communities is rising[63].

Why no camps?[64]

It is important to state that none of the policymakers in Lebanon support camps as a first or even a second resort. The government has forbidden camps, a policy strongly supported by UNHCR. All agree that, given the choice, it is better for refugees to be integrated within communities.

One of the most convincing arguments against camps is that they take away refugees' opportunity to manage their own lives. However, it is inconceivable that enough jobs could be generated to provide sustainable livelihoods for a meaningful proportion of the refugee population and in these circumstances refugees have little opportunity to control their lives. Inevitably refugees will be dependent on some form of welfare support for the duration of their stay in Lebanon. There is little social connection between the shanty settlements and local communities.

Camps seem inevitable. This has been recognised by some government ministers, who have made public personal pronouncements. Camps can accommodate large numbers and can be constructed relatively quickly once land has been identified. This last point is important as Lebanon is a small country and there is not much vacant land. Land-owners must agree to lease their land and communities have opinions about the establishment of camps in their vicinity.

There is also the issue of cost. We often hear that it is more expensive to accommodate refugees in camps than in the community but the current approach is expensive. The direct costs of rent, food, heating, health care and all the other essential living expenses must be covered. It is extremely expensive to provide health care to such a dispersed population. Then there are the costs to refugees' dignity and safety that come from the coping strategies that they cannot avoid. Finally (and very significantly) there are the costs to the host communities – lost income due to lower wages, more competition for jobs and the deterioration of services due to over-demand.

Actually the aid community, and the refugees, have no choice in the matter. De facto camps are springing up all over the country (the shanty settlements mentioned above). These are expanding in size and number. We will see more aid going to these settlements, as informal settlements have been prioritised in government and UN planning. But it will be impossible to intervene in so many small settlements, spread over such a large area. Aid agencies will focus on the largest settlements and those with the most extreme needs, drawing people to these settlements. This is a reality that we need to address systematically; it will not go away.

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[63] Loveless, J (2013) Crisis in Lebanon: camps for Syrian refugees?, Forced Migration Review, http://www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/loveless.html

[64] Loveless, J (2013) Crisis in Lebanon: camps for Syrian refugees?, Forced Migration Review, http://www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/loveless.html

A shift in government policy to allow a certain number of properly planned camps is essential. This will enable aid organisations and municipalities to plan and construct camps properly, avoiding the chaotic expansion that we are currently seeing. It is also crucial that aid is shared across refugee and host populations. This is only fair; needs within Lebanese communities are similar to those faced by refugees. If carefully targeted, it will also reduce local inter-communal tension.

The camps issue has polarised debate within Lebanon and outside. But it is not an either/or situation. In order to address such enormous needs we need to combine approaches. This entails continuing with the existing approach but enhancing it with camps and other alternatives. With existing options saturated, more refugees arriving, and tensions within communities growing, we must be creative.

Syrian refugees fleeing to Turkey live both in camps and in urban areas, however the situation for refugees outside of the camps is not ideal[65]. The camps themselves are at capacity, and there are thousands of people being held up on the Syrian side of the border until more accommodation can be built. Turkey appears willing to accept them as space becomes available and to address their humanitarian needs – like shelter, food, and medical attention – all under the auspices of providing temporary protection.

However, there are now also tens of thousands of Syrians living in cities and towns with few options for support, since there is no social services network available to them. They are not able to register with the Turkish government or the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) because such a process does not exist outside the camps. They must pay independently for rent, food, and health care. And as their savings dwindle, their main option for obtaining help is to move into one of the camps.

The Turkish government has offered no official guidance as to how the temporary protection policy applies to Syrian refugees outside the camps, and the rights and responsibilities of these non-camp Syrians remain unclear. It is generally understood that they cannot be returned to Syria, but their humanitarian needs like shelter and food are not addressed by any agency. Furthermore, there is no consistent guidance on whether or not they can officially maintain legal residence in Turkey outside the camps. As a result, they live in constant fear of having to move to a camp, where they would be separated from whatever family, friends, and support they may have in the cities. The Turkish government issued a directive in April 2012 on how the temporary protection policy applies to different categories of Syrian refugees, but it has not been made public and therefore offers no practical guidance for government officials, service providers, and refugees themselves. The Turkish government should immediately make public the April 2012 directive and should provide official guidance as to how the policy applies to Syrians outside of the camps.

There are also case studies of issues with restricting aid to people to camps as a previous GSDRC study from 2014 details.[66]

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[65] Refugees International (2012) Syrian refugees: Reliance on camps creates few good options, RelifeWeb, http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/syrian-refugees-reliance-camps-creates-few-good-options)

[66] Rohwerder, B. (2014). Restrictions on humanitarian aid to refugees (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1078). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/hdq1078.pdf

- **Bangladesh:** *The government has restricted aid to registered refugees living in official camps. As a result hundreds of thousands of unregistered refugees face poor conditions of nutrition, health, shelter, protection and livelihoods. Women tend to be worse off. A limited amount of 'under the radar' service delivery by NGOs occurs but the humanitarian community's attempts to implement a more substantial response are blocked by the government.*
- **Uganda:** *Aid is restricted to refugees in official settlements. Many refugees prefer self-settlement because of the freedom it offers. Problems with local hosts can arise because of the additional demands refugees often place on local services. The humanitarian response has been limited by lack of capacity and obedience to government policy.*
- **Kenya:** *Refugees in Nairobi have achieved a level of self-sufficiency despite not being entitled to aid. The poorest struggle to access basic services. Humanitarian organisations are engaged in advocacy aimed at ensuring refugee rights.*
- **Tanzania:** *Unequal service provision compared to some refugees in camps has caused tensions with the local community.*

*The limited literature and expert contributors identify the following **lessons**:*

- *Refugees will end up outside camps even when not provided with aid, either by choice or circumstance.*
- *Lack of assistance often leads to refugees in host communities facing problems accessing services, livelihoods and protection.*
- *A camp only aid policy can cause tensions with the local community due to perceptions of unfairness or worries over the strain placed on local services by unregistered refugees.*
- *Restricting aid can be inefficient as it does not provide substantial benefits to refugees or host communities.*
- *Aid agencies have done little to counter these restrictions.*

4. Impact on hosts and refugees

Impact on refugees

Few studies have looked at the questions and find that the reasons refugees choose to stay with host communities are a combination of factors relating to their physical, emotional and spiritual security, a previous GSDRC report from 2014 included the following[67]:

- *They have a negative perception of the conditions in camps and in Uganda the distance and rigidity of the camp structure is a problem for many.*
- *They prefer to stay with family and friends, no matter how distant, which leads to a preference for staying with their own ethnic group. This provides them with emotional security and comfort.*
- *They prefer to stay close to their own fields so they can continue to farm and host families are more practical for this.*

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[67] Rohwerder, B. (2013). Democratic Republic of the Congo: Internally displaced persons and refugees' relations with host communities (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1032). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/democratic-republic-of-the-congo-internally-displaced-persons-and-refugees-relations-with-host-communities/

- *They feel safer in host families.*
- *They are provided with humanitarian assistance they often don't receive elsewhere.*

Impact on hosts

A previous GSDRC report from 2014 found[68]:

> *The reasons host families/communities choose to accept IDPs/refugees is the result of a combination of factors relating to compassion, solidarity and benefits, including:*
>
> - *They welcome in family and friends and have a broad sense of family.*
> - *They understand what the IDPs/refugees have been through.*
> - *They see a need and meet it.*
> - *They are encouraged to help by their church.*
> - *They receive benefits in the form of the labour of the displaced people and their contributions to the local economy.*
>
> *The relationship between hosts and IDPs/refugees results from deep social ties and is generally positive. However it can become strained if resources are limited. The main problems are caused by a lack of food and space.*
>
> *The long term impacts of IDPs/refugees on host communities include: increasing vulnerability, food insecurity, an exhaustion of resources and a weakening of the social support net, as well as negative coping strategies and an increase in insecurity. As a result of not wanting to be a burden on host families, IDPs/refugees have sometimes turned towards camps as a potential long term solution to displacement due the possibility of receiving humanitarian assistance there.*

The GSDRC study looks at choosing hosting as a displacement response, reasons IDPs/refugees stay with host families/communities, reasons host families/communities accept IDPs/refugees, relationships between IDPs/refugees and host communities and Impact of IDPs and refugees over a sustained period[69].

Chambers (1986) focuses on the differential impact on poorer hosts: *'Refugee relief organisations and refugee studies have refugees as their 1st concern and focus. Adverse impacts of refugees on hosts are relatively neglected. When impacts are considered, they are seen in terms of host country governments, economies, and services rather than people or different groups among host populations. In rural refugee-affected areas, the better-off and more visible hosts usually gain from the presence of refugees and from refugee programs. In contrast, the poorer among the hosts can be hidden losers. This is more so now than in the past, especially where land is scarce and labor relatively abundant. The poorer hosts can lose from competition for food, work, wages, services, and common property resources. Vulnerable hosts also lack refugees' option of sending their weaker*

[68] Rohwerder, B. (2013). Democratic Republic of the Congo: Internally displaced persons and refugees' relations with host communities (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1032). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/democratic-republic-of-the-congo-internally-displaced-persons-and-refugees-relations-with-host-communities/

[69] Rohwerder, B. (2013). Democratic Republic of the Congo: Internally displaced persons and refugees' relations with host communities (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1032). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/democratic-republic-of-the-congo-internally-displaced-persons-and-refugees-relations-with-host-communities/

dependents to camps and settlements. Development programs in refugee-affected areas and refugee studies will do a disservice if they neglect adverse effects of refugees on vulnerable hosts. These effects further strengthen the case for development to benefit the whole population in refugee-affected areas'[70].

A UNHCR study by Whitaker (2012) also focuses on this issue[71]: *'There has been little academic research about the impact of refugees on host populations, although the issue has caused growing concern on the part of the international community and host governments (Callamard 1994). Since the 1980s, refugee aid and development (RAD) theories called for strategies linking refugee relief programs with local development policies (Betts 1981, 1984; Gorman 1993). The second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA II) in 1984 asserted that refugee assistance should be development-oriented and should take into account host population needs. Nevertheless, a number of factors impeded effective integration of refugee aid and development policies, including lack of support in donor and host countries, weak coordination between refugee and development bureaucracies, and difficulties integrating increasing numbers of refugees into development plans (Gorman 1994).*

While RAD theories managed to draw attention to the situation of host populations, they were based on the fundamental assumption that refugees represent a problem or a burden, rather than an opportunity (Harrell-Bond 1986). Recently, it has been recognised that refugee migrations bring both costs and benefits to host countries (Kuhlman 1994; Sorenson 1994; Baker 1995). Refugees generally impose a burden on local infrastructure, environment, and resources. Refugees can also benefit hosts, though, by providing cheap labour to local producers, expanding consumer markets for local goods, and justifying increased foreign aid. Thus, the reception of refugees can sometimes be seen as part of a government's broader development plan (Daley 1993).

In the end, though, these conceptualisations about the host country impact of refugee populations are too broad. Rather than asking whether or not the host country as a whole benefits, one should disaggregate the question: who benefits and who loses from refugee influxes and why? Refugees are assumed to have a different impact on diverse classes, genders, sectors, and regions within the host country (Chambers 1986; Kuhlman 1990; Sorenson 1994), but little empirical research has been done on this issue. In addition, the situation is expected to be dynamic over time; what starts out as a liability may turn into a resource, and vice versa. This research seeks to contribute to this line of inquiry by examining not only the costs and benefits associated with the refugee presence, but also their variations among host populations over the past several years.'

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[70] R. Chambers, "Hidden losers? The impacts of rural refugees and refugee programmes on poorer hosts", *International Migration Review,* 20(2), Special Issue: Refugees: Issues and directions, 1986, 245-263. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12267850

[71] Whitaker, B (2012) Changing opportunities: refugees and host communities in western Tanzania, UNHCR Working Paper No. 11, http://www.unhcr.org/3ae6a0c70.pdf

Tanzania[72]

The sudden presence of refugees and relief resources in western Tanzania significantly altered the lives of people who lived there. The opportunities available to host communities changed in both positive and negative ways. Although hosts experienced the changes differently, those variations are discussed in subsequent sections of the paper. This section focuses on the broad patterns which emerged during the course of the research. Changing opportunities were experienced in five areas in the local context: agriculture, environment, market economy, infrastructure and development resources, and way of life.

5. Additional resources

Cheng, C. and Chudoba, J., (2003). 'Moving beyond long-term refugee situations: the case of Guatemala', New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 86, (UNHCR: Geneva).
http://www.unhcr.org/research/working/407d3b762/local-integration-local-settlement-refugees-conceptual-historical-analysis.html
http://www.knomad.org/docs/forced_migration/KNOMAD%20Study%20-%20Part%201%20-%20Refugees%20Rights%20to%20Work%20-%20An%20Assessment.pdf
http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/HDQ1401.pdf

Kaiser, Tania 2001. "A beneficiary-based evaluation of the UNHCR programme in Guinea." Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit, Geneva: UNHCR

UNHCR video on alternatives to camps in Niger: http://www.unhcr.org/uk/alternatives-to-camps.html

A series of reports on urban refugees:
http://www.refworld.org/topic/50ffbce526e/50ffbce5289.html

UNHCR policy on alternatives to camps: http://www.refworld.org/docid/5423ded84.html

Jacobsen, Karen. July 2001. "The forgotten solution: local integration for refugees in developing countries." New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No.45;

Crisp, Jeff. January 2003. "No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa." New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No.75, Geneva

UNHCR; Harrell-Bond, Barbara. November 2002. "Toward the Economic and Social 'Integration' of Refugee Populations in Host Countries in Africa." Paper presented at a conference organised by the Stanley Foundation, "Refugee Protection in Africa: How to Ensure Security and Development for Refugees and Hosts," Entebbe, Uganda

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[72] Whitaker, B (2012) Changing opportunities: refugees and host communities in western Tanzania, UNHCR Working Paper No. 11, http://www.unhcr.org/3ae6a0c70.pdf

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About this report

This report is based on five days of desk-based research. The K4D research helpdesk provides rapid syntheses of a selection of recent relevant literature and international expert thinking in response to specific questions relating to international development. For any enquiries, contact helpdesk@k4d.info.

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