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Development through Local Integration: The **quest** for Durable solutions for Refugees in Kenya

A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
AND IMPACT OF THE KENYAN REFUGEE ACT 2021

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Abstract

Refugees often spend over 20 years in what are supposed to be temporary camps, leading to increased violence and abuse. The humanitarian and development sector is seeking long-term solutions to protect their human rights and prevent discrimination. This study aimed to identify which possible solutions the Kenyan government may implement to address the demands of refugees in terms of local integration, focusing on urban refugees in Nairobi from the Kakuma refugee camp. The study employed a theoretical framework which consisted of the concepts of Belonging, Waiting and Local integration. To understand local integration of refugees in Kenya, 13 semi-structured interviews and 9 focus group discussions were conducted.

The findings revealed that access to education, health care, employment, legal documentation, and being exposed to xenophobia by the host community were the most significant barriers to successful local integration for refugees in Kenya. The government has made efforts to help refugees to improve their socioeconomic situations. However, significant ID card problems makes it difficult for them to access basic services. These issues could be resolved with the help of clear guidelines and accountability. Based on our findings, 14 recommendations were developed aimed at key stakeholders to promote local integration and coexisting communities.

Keywords; Durable solutions; Local integration; Kakuma; Refugee camp; Belonging; Waiting

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CSO - Civil-Society organization

EAC - East africa community

IDP - Internally Displaced Person

IGO - Intergovernmental Organization

NGO - Non-Governmental Organization

RCK - Refugee Consortium Kenya

RLO - Refugee-Led Organization

SDG - Sustainable Development Goals

UN - United Nations

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

YVC - Youth Voices Community

1.0 Introduction

Although refugee camps were intended to be a temporary short-term solution, the UNHCR reports that most refugees spend at least 20 years of their lives in a camp (UNHCR, 2016). Refugee camps are initially established to assist refugees with short-term and urgent solutions for accommodation and immediate protection and provide temporary protection to meet the most basic needs and strengthen refugees' security and self-reliance (Jahre et al., 2018; Ramadan, 2013). However, the personal security of refugees has been threatened due to unsustainable conditions in the camps (Lalla et al., 2020). Studies have found that more extended living in refugee camps has created unsafe environments where violence and abuse occur (Lalla et al., 2020; Crisp, 2000). To address this challenge, it is critical to explore durable solutions allowing refugees to exercise their human rights with no fear of discrimination due to their displacement (Oloka-Onyango, 2010). The primary focus of our case study is on urban refugees from the Kakuma refugee camp, which is home to over 200 000 refugees, most of whom have been living there for generations. According to UNHCR (2022), the camp is estimated to be the largest in the country and was established in 1992.

In recent decades, the quest for finding durable solutions for refugees in East Africa has become a vital discussion for humanitarian and development actors (Oloka-Onyango, 2010). Displacement has become a cross-border concern with a clear political component that necessitates a multi-sector reaction beyond today's humanitarian agenda (Oloka-Onyango, 2010; Campbell, 2006). A durable solution is achieved when the displaced can exercise their human rights without being subjected to any prejudice because of their displacement and no longer need support or protection requirements related to their displacement (UNHCR, 2010; Oloka-Onyango, 2010). It is important to note for this research, there are three paths to durable solutions, which include voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement (Black & Koser, 1999; Bidandi, 2018). This research, on the other hand, focuses on local integration, which scholars argue to be the only long-term solution that effectively addresses the systemic challenges and has the potential to generate positive socio-economic opportunities both for refugees and host community (Khasalamwa-Mwandha, 2021; Teye & Yebleh, 2015).

The majority of refugees worldwide live in urban areas, making integration into host communities and contributions to the asylum nation more critical. The UNHCR suggests that the governments should strive for "Development through Local Integration" for refugees at both the national and country levels, with the idea that refugees can be agents of development (UNHCR, n.d). Therefore, various interventions and opportunities must be developed to ensure that refugees and local host populations integrate economically, politically, and socially, and that any assistance aimed at either is enjoyed by both (Wamara et al., 2022). National legislation must therefore ensure that refugees have effective access to basic rights, as outlined in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. This includes the ability to work, start small businesses and engage in self-employment, and to obtain alternative legal status to apply for permanent residency (Polzer, 2008). Since several countries, including Kenya, have signed this convention, it is each country's responsibility to facilitate refugee integration and naturalization. In Kenya, the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government is in charge of developing criteria that allow for the local integration of refugees under Kenyan laws (IOM, 2016). When a refugee becomes a citizen through naturalization or has a legal status that allows effective access to socioeconomic and civil fundamental rights, he or she is considered fully integrated into the host country. It is however important to note that only 16% of Kenya's refugees live in urban areas, and few have greater opportunities for self-sufficiency (UNHCR, n.d).

In 2021, a new law passed by the former Kenyan President, Uhuru Kenyatta, promoting livelihood opportunities to the nation's half-million refugees instead of relying on humanitarian assistance for the past three decades. Kenya's new Refugee Act 2021 features significant policy reforms regarding refugee economic participation, integration, assessment of their refugee status, and their capacity to contribute to Kenya's national and local economies. The new legislation went into effect in February 2022, but few actions have taken place since the Kenyan government declared that establishing regulations that specify the scope of refugee rights and the administrative framework for putting the new law into practice would be a lengthy process (Refugees International, 2022).

This is the backdrop against which this study will investigate and which strategies are required from the Kenyan government to meet the needs of refugees in terms of local integration, with a primary focus on urban refugees in Nairobi from the Kakuma refugee camp. The term "durable solution" is a key concept in this research, and it will be discussed

further in the following chapter. Additionally, the term refugee will be used in which we refer to the UNHCR definition, and states that a refugee is someone who is forced to flee and cross a country's border due to persecution, war, or violence (UNHCR, n.d).

Further, based on qualitative methodology, the study uses a case study approach to examine the viewpoints of several stakeholders, including refugees, host communities, and humanitarian/development organizations in Kenya. By investigating the experiences and perspectives of respondents, this study aims to identify potential barriers to local integration and identify solutions to overcome them. Notably, the research will investigate how policymakers, humanitarian and development programs may enable refugees and their host communities to create self-sufficiency and sustainable livelihoods, in addition to the possibilities for sustainable peacebuilding efforts to promote social cohesion. The results of our research will lead to recommendations that could serve as a guide for stakeholders involved in refugee integration. These recommendations may have the potential to influence practice and policy while also shaping the global effort to find durable solutions for displaced people.

1.1 Research aim

The aim of this research is to understand which strategies may be required from the Kenyan government to meet the needs of refugees in terms of local integration with a primary focus on urban refugees in Nairobi from the Kakuma refugee camp. Furthermore, the findings of the study will lead to recommendations that will serve as a guide for stakeholders working towards creating a peaceful and secure world for all. Recommendations will be based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a main focus on 10.7 concerned with how to “Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well- managed migration policies” (UN, n.d).

1.2 Research Questions

In order to address the study's aim, the following research questions will be answered:

- How do refugees and stakeholders express their perspectives on Refugee the Act 2021 in Kenya and its implementation?

- Which strategies may be required from the Kenyan government to meet the needs of refugees and achieve local integration as a durable solution in Kenya?

1.3 Background

1.3.1 Migration legislation and politics before the year 2020

Kenya has ratified international conventions such as the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1969 Refugee Convention, however, it was not until 2007 that the Kenyan government incorporated these agreements as part of domestic legislation by passing the Refugee Act 2006 (Omata, 2020). Refugees were required to reside in “designated areas” under the Refugees Act 2006, however, no locations had been formally allocated until the state named Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps in 2014 (ibid). The government’s decision to take on further accountability for the registry and safety for refugees became a defining milestone followed by the Refugee act 2006. The new act acknowledged rights for refugees and asylum seekers such as, the right to refugee IDs, engagement in business and protection against unjustified detainment, arrest, and deportation (Owiso, 2022).

Due to limitations placed on refugees’ freedom of employment and movement, Kenya has repeatedly been internationally referred to as a challenging nation for refugees (Omata, 2020). However, refugee policy promoted local integration up until the 1990s in Kenya. The state offered little assistance, and churches and humanitarian organizations were primarily in charge of assisting refugees, although the state granted work permits and freedom of movement to refugees and asylum-seekers (ibid). However, due to a significant rise in the amount of refugees escaping war and insecurity from neighboring nations starting in 1990, such as, Sudan, Somalia, and DRC, Kenya’s refugee policy began to be more constrained (Talukder et al., 2021). Thereafter, the government mandated that refugees settle into either Kakuma or Dadaab refugee camps, both located in Kenya’s outskirts. Freedom of movement became restricted, and refugees who wanted to leave the camps must require a “movement pass”, meaning a signed permit granted by camp officials (ibid).

Further, since the 1990s, Kenya has consistently viewed refugees and asylum seekers as a security concern to the country, and the refugee policy has been intertwined with the matter of securitization (Omata, 2020). Refugees and asylum seekers have been linked to terrorism in recent years, with Somali refugees being particularly targeted by the host community as a

result of a series of terrorist attacks in Kenya by Al-Shabaab in 2013 and 2015 (Owiso, 2022). Following an attack on a university in 2015, the state demanded that UNHCR should close Dadaab Refugee Camp (which houses mainly Somali refugees) and warned to take matters into their own hands if UNHCR did not act within three months. In 2012, the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government made efforts to strengthen the encampment policy. They expressed that all refugees and asylum-seekers located in Nairobi must either return to the refugee camps or be forcefully transferred (ibid). In 2016, the state declared that the refugee camps would close within half a year due to security threats. Subsequently, the government decided not to close Kakuma Camp but still aimed to close the Dadaab Camp. However, in 2017, the Kenyan High Court halted the decision, citing it as illegally discriminatory and thus unconscionable (Omata, 2020).

1.3.2 The implementation of The Refugee Act, 2021

The Refugee Act 2021 went into effect in February 2022, and it is an update to the Refugee Act 2006. Notably, the new Act includes detailed provisions on determination, documentation, and freedom of movement.

Given the comprehensive nature of the Refugee Act 2021, this research concentrates on specific sections deemed relevant. These include rights related to refugee status, determination, documentation, and freedom of movement. According to the Act 2021, refugees has the right to the following:

- Being involved in both economic and social development; this means that refugees can work and are required to pay taxes. Work permit requirements include obtaining proper documentation and permits from the county and Kenyan governments.
- Start businesses or trade in specific industries.
- The ability to obtain identification and civil registration documents.
- East African Community (EAC) refugees can renounce their refugee status and obtain the same residence permit and opportunities as those granted under the EAC Common Market Protocol.
- Not be forcibly returned to their home country unless there are compelling reasons, such as threats to Kenya's national security.

- Refugees must be included in national and county development efforts, as well as in state bodies utilized by both the host community and the refugees (Kenya Law, 2022).

1.3.2 Contextualizing Kakuma Camp

Kenya has long served as a refugee host country, with most refugees from Somalia, South Sudan, and DRC fleeing from insecurity, conflict or persecution (UNHCR, 2022). Kenya hosts over 568,000 refugees around the country. Today refugees are hosted in Kakuma refugee camp and Dadaab camp. Dadaab is located near the Somali border, was founded in 1991 and currently houses over 190,000 refugees, mostly Somalis (ibid).

The Kakuma camp, located in Kenya's northwest region, is the country's largest. As a result of Sudan's civil war, the camp was established. Sudan's civil war resulted in many young people fleeing and seeking asylum in the 1990s. These children, dubbed "lost boys of Sudan," first arrived in Ethiopia, where UNHCR established temporary shelters (Refugees International, 2022). However, these shelters were destroyed only a year later due to civil war in Ethiopia, forcing many Sudanese to flee to Kakuma (IRC, 2014). Kakuma Camp was established in 1992 in Turkana County, which also houses most of the Turkana ethnic group. These camps were initially intended to house 23,000 Sudanese refugees on a temporary basis. Today, Kakuma is home to over 200,000 refugees, mostly South Sudanese, Ethiopians, and Congolese (UNHCR, 2021). Today Kenya has a strict encampment policy that prohibits refugees and asylum seekers from leaving the refugee camps without valid permission from the government (Agwanda, 2022).

1.4 Thesis Disposition

In the following chapter 2.0, we present the study's theoretical framework, which consists of the concepts of Belonging, Waiting and Local Integration. Chapter 3.0 presents the Research Design and participants in the study. Chapter 4.0 reviews previous literature on local integration in the Sub-Saharan African region. Chapter 5.0 presents the study's findings from 13 semi-structured interviews and nine focus group discussions with refugees, law students, a lecturer, a researcher, a UN agency and various NGO/CSO/RLOs in Kenya. Chapter 6.0 dives into a discussion of the empirical findings in relation to the Refugee Act 2021, its theoretical

framework and previous research. Lastly, chapter 7.0 concludes the study and provides recommendations for key stakeholders.

2.0 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, we introduce the three vital challenges and processes refugees face, namely, Belonging, Waiting and Local Integration. This study aims to understand what refugees in Kenya go through once they arrive in the host country and what sacrifices are made to create a feeling of belonging in their new community. We want to understand what it means for a refugee to be constantly waiting for news, to be in limbo. In addition, we want to understand what the Kenyan government should do to facilitate and allow for local integration as a durable solution. Our theoretical framework chapter is organized as follows to capture the full range of these analytical perspectives, Section 2.1 will discuss Nira Yuval Davis' introduction to the notion of Belonging, 2.2 will go over the Waiting discourse by drawing on the work of Sharam Khosravi, 2.3 will discuss the concept of the three durable solutions and lastly, 2.4 will discuss the discourse of successful local integration.

2.1 Belonging

Nira Yuval-Davis (2011) discusses migrants and displaced people in relation to concerns about belonging and hence our analytical framework. She suggests belonging includes “emotional” and “the politics of belonging.” These elements of belonging are distinct but interconnected ideas. Emotional belonging implies a type of attachment or feeling of being “at home.” In contrast, political belonging delves deeper into what it means to belong to a community, such as citizenship or status (ibid). Yuval-Davis argues that displaced people come to confront the normalized model of people, territory, and political community, thereby constructing them as outsiders of the ordinary realm and mainstream society. Migrants develop various attachments to their host country over time; however, not all are granted the ability to acquire citizenship, work permits, or remain in a geographical area (ibid).

According to John Crowley (1999), the politics of belonging could be explained as “the dirty work of boundary maintenance.” This concept investigates how political communities have established boundaries that divide the world’s population into “us and them.” This concept is also referred to as the postcolonial theory of “othering” (ibid). According to Yuval-Davis, “Othering” is an act in which the rights of a group or individual are rejected by those in the “imaginary community.” (see also Anderson, 2006). The term “imaginary community”, as introduced by Benedict Anderson (2006), could be explained as members who construct an idea of a community, which, even though it is imagined, allows for the upholding of

boundaries of a perceived collective and maybe fraternity, despite having never seen one another within or outside of these boundaries (ibid). An imaginary community could close people's eyes to the realities of injustice that the "other" encounters. Othering and imagined communities are thus intertwined and relevant for our analysis as these notions offer an entry to understand how fear of outsiders can threaten the community's sense of security and exclude those on the move, refugees seeking a secure place.

Yuval-Davis (2011) considers Autochthonic political projects of belonging, in which communities claim to be "autochthone", meaning "of this soil". According to Yuval-Davis, claiming to be autochthonous is a way of saying that only one kind of person belongs to a specific area, country, or community, and others are not welcome to cross these boundaries. As Yuval-Davis points out, the previous discourse on "old" racism, which focused on racialization, differs from Autochthonic politics of belonging, as this notion stresses the importance of religion, ethnicity, or traditions as ways of exclusion and marginalization (ibid). These differences would be viewed as dangerous, as potentially "spreading" and "taking over" "the cultural essence of the state." (Yuval-Davis, 2011).

According to Clifford (1994), the Autochthonism concept helps us understand the correlation between citizenship and identity. Various groups form their identities by determining the different character traits of membership, which can also exclude nonmembers (Clifford, 1994). Several studies (e.g. Kuch, 2017; Kanamugrire, 2016; Pavanello, 2010) show that migrants are currently discriminated against at various levels of society. Migrants, for example, face local barriers since they are perceived as "strangers." Therefore, migrants have more significant difficulties in accessing local spaces "owned" by those who had previously settled in a particular area, making integration more difficult (ibid).

The politics of belonging also includes concerns regarding communal identity, the concept of citizenship, and how it applies to the status and entitlements that come with it (Yuval-Davis, 2011). There are different definitions of the meaning of citizenship. For example, according to a liberal view of citizenship theories, the individual should be loyal to the state and the political community and fulfill the responsibilities of being a citizen (ibid). According to Marshall, citizenship is "full membership of the community, with all its rights and responsibilities" (1950). What is intriguing about this statement is that Marshall defined *citizenship* as being a community member and having rights and responsibilities (ibid). Who

truly belongs in a community, and what qualifications must you have to become a member? Does he/she have to be willing to learn the local language, practice the same religion, or even be open to assimilation; These are all inquiries raised by Yuval-Davis (2011). According to Yuval-Davis, rights are an essential component of citizenship. However, it's also vital to address spatial rights, which include the right to enter a state, community, or area, as well as the right to stay and function once there (ibid).

2.2 Waiting

International migration entails the movement of people crossing political borders, it additionally covers various “temporalities” and “waiting” (Jacobsen & Karlsen, 2021). Using waiting as a dimension of our analytical framework illustrates further the complexities of boundaries, belonging, governmental authority and social connections during migration. Waiting is caused during the migration process, Hage (2009) also describes it as “productive” in terms of contributing to the production of migrant ‘illegality’ or ‘irregularity’. Further Hage, introduces the concept of “stuckedness”. Hage (2009) suggests that a specific type of being stuck may be romanticized, for instance, in literature as a strength with the stuck person being an admired character that bravely waits out and surviving in the midst of disaster, whether it's natural disaster or poverty (ibid). However, today, many refugees are seeking to prevent “legal limbo” and becoming stuck (Hage, 2009; Eriksen, 2021).

In the book of Jacobsen et al., Khosravi (2021:203) defines forced waiting as “imposed by bordering practices with the consequences of destabilizing lives and bodies.” According to Khosravi, the process of border waiting does not have to be limited to a person waiting at a state border but could refer to all forms of waiting that non-citizens are forced to endure (2021). The ongoing nature of bordering, such as waiting for permission to enter a country, obtain employment or an opportunity to study, these variables make it difficult to know when border waiting begins or ends. Khosravi argues that researchers tend to focus on when waiting ends, such as through resettlement or gaining asylum status, but there are few studies that focus on when the waiting begins. Khosravi believes that this is difficult to achieve since waiting can begin with the mere thought of migrating, making the migration process complicated and long (ibid).

Further, regarding refugee camps, Khosravi (2021) stresses that they are commonly referred to as “Spatial”. For instance, refugee camps such as Kakuma, Khosravi describes as a “Spatial and temporal manifestation and they are bounded entitlements, existing somewhere between the temporary and the permanent, and which do not appear on official maps of countries.” As Khosravi (2021) argues, refugees exist physically but at the same time they are hidden from the rest of the world. This is also addressed by Kesharvarz (2016), who underscores that refugee camps are supposed to offer human rights, but instead, violate refugees' rights.

Our discussion above, leads us to discuss the concept of durable solution, which includes the ideas of refugee resettlement, repatriation, and local integration.

2.3 Durable solutions

The phrase “durable solution” is not found in any well-known legal documents dealing with refugees. The term, for example, is not mentioned in the 1951 Refugee Convention or Statute of the Office of the UNHCR (Yacob-Haliso, 2016). The statute, on the other hand, states that UNHCR should work to find “permanent solutions for the problem of refugees by assisting Governments...to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of such refugees, or their assimilation within new national communities” (UNHCR, 1950: chapter 1 para. 1).

In the ongoing debate over the definition of Durable solutions, three distinct solutions have emerged, which prioritize voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement (Black & Koser, 1999; Bidandi, 2018). Humanitarian organizations generally consider these three solutions durable since they believe the risk of persecution becomes reduced while unstable living conditions for vulnerable people improve (Black & Koser, 1999; Yacob-Haliso, 2016). This understanding, however, has been questioned (Barnett, 2001; Bidandi, 2018) by various right-based schools arguing that long-term solutions must tackle the underlying root causes of conflicts, such as poverty, war, discrimination, and environmental degradation. As a result, these scholars argue that repatriation or acquiring citizenship in a third country neither addresses nor resolves the underlying systemic issues that inflict inequality and precarity upon asylum seekers through tedious waiting processes and, by extension, exclusion (Yacob-Haliso, 2016).

Our proposed framework focused on durable solutions we suggest allows for a more complex understanding of the role of local integration in Kenya and beyond.

2.4 Successful local integration approaches

In the previously discussed Section 2.3, humanitarian actors acknowledged that voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement in a third country were the most durable solution for refugees (Black & Koser, 1999; Bidandi, 2018). On the other hand, this thesis focuses on local integration as research has shown to be the only long-term solution that effectively addresses the systemic challenges refugees face (Yacob-Haliso, 2016; Kaiser, 2010). For instance, many scholars argue that local integration not only addresses these issues but has the potential to generate positive socio-economic opportunities both for refugees and the host community (Khasalamwa-Mwandha, 2021; Teye & Yebleh, 2015).

In the debate over local integration, there are several definitions of what integration is and what components are required for a “successful” integration process in the host country. According to Robinson (1998), the term integration is a “chaotic concept” that many people will use but interpret differently (1998). While Harrell-Bond defines it as a “situation in which host and refugee communities can co-exist, sharing the same resources – both economic and social – with no greater mutual conflict than that which exists within the host community” (1985). Hovil (2014) has a more holistic focus and refers to integration as “de jure” and “de facto”. For example, “de jure” local integration concerns national belonging, where one obtains citizenship or a temporary legal stay. However, according to Hovil, receiving documents should not be equated with local integration since it does not guarantee that the refugee’s rights will be met at the local level (2014). While de facto integration could be viewed as an “informal process that takes place primarily at a local level whereby refugee individuals or groups negotiate to belong in the locality in which they are living” (ibid). Although there are, indeed, many scholars involved in the debate over local integration, this research, however, employs the frameworks proposed by Jacobsen (2001) and Agers and Strang (2008) to gain a better understanding of the factors that could lead to successful local integration.

According to Jacobsen (2001), to fulfill successful integration in society Jacobsen has identified a set of requirements that has to be met, including that people;

- “are not in physical danger (and do not live under the threat of refoulement);
- are not confined to camps or settlements, and have the right of return to their home country;
- are able sustain livelihoods, through access to land or employment, and can support themselves and their families;
- have access to education or vocational training, health facilities, and housing;
- are socially networked into the host community, so that intermarriage is common, ceremonies like weddings and funerals are attended by everyone, and there is little distinction between refugees’ and hosts’ standard of living” (Jacobsen, 2001:9).

Ager and Strang (2008) present a theoretical framework for refugee integration, identifying four interconnected levels that are subsequently divided into ten core domains (see appendix 2). According to Ager and Strang, the first level (*Markers and Means*) is the most significant of these four levels and covers four core domains such as Employment, Housing, Education, and Health (ibid). These domains are considered "markers," and it is argued that success in these domains will lead to a positive integration process for both refugees and society. If success in the first level occurs, it is more likely that success in the remaining core domains will occur as well, and this is explained as "means." For example, success in employment (markers) can lead to improved living circumstances through stable income, as well as social connections (means). All of these factors contribute to the refugee's successful integration (ibid).

Furthermore, the second level *Social connection* emphasizes the importance of the refugee retaining their belonging to culture, religion, and ethnicity from their nation of origin, while also maintaining good social relationships with the host communities (Ager & Strang, 2008). Additionally, it is critical that the refugee receives information and has access to the services provided by society. The third level *facilitates* local integration by learning the local language and becoming acquainted with the host culture while remaining safe from threats. The final level, *foundation* is to be able to receive and exercise their rights as enshrined in the host country by the state (ibid). Understanding these domains of local integration for refugees allows us to identify the barriers that may arise during the integration process and how willing the state might be to accommodate a variety of social and economic means for the integration of refugees.

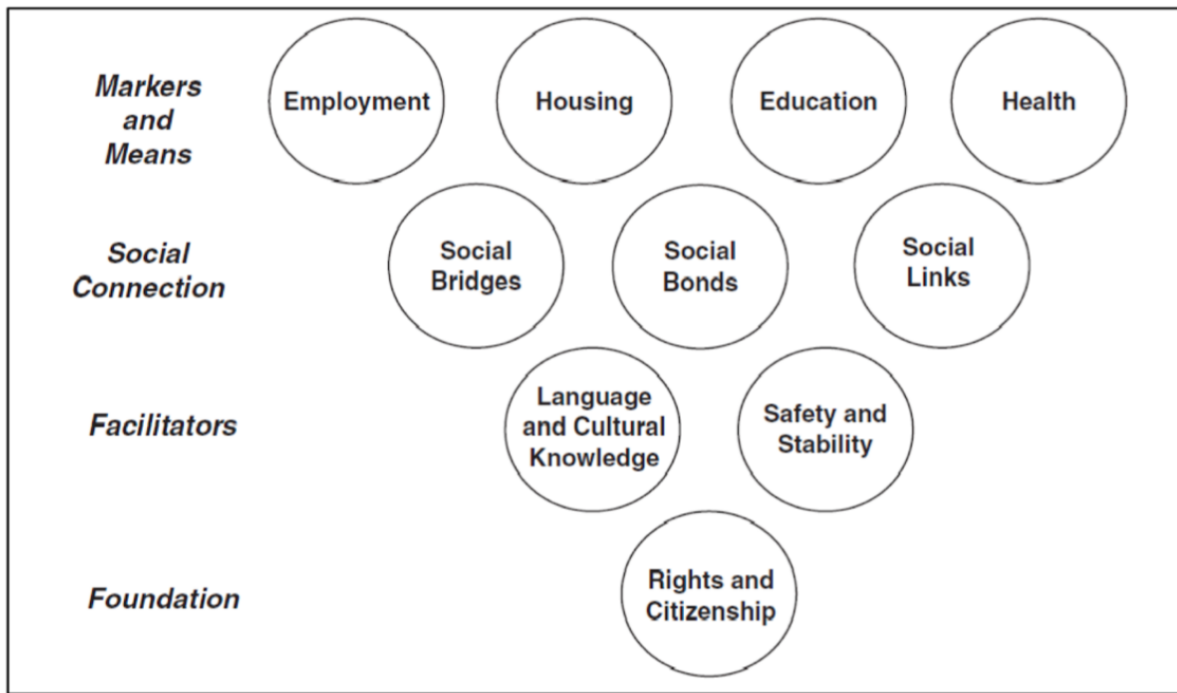


Figure 1. Ager and Strang theoretical framework, core ten domains of successful integration (Ager & Strang, 2008:170).

3.0 Research Design

3.1 Method of Analysis

This thesis adopts a case study approach aiming to investigate what possible strategies the Kenyan government may implement to promote local integration as a durable solution for refugees in Kenya. We carried out our study in Nairobi. To address the study's objective, we used a qualitative research design with mixed data collection methods. We used semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to gain a deeper understanding of local integration of refugees (Alvehus, 2013; Yin, 2017). The results of our study will lead to recommendations that could serve as a guide for stakeholders who are involved in refugee integration. These recommendations may have the potential to influence practice and policy while also supporting stakeholders engaged in refugee integration.

Focus group discussions with refugees were conducted with the supervision and assistance of RELON- Kenya, a refugee led organization (RLO). RELON- Kenya is a local organization which is familiar with the new Refugee Act and works closely together with Kenya's refugee community. Further prior to the interviews, we developed four distinct interview guides (see Appendix D-G), two of which were adapted for semi-structured interviews with UN agencies and NGO/RLOs. The third guide was adapted for focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with refugees in Nairobi, and the last guide for a lecturer. The pre-written open-ended questions were inspired by Bryman's methodology, which encourages open dialogue (Bryman, 2018). The four distinct interview guides were developed to address the various perspectives of refugees and stakeholders on local integration and the 2021 Refugee Act, considering the lack of data on the impact and effectiveness of the new law. The tailored guides helped to identify patterns that emerged during the interviews regarding current challenges and opportunities faced by different stakeholders.

We discussed other possible methods and the results they might produce when considering semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions as our methodology to answer our purpose and research questions. The use of questionnaires, for example, and their potential benefits for the study, were discussed. According to various authors (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Bryman, 2018), there are advantages and disadvantages to this method. They emphasize that using questionnaires would allow the researcher to reach a larger sample size

as it is less time-consuming. However, the results would be less nuanced than those obtained through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Furthermore, we hypothesized that if we had used questionnaires, we would not have gained a deeper understanding of the integration process because the method would not have allowed for more personal contact with the participants and detailed experiences with discrimination, challenges, and solutions to facilitate local integration. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were therefore chosen, as they allow us to delve deeper into the conversation with follow-up questions (Bryman, 2018).

Furthermore, to carry out this study in a comprehensive way, we collaborated and divided the responsibility for certain tasks. The design and content of the study was developed in collaboration before dividing the writing. Mona Ghasemi mostly produced the Introduction and Discussion chapter and Andrea Thorgren the Theoretical framework and Review of Literature. Meanwhile, the research Design, Results and Recommendations were split equally. The conducting of the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions was also carried out in collaboration.

3.2 Data collection

We have conducted 13 semi-structured interviews and nine rounds of focus group discussions in Nairobi as part of this study (see Appendix B-C for more details on the respondents). The period of field data collection lasted 8 weeks.

The literature sources for this case study draw on primary sources and gray literature, such as, government documents, peer-reviewed articles and NGO/UN reports. The initial research process began by utilizing the research strategy by Bryman (2018), which entails starting with a general search of the issue. For instance, starting with the concept of durable solutions for refugees with focus on local integration, and thereafter delve deeper into the context of Kakuma and Kenya. We found relevant scientific publications through the Lund University database LUBsearch, and Scopus with various sets of keywords, such as, “Refugees”, “Durable Solutions”, “local integration”, “Refugee Act 2021”, “Kakuma camp”, and “Kenya”.

To further enhance the study and use the most appropriate sources available, we use English publications in scientifically peer-reviewed journals. Given the limited information available regarding the Refugee Act of 2021, we decided not to use the criterion regarding publishing

year in order to have access to a wider range of information. Due to the lack of research, findings from NGOs and the UN as well as other gray literature were used.

3.3 Semi-structured interview

We have conducted 13 semi-structured interviews (See table 1) and 9 rounds of focus group discussion in Nairobi.

We chose semi-structured interviews for several reasons. Using open-ended interviews allows for greater flexibility and the possibility of delving deeper into a research topic and, explore further respondents' perspectives and experiences by using follow up questions (Teorell & Svensson, 2007; Bryman, 2018). Respondents can go deeper into the research questions by using semi-structured interviews (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). According to Teorell and Svensson (2008), this could assist the researcher to better comprehend the topic and contexts, allowing them to identify different patterns. Further, in comparison to other methods the respondents might feel more involved in the study and motivated to share their perspectives, which results in a more successful and efficient process (Alvehus, 2013; Punch, 2005). Therewith, conducting semi-structured interviews in Nairobi will provide a better understanding of the current laws/policies in Kenya and the local integration system after the implementation of the Refugee act 2021.

We conducted semi-structured interviews with people who had various job assignments and roles in respect to refugee integration, humanitarian/development organizations, UN agencies, academics, and members of the refugee community (See Table 1 below).

Table 1. Overview of the number of actors and refugee community participated in semi-structured interviews

Category	Numbers
UN Agencies	1
RLOs	4
Academics	1
Refugee Advocate	1

International Organizations	1
NGOs	1
Refugees/Students	4

3.3.1 Respondents

The 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted with a variety of stakeholders, including one UN agency and local NGOs from the humanitarian and development sectors, academics, and refugees (see Appendix B). The interviews were carried out in Nairobi using a snowball method meaning that interviewees suggested additional suitable respondents for our research to whom we then would reach out.

In selecting our respondents, we made strategic decisions based on specific criteria. We approached respondents who had at least five years of experience in humanitarian and development work, as well as knowledge of Kenyan migration policy. Other than being over the age of 18 and originally from Kakuma camp, there were no formal requirements for refugees to participate in the study.

We asked our Swedish embassy contact for assistance, as well as the Refugee-Led Organization Network Of Kenya (RELON-Kenya), and made sure they were aware of the potential interviewee criteria. 6 of 13 respondents were discovered by our contacts, who made the first contact and introduced us. We continued the conversation via email or in person after they made the first initial contact to introduce us. We did, however, find four respondents through Google searches and scheduled meetings in their offices. The interviews took place in a variety of settings, such as cafés and corporate headquarters. Each interview lasted between 30 to 50 minutes and was conducted in English.

3.4 Focus Group Discussions

We held nine rounds of focus group discussions to gather multi-layered perspectives on local integration (see appendix C). We have been inspired by Hennink's approach when conducting focus group discussions, as Hennink highlights the significance of gathering multiple viewpoints from knowledgeable and relevant participants (Hennink, 2014). Using this

approach, we were able to capture a diverse range of thoughts and perspectives from the refugee community on successful local integration, as well as the steps they believe the government and other stakeholders should take to facilitate this process.

Three male-only groups, three female-only groups and three mixed-groups were conducted. Each group consisted of 2-11 refugees or law students aged 18-65, and the discussions lasted about 50 minutes, to allocate enough time to properly address the issues in question. We divided the focus group discussions with refugee participants between sexes, primarily to make respondents feel more comfortable speaking and sharing their thoughts. The participants shared common experiences on the process of integration into Kenyan society. Due to late arrivals or last-minute cancellations, two of the male-only group discussions had only 2-3 participants; despite this, we chose to continue considering they had a high level of experience with local integration (O.Nyumba et al., 2018). We conducted the six focus group discussions with refugees with an interpreter and under supervision of and with assistance from RELON-Kenya in conjunction with their local advocacy workshops. As a result of their network of contacts, we were able to get in touch with our target group and conduct our research.

The participants in the mixed-group discussions were Kenyan law students and were conducted during an online lecture. These discussions provided insight into how Kenya's future lawyers view the current refugee legislation. When conducting group discussions we followed suggestions offered in various methodology studies on conducting interviews online and in person (Hennink, 2014; Bryman, 2018; Briggs, 1986).

3.5 Thematic analysis

To analyze all collected data, we apply a thematic analysis. This consists of developing phrases or words based on empirical data findings (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The ability to identify different common characteristics and patterns in data is one of the benefits of thematic analysis, which allows for a more in-depth understanding of correlations between subjects (Byman, 2008). We work dialectically by applying a theoretical approach which is informed by the information we have gathered through our semistructured interviews and focus group discussions with people from the refugee camp and from various organizations working on refugee issues. These phrases or words were then classified according to various

themes or sub-themes including, host community, education, documentation, police, definitions of local integration, healthcare, solutions, employment, legal system and freedom of movement. We continued until no further themes could be identified.

3.6 Limitations

We conducted an eight week fieldwork in Nairobi. Fieldwork could always be longer, yet our period in the field was enriching for our research in allowing us to get familiar with the area, engage with people and organizations, do observations of daily life, and gather various kinds of discursive material. To be permitted to conduct interviews with Kenyan government officials and politicians, as well as entering a refugee camp, we would have needed a specific kind of research license. We, however, deemed that it would be too time consuming to try to obtain such a specific license due to what we were informed would involve tedious bureaucratic procedures. Thus, we might have been well back in Sweden when granted the license. Interviews with government officials and politicians we believe could have given us an even more detailed understanding of the new Refugee Act 2021 and maybe even information about regulations being in the pipeline. Instead, we approached non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and refugee lead organizations (RLOs) that actively work with legal assistance.

Other limitations that needed to be addressed were power structures and cultural responsiveness. Several challenges arose during the field study. For example, in Kenya Swahili and English are the official languages; however, many refugees come from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, Uganda, and Somalia, all of which may speak languages other than Swahili and English. Thus it has been necessary to employ the assistance of an interpreter. An interpreter was not required during the semi-structured interviews since the respondents understood English fluently. However, most refugees communicated in Swahili during the focus group discussions, necessitating the use of an interpreter. It is important to note that since Swahili is not the native language of many refugees, some found it more difficult to communicate in Swahili.

Another factor to consider is whether the respondent is a woman and the interpreter is a man, or vice versa, as respondents may feel more comfortable with the same sex. We, therefore, sought to find an interpreter who was of the same sex as the group, to avoid any power structures (Teorell & Svensson, 2007). It was also important to identify other power

structures that could take place. For instance, if the interpreter is not local, has a low/high social status, or is unfamiliar with the subject, the interview situation may be awkward and be framed by a range of hierarchical dynamics based on gender, class, education, urbanity, and so on. These constraints must be kept in mind at all times, and cultural sensitivity is essential to avoid causing discomfort to respondents and interpreters (Teorell & Svensson, 2007). Our interpreters were locals from L'Afrikana, a refugee-led organization that works on refugee issues and empowerment (McLennan et al., 2014). The refugees were already familiar with the organization, which made them feel more at ease and secure when they were asked questions.

Furthermore, we are two Swedish women and thus considered and approached as Western. In this sense, we could stand out as outsiders. Respondents may have answered questions based on a Global North and Global South imbalance seeing us as representing “the West” answering what they believed that we as interviewers would want to hear rather than what they genuinely feel (FAO, n.d.; Schech et al., 2018). We therefore repeatedly emphasized the significance of the respondents’ opinions, experiences and expertise. Different approaches were used to counter the possibility of courtesy bias (Schech et al., 2018). For example, we stressed the importance of respondents' honest and candid responses and that there were no incorrect answers (ibid). Finally, we explained that the purpose of our study is to understand and gain a better understanding of the rights of refugees in Kenya, and hence not to evaluate individuals and organizations. Thereby, we distanced ourselves from official investigations of refugees seeking asylum.

During our data collection, we were influenced by Robert Chamber's (1983) perspectives on outsiders in order to limit biases. Chambers, for example, believes that as an outsider, becoming aware of one's own biases, values, and rationalizations is critical for truly learning about local experiences (Chambers, 1983). To address these potential biases and ensure that the study was culturally sensitive, we invited three refugee students to provide feedback on the research questions and interview guidelines for the semistructured interviews and the focus group discussions. The two-hour discussion yielded important and valuable insights into the cultural and social contexts of this study. Consultations with RELON-Kenya have provided useful and important insights when developing our research design. These insights have resulted in interviews that we hope have been both respectful and sensitive to those people who kindly agreed to be interviewed.

3.7 Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations for this study were based on a guideline made by the Refugee Studies Centre (2007) at the University of Oxford as well as Lund University guidelines (2021). The guideline consists of eight main considerations for ethically responsible research practices towards the respondents of this case study.

In all contacts with research participants it is essential to protect their physical, social and psychological well-being. In this case study, our responsibility is to our respondents, especially when it comes to a vulnerable group like refugees. Their desires, feelings, rights and anonymity must be respected (Refugee Studies Centre, 2007). Obtaining participants' consent, as we did, however, does not eliminate the possibility of unintended harm. It has been critical to try to anticipate risks of potential harm and take steps to mitigate any potential negative effects (ibid). We identified scenarios that could potentially cause risk and harm, such as anonymity being compromised, unawareness of the implications of participation, and the potential triggering of difficult memories as a refugee.

3.7.1 Loss of Anonymity: A Potential Risk for Participants

To mitigate potential risks, we have been devoted to ensuring confidentiality of participants after obtaining informed consent to carry out the interviews. Henceforth, the empirical fieldwork data are anonymous, 8 of 13 respondents requested anonymity and were given a pseudonym, four of which represent their organization but are personally anonymous. This is primarily required to eliminate any chance of linking any factual data to any specific respondent (Henshall, 2006). All data containing identifying information was stored on a password-protected computer and erased once the study was completed. Further, we recorded the interviews with the consent of the participants.

3.7.2 Insufficient Awareness: Implications of Participation

During data collection, all respondents received information before giving their informed consent regarding the purpose and their part in the study, and what potential benefits the outcome of the study could offer various stakeholders (Scheyvens et al., 2014). The respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time during or after the interview (Henshall, 2006), as well as the university at which we were enrolled.

Respondents also received information regarding the Sida-funded scholarship that funded the field study. Additionally, respondents were given the option of selecting a location or safe space to conduct the interview in order to feel comfortable (Refugee Studies Centre, 2007).

3.7.3 Topics and Questions

As previously mentioned in 3.7, we got assistance from RELON-Kenya in identifying three refugees that are students, to provide feedback on the questionnaire guides for focus group discussions. The purpose of this was to prevent any undue intrusion, triggering difficult memories in individuals or bringing up inappropriate questions (Refugee Studies Centre, 2007). We suggested to RELON-Kenya that the students should come from the Kakuma refugee camp and have a good understanding of migration policy. There were no age restrictions, but we required a gender balance. The group consisted of two males and one female, all between the ages of 19-25. The students spent two hours completing the questionnaires and were given the opportunity to provide feedback on questions that should be deleted or rephrased. In accordance with the Oxford ethical guideline, we provided fair compensation to the students by reimbursing them with 1000 KES for transportation costs to and from RELON's office. The respondents were informed that if they wish to view the study's results, they can do so through RELON-Kenya (Refugee Studies Centre, 2007).

4.0 Review of literature

Several studies on refugee integration have discussed solutions for resettled refugees, particularly those living in a third country (Agblorti & Grant, 2019). This study, however, focuses on local integration within the host country. According to Khasalamwa-Mwandha, there are two types of circumstances in refugee studies that focus on livelihoods (2021). Livelihood in "active" political turmoil or humanitarian crisis, as opposed to "inactive" humanitarian circumstances. Most research concerns violence, the political economy of conflict, and the collapse of livelihood systems in active crises (ibid).

In an ethnographic study by Khasalamwa-Mwandha (2021), the author investigated socioeconomic paths for livelihoods and integration in Uganda. According to the findings, individuals previously living in urban areas had more difficulty adjusting to their new surroundings than refugees from rural areas (ibid). Furthermore, Khasalamwa-Mwandha revealed that structural issues in rural communities limit and compromise refugees' economic security and integration. Regarding work and employment opportunities in South Africa, Kanamugire (2016) argues that letting refugees utilize their skills would lead to full economic integration. However, some occupations are forbidden to refugees, with the exception of positions reserved for citizens, such as politics. According to Kanamugire, South African politicians indicate reluctance towards full integration of refugees in South Africa and that certain policies exist to motivate them to leave the country (ibid).

According to Agblorti and Grant (2019), the location of a refugee camp plays a role in successful local integration. The author investigated the barriers to local integration in Ghana and concluded that the three main challenges for refugees were acquiring property for refugee camps, the relationship between hosts and refugees, and humanitarian support to the flood of refugees (ibid). The authors also discovered an unexpected finding. 33% of survey respondents indicated that they would support local integration as long as it was accompanied by a sufficient "integration package" (Agblorti & Grant, 2019). Additional research has also been conducted in Tanzania and Kenya. Kuch (2017), for example, conducted an ethnographic study in which the author sheds light on Burundian refugees' experiences of naturalization in Tanzania and how former refugees conceptualize and utilize their newly acquired status. Most respondents agreed that freedom of movement is the most fundamental

right gained through new citizenship since it is up to the individual to decide whether to remain in the refugee settlement.

Pavanello (2010) states in a report that despite the Kenyan encampment policy, the challenges for the state, humanitarian and development stakeholders increase regarding urban refugees. In Kenya, urban refugees do not receive the same level of assistance as the refugees residing in Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps. Furthermore, when it comes to a historical perspective, Kenya has been more welcoming to refugees with a similar background during periods with less influx of refugees, writes Androff (2022) in his book on the global refugee crisis. The author also believes that in Kenya, there is, above all, resistance to integration that would lead to naturalization for refugees, and names Kenya as a "reluctant host" that prefers encampment and repatriation (ibid).

In a study by Kanamugire (2016) about local integration in South Africa, the author writes about how refugees have the right to basic education according to the constitution. However, although education should be accessible for refugees, they experience many challenges, such as documentation. As many people do not plan forced displacement, they often do not arrive with all the documents and certificates needed for school enrollment, such as ID or passport. Furthermore, Pavanello (2010) believes that many refugees in Nairobi do not register when arriving in Kenya due to the lack of information. The study's findings showed that refugees who have not received the official documentation lack knowledge of the procedure and worry about detentions, expenses and deportation due to failed registration (ibid).

In the study of Androff (2022), the results indicate that several employees of refugee agencies hypothesized that the population's discontent was fueling government reluctance to allow citizenship in Kenya, where people generally believe that citizenship needs to be earned. Further, NGO employees have stated that public sympathy for refugees, such as cultural background and language, is significant in determining integration. However, Kuch (2017) concludes that although refugees can obtain citizenship by legal and illicit means in The Republic of the Congo, refugees in Brazzaville still face discrimination and maltreatment. Thus, Kuch believes that citizenship in and of itself does not guarantee complete security and a sense of community.

It goes without saying that previous research has consistently demonstrated that refugees across Sub-Saharan African countries experience similar challenges and issues in the process

of becoming fully integrated into the host country. It is essential to acknowledge that each country has its unique historical background and narratives, which should not be generalized. However, the global similarities that refugees face in terms of security, documentation scarcity, livelihood opportunities, educational rights, and freedom of movement must not be overlooked. Although these findings are not novel nor groundbreaking, the aim of this research is not only to identify the existing problems that are specific to Kenya but also to identify feasible solutions that can facilitate successful local integration.

5.0 Results

5.1 Definition of local integration

On a sunny day in March, we met with two students from Mount Kenya University (MKU) and the University of Nairobi to better understand their interpretations of the term “local integration”. One of the students, whom we will refer to as Abraham (Student A), is a South Sudanese refugee pursuing a law degree. Abraham, who grew up in the Kakuma refugee camp, believes that local integration occurs when you are not constantly reminded of one's refugee status. Beatrice (Student C), a bachelor student in Biotechnology, and a refugee from DRC, shares Abraham's belief in the significance of having equal opportunities as everyone else. She goes on to say that for her, true integration involves feeling accepted by others. To her, acceptance means "being acknowledged as a person first and as a refugee second."

“For me, being fully integrated means that you’re part of a community that accepts you for who you are, is exposed to the same things as they are, and has access to the same services as they, like education and medical services. Even though I’ve been integrated into our school, I wouldn’t say that I am fully integrated since there are some services I can’t get because I’m a refugee. If I could get the chance to be fully integrated, it would mean so much because at least I wouldn’t have to feel alone. Right now, I feel like I can’t get certain things just because of my refugee status. But if I were fully integrated, I could work and get healthcare just like other Kenyans.” - Abraham

We also interviewed various RLOs on their thoughts on local integration. During our conversation with a representative from an RLO called Umoja, we explained that integration involves a collective effort to unite and support one another. Umoja, for example, offers English classes to refugees struggling with the language. Umoja hopes that by providing these services, refugees can interact with other community members, leading to integration. While the youth-led RLO, Youth Voices Community (YVC), emphasizes the importance of freedom of movement as essential in becoming integrated into Kenyan society. Being confined to a specific area impedes a person’s capacity to become self-sufficient. In discussions with university law students, participants in all focus group discussions agreed that freedom of movement opens up more socio-economic opportunities for refugees. Faith

from student group 2 (SG2) believes that “the Refugee Act doesn’t clarify the process of integration or how to integrate

5.1.1 Challenges and opportunities with local integration

In conversation with our respondents, there were also discussions about the Refugee Act 2021 and what it means in practice with local integration. 13 out of 13 respondents were optimistic about the meaning of local integration, but 2 out of 13 were skeptical about what local integration would look like in practice.

Andhira Kara, who is a Refugee advocate and has previously worked as Lead Country Researcher-Kenya at LERRN, stated that local integration is a good solution, especially for refugees born in Kenya since most have never been to their country of origin, and Kenya has thus become home. However, Kara believes it is necessary to include all three durable solutions together and not overlook one solution. She believes that in African countries receiving refugees, partial local integration has worked, but when it comes to durable solutions, only resettlement to a European country has worked. Therefore, there is a chance that many African countries will not be "willing" to integrate refugees since they see their arrival in the host country as only a temporary stay, with the final destination being resettlement in a third country. In addition, it is critical to emphasize that countries with weak institutions may also perceive a wave of refugees as an additional burden and a threat to an already weak economy.

According to Ferd Moyomba, Lecturer at MKU, the most difficult challenge in Kenya is understanding what durable and local integration entails in practice. "If people do not understand what legal integration means, we may be on a path that leads nowhere," he says. Moyomba emphasizes the benefits of local integration and claims that if the government stops funding refugee camps and instead allows refugees to be integrated, the government will save money. Currently, taxpayer funds and donor aid are used to fund the camps, and through integration, these refugees can become self-sufficient.

5.2 Access to education

Education has come up several times during our interviews, and for many refugees, education is a necessary step toward integration in Kenya. However, the respondents had experienced a variety of burdens. For example, 13 out of 13 of our semi-structured interviews agreed that the Kenyan government provided free primary school education for refugees; however, education quality was lacking in the refugee camp, and primary school fees were too high. For example, Gilbert Asukulu, director of L'Afrikana, contends that all refugees not born in Kenya face difficulties gaining access to primary, secondary, college, and university education. On the other hand, he believes that refugee children born in Kenya have an easier time enrolling in school since they have birth certificates; however, if the child has his refugee status, the child will be considered a "foreigner" and must pay a higher school fee, which is "unfair and violates human rights," according to Askulu.

Five of the nine focus groups discussed similar issues as Askulu, who stated that their children, aged 8 to 10, had difficulty enrolling in primary school due to a lack of birth certificates, "everybody does not bring their birth certificates or passports to Kenya". In focus group F3, one of the women, let's call her Aamiina, expressed her dissatisfaction, saying:

"Education for my children is supposed to be free since I have the birth certificate. However, it does not work in practice because we still need to spend money. It costs us 5000 shillings for each of my children, not including food or uniforms."

Regarding affordability, primary school was one of many institutions that were difficult to enrol in, and several respondents stated that access to higher education was even more difficult. In a conversation with the focus group M2, Kevin from Burundi said he only completed secondary school despite receiving a scholarship from a local church in Kenya to attend university. The scholarship required opening a bank account, and opening a bank account required government approval. An admission certificate from the school was required for approval. Once the school submitted the documents and the state approved them, the banks stated, "Your ID card is not recognized because it is not Kenyan and is a refugee card. I ended up losing my scholarship, and I could never attend university after that."

According to Beatrice, tuition fees are a significant barrier to entering university, and as a refugee, there are a limited number of scholarships to apply for; however, these scholarships

are more difficult to obtain because one's score points are expected to be higher than other Kenyans'. Although tuition fees are a significant barrier, refugees from French-speaking countries have had difficulty enrolling in Kenyan universities. All respondents in the focus group M2 were from Burundi, and they noted that refugees from Burundi, the DRC, and Congo have a different grading system than those from neighboring countries where English is their official language. This means that a refugee who completed high school in Burundi and has a diploma must convert his grade to Kenyan grading points, which is very expensive. As a consequence, fewer refugees from French-speaking countries are enrolled in Kenyan universities.

5.2.1 Education solutions

Beatrice mentioned in the previous section that tuition fees impede attending university. To cover these fees, there are limited scholarships available to cover these fees. To be eligible for these scholarships, one's grades must be above a certain level, usually higher than Kenyan students require. This is something that Grace, a South-Sudanese refugee (Student B), has experienced, and she also points out that universities in Kenya are graded on a scale of 500.

According to Beatrice, regulations for this problem should be developed that include fair rules for all. Furthermore, Beatrice believes that lowering the score points threshold is necessary so that everyone, refugee or not, has equal access to it. Regarding refugees from French-speaking countries, it was mentioned that the Kenyan state requires the ability to convert grades into Kenyan scores, which is usually very expensive. As a result, Beatrice suggests that the Kenyan government devise a system for free recognition of foreign grades.

5.3 Healthcare challenges

Six of the 13 semi-structured interviews and seven of the nine focus group participants reported that they had been discriminated against or knew of someone who had been discriminated against when seeking healthcare. In addition, healthcare costs are too expensive, according to nine out of 13 semi-structured interviews and seven out of nine focus groups.

Healthcare is an important topic for many refugees and has come up in several conversations. During a conversation with Mary (Respondent C), who works with a humanitarian organization, the interviewee stated that health services are all part equal for refugees in the camps. However, she stressed that "when you move to cities, you must pay for health care. So if you don't have any money, it becomes a problem." The UNHCR provides healthcare insurance for refugees through the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF), which several refugees have criticized. According to Beatrice, her family is covered by NHIF, meaning the family has to register with a specific hospital in their area. Visiting another hospital is thus not allowed. "It's different for Kenyans because if you're employed, your employer can decide if your insurance covers all hospitals or a specific hospital, so they have that choice," she adds. In contrast, Abraham referred to the Act 2021, which states that refugees' health care should be covered. However, many refugees do not have access to NHIF even though they are eligible. Furthermore, in the focus group M3, it was discussed that to obtain the insurance card, one must pay 500 shillings, which is money that not everyone can afford.

From focus group M3, Lucas expressed frustration when he sought medical care and "was told that his visit to a public hospital should be free, but when they discovered he was from Burundi, medical treatment began to cost him since they saw him as a "foreigner." In addition, several people in the same focus group reported being refused medical treatments in the hospital and were sent to the pharmacy. A similar situation occurred with Grace, who was refused treatment at a public hospital and was advised to visit a pharmacy instead.

"Our neighbor faced discrimination when attempting to enter a public hospital. They delayed him because they wanted him to pay half the price up front and the rest after the treatment. They charged foreigners more than Kenyans, and it was so expensive. So it is challenging for someone to come up with such a large sum in a single sitting. So our neighbor's family asked the doctors if they could treat him first and then pay the money. But they were strict as if they would run away without paying. What happens if someone does not have enough money? It feels like they prioritized someone's life over money"- Grace

5.3.1 Healthcare solutions

Overall, the majority of the respondents stated that finding a long-term solution in health care is a difficult task. According to RCK, the main issue for refugees regarding health care is that

only some have access to NHIS. However, RCK believes that the healthcare system in and of itself could be better, even for Kenyans. Further, health care needs to be improved throughout the country, such as more people becoming doctors and more facilities being built to improve the overall standard. Abraham adds to that and mentions:

“I believe we can have equal access to any facility, no matter where you are in the country. If it’s a hospital, let’s ensure everyone can access it. You should be treated the same whether you are a refugee or a citizen” - Abraham

5.4 Employment challenges

The importance and benefits of finding employment in Kenya as a refugee were discussed by all 13 respondents in semi-structured interviews and four out of nine focus group discussions. Participants primarily emphasized the difficulties and discrimination they experienced in finding employment and starting their own businesses. For example, Tanya (Respondent A), who works with a UN agency, gave examples of requirements to obtain a work permit, as it is illegal for a refugee to work without a work permit.

“The Refugee ID card is enough, but in practice, they still need to get what’s called the Class M work permit, and applying for that is very tedious. One of the conditions is, and again, not refugee specific, as a foreigner, you have to show that there is no Kenyan who is more fit to take that job. The process is very bureaucratic, and refugees working in the formal sector, that’s very unusual.” - Tanya

Moyomba believes that Kenya could benefit significantly from the skills of the many skilled refugees who come to the country, such as the teachers, doctors, and nurses who, for example, reside in the Kakuma camp. Many of the refugee respondents have struggled to find employment. In addition to the difficulty of finding employment, wage discrimination is also mentioned in focus group discussions F2 and M1, as refugees are paid a lower salary than Kenyan citizens, "I applied for the job as a chef in a restaurant, but because I was a "foreigner" they only wanted to pay me 15,000 KES and my assistant would receive 45,000 KES", Paul from focus group discussion M2 said.

One male, let's call him David, in focus group discussion M1, mentioned that many refugees come to Nairobi to pursue business as a livelihood opportunity. However, according to Grace,

starting a business for a refugee in the Kakuma camp involves several steps. First, the individual must present documentation and speak with a community leader, who then contacts the county government and the county governor. Then, in addition to a work permit, refugees must visit the Kenya Revenue Authority to get a pin used to pay taxes. Sahra (Respondent B), a Somali refugee, was allowed to work abroad; however, as a refugee, it required applying for a Conventional Travel Document (CTD). She explained she had to travel from Kakuma camp to Nyayo House (immigration offices) in Nairobi to pick up the document, which required a movement pass. While at the airport, people questioned her refugee documents, although the CTD acts as valid travel documents.

5.4.1 Employment opportunities

Facilitating employment opportunities will support both local integration and the Kenyan economy, according to several respondents. The topic of improving employment opportunities came up in 4 of the 9 focus group discussions and 5 of the 13 semi-structured interviews. Abraham suggests that the government create a department devoted to hearing people's business ideas and offering guidance. Bribery is a common way to get jobs. Thus, Abraham thinks the government should focus on providing refugees with work permits and business licenses. Tanya supports Abraham's suggestions and adds that the government should concentrate on regulations, "It is one thing getting access to the money; it is another thing getting access to the documentation and the permissions to run the business. So making it easier for refugees to get access to that so that there's less of these bureaucratic borders."

5.5 Host community

10 of 13 respondents from the semi-structured interviews and six of nine focus group discussions (FGDs) discussed the refugees' difficulties and opportunities due to the Kenyan host community and the police.

Asukulu and YVC express that refugees and Kenyans are neighbors and should embrace each other's cultures, however, Asukulu says "It's bizarre to see that we are just being treated like aliens". YVC states that if Kenyans decide to accept and make use of our skills, it will boost the country's economy. According to Abraham, the main issue with foreigners coming to

Kenya who have different religious and cultural beliefs is whether or not the local population will accept their differences.

Language barriers are also mentioned by the RLO Umoja as having an impact on interactions with the host community and having a tendency to lead to stigmatization. Several respondents have shared stories of discrimination they have encountered. Tanya theorizes that this may be because of false assumptions about refugees, such as "This person is a foreigner." Can I trust them?" Tanya believes that refugees are often associated with security incidents. For instance, "After the attack at Westgate Mall happened, the first thought was it's somehow linked to Somali refugees". Student group 2, believes that this wrong mindset can challenge the integration of Somali refugees. RCK describes the integrated refugee community of Kalobey in Turkana County, where tensions between the host community and the refugees are primarily due to access to resources. There have been many interventions that call for refugees and host communities to cooperate in terms of business to mitigate these conflicts. One student in group SG1, believes that "there is a preference for East African refugees and more discriminatory against others".

In addition, several respondents indicated that police in Kenya frequently make arrests and harass refugees in Nairobi. Abraham claims that when the police ask for identification, refugees present their refugee IDs; however, often, the police officers will claim their IDs are invalid. Furthermore, the police commonly ask for money from refugees or single out individuals solely because they are refugees and lack sufficient training and knowledge about refugee documentation, such as the appearance of valid movement passes, work permits or IDs.

5.5.1 Coexistence and Peace building

7 of 13 respondents from semi-structured interviews provided ideas for peace-building initiatives that may help the host community and the refugees live in coexistence. However, Asukulu has lived in Kenya for 21 years and has yet to observe any government initiative to bring together the host and refugee communities to raise awareness of and promote coexistence. For instance, Moyomba claims that local integration will not be accomplished if the government wants to integrate refugees, but the host community does not. Therefore, Moyomba argues that a bottom-up approach is required, starting with the host community

and focusing on sensitization. For instance, Moyomba suggests community engagement and sensitization forums in which government and NGOs collaborate to promote local integration for all residents, not just refugees.

Tanya supports Moyomba's argument and emphasizes that the host community must always be a part of any initiatives aimed at refugees. In order to minimize discriminatory treatment from Kenyan citizens and police officers, Abraham and Grace believe that more education and awareness of the rights of refugees are necessary for the law enforcement community and other governmental institutions.

5.7 Refugee documentation & the Refugee Act

13 out of 13 respondents from the semi-structured interviews and nine out of nine FGDs have expressed challenging experiences involving documentation, such as IDs, work permits, business licenses and birth certificates. In addition, respondents from all 13 semi-structured interviews and nine FGDs discussed challenges regarding the Kenyan legal system and its policies, such as the right to freedom of movement.

For instance, several respondents such as Moyomba, RCK, Sahra and focus group discussions F1, F3 and M1 emphasize the long processes of acquiring or renewing documentation. As a result, this creates an obstacle for refugees to access different services. According to Moyomba, refugees face unique problems with documentation,

“Refugees are given identification documents that expire within five years with a good reason. The good reasons are that the refugee situation is not permanent. They expect to return at some point. The problem is that when the documents expire, they take a long time to renew. And at that period when they are awaiting renewal, any person looking at that ID will consider that document expired.”

RCK tells us that once asylum seekers enter the country, they are ideally registered by the Department of Refugee Services (DRS). However, in some instances, due to a lack of sensitization or awareness of refugee laws, the refugee may be arrested for being unlawfully present in Kenya if the refugee either has expired documentation or left it at home. With

invalid ID cards, institutions will also deny refugees access to various government services. The representative for Umoja explains that for the refugees that live in, for example, Kakuma refugee camp, certain papers are challenging and costly to get from the camp. The application for certain documents requires to be in Nairobi in person:

“You must go to Nyayo House, so it becomes a barrier for someone who lives far from Nairobi. It is a massive challenge for someone who stays in Kakuma since you need money to sustain yourself in Nairobi. You find that the documents require a lot money” - Umoja

The representative from KITUO, a legal advice centre, believes that if refugee IDs were fully recognized to enable access to services, it would automatically translate to local integration, "The reason why we now have limited integration is that the limitation of access to services is very high, many of their rights have been taken away." The Refugee Act currently needs more regulations that can enforce the laws, according to KITUO. Therefore, KITUO has taken legal action and gone to court to ensure that refugee IDs become fully recognized. Several respondents have also raised the need for more refugee representation in the county and parliament's design and implementation of programs and representatives. The representative at Umoja wants to see a spot for a refugee in the Kenyan parliament to bring forward their concerns:

"Refugees need top seats in Kenya so that they can fight for other refugees because they don't have anyone that represents them in the parliament. If I was a policy maker, I would get one spot for the refugees to represent all the refugees in Kenya to speak for them, so that they can have grace.” - Umoja

An additional challenge with policies that hinder refugees is the possibility of applying for citizenship in the country. Moyomba tells us that according to the Kenyan Constitution, any person who has been in Kenya legally for over seven years can apply for citizenship. Therefore, nothing should stop refugees who have been here for over seven years from applying. However, "Because you are a refugee and went to the immigration office today and says "I want to apply for citizenship", they do not even attend to you because you do not qualify according to the government". Therefore, one student in SG1, hopes for the

constitution to anticipate citizenship as part of local integration. Abraham has previously attempted the process of searching for citizenship and described it as a long, complicated and expensive process with several steps and many obstacles along the way. Abraham was able to start the process by applying as a foreigner and not a refugee, however, Abraham says that it was not possible to complete the application. One step meant a fee of 2000 (USD).

5.7.1 Enhancements to Refugee documentation and the Refugee Act

Several respondents have suggested policy changes or strategies for the government and key organizations in order to promote local integration in Kenya. In addition, participation and representation of refugees were discussed in 5 of 13 semi-structured interviews and one focus group discussion. According to Tanya, involving refugees in the design of programs and projects is not optional but should be a core principle, where focusing on the participation of the most affected people is essential to ensure that refugees in most communities are fully involved.

All men in focus group discussion M1 and Umoja agreed that government institutions should be more cohesive and more educated about refugee law, as many employees need to learn what a refugee ID looks like. One student in SG3 suggested that the government recognize the refugee IDs the same as Alien cards and digitalize the documentation process to minimize the long waiting time. RCK and Grace also suggest that more government services should be digitized and available online. However, the problem remains that only some have access to the internet or equal opportunities to travel to Nairobi. KITUO, RCK, and participants in focus groups M1 and M3 suggested that the government enable refugees to obtain driver's licenses, SIM cards and M-Pesa (mobile money services). They argue that it would promote free movement and create more business opportunities.

Abraham, who attempted to apply for citizenship, believes it should be a right for refugees who meet the requirements to obtain citizenship and have the same rights as a Kenyan to be integrated into society. Further, all interviews and group discussions discussed the right to freedom of movement for refugees. Many respondents also criticize the current encampment policy, as urban refugees and refugees living in Kakuma camp do not have equal opportunities. All refugee respondents wished for freedom of movement as it would facilitate

access to documentation and, thus, also education, healthcare, employment and business opportunities.

6.0 Discussion

What are the perspectives of refugees and stakeholders on the Refugee Act 2021 and its implementation, and what steps should the government take to achieve local integration as a long-term solution in Kenya? Of course, these are complex questions that have been attempted to be answered throughout the research. Regarding the previous chapter, we identified five factors that impact refugees' integration opportunities, including difficulties accessing education, healthcare, employment, and legal documentation, as well as being exposed to xenophobia by the host community. All of these factors could stymie integration opportunities in Kenya; however, 9 out of 13 respondents in semi-structured interviews were optimistic, saying that the Refugee Act 2021 can potentially improve the situation for refugees in terms of integration if the government lays out reasonable regulations.

We also discovered that integration can be affected and manifest differently depending on the country of origin. This also impacts the prerequisite for integration since we noticed that sharing the same language, culture, or religion as the host community facilitates integration. Something that Androff (2022) also confirmed in his findings. For example, we observed refugees from French-speaking countries like Burundi and the DRC, where the grading system differed significantly from that of other African countries in the EAC, affecting their enrollment in Kenyan universities. In addition, our findings revealed that the host community is slightly more hostile towards Muslim refugees such as Somalis than to other refugee groups. As stated in the background (Owiso, 2022) and our findings, Kenyan politicians have generally been openly Islamophobic and xenophobic towards Somalis, using them as a scapegoat due to recent terrorist attacks in Kenya. This relates to what many researchers are referring to as "othering" (Crowley, 1999; Yuval-Davis, 2011) or "imaginary community," as Anderson (2006) refers to an imaginary understanding of how some groups in Kenya pose a security threat.

Notably, the Act 2021 itself features what Yuval-Davis would describe as "Autochthonic," with a clear marker on which communities are more accepted to belong in Kenya and which should be viewed as "non-members." For example, Act 2021 states that if one is from an EAC country, one has the right to withdraw their refugee status (Kenya Law, 2022), granting you the same opportunities as people from other EAC countries regarding employment and freedom of movement. This is, of course, of value in addressing the benefits and drawbacks

of initially renouncing their refugee status, which we will not address in our research. However, it is essential to note that the majority of refugees in Kenya are Somalis, who are thus not part of the EAC. As a result, it is critical to consider the implications for integration opportunities when certain refugee groups are excluded from the Refugee Act.

Based on our findings, we can conclude that the primary reason for refugees' failure to integrate is a lack of acceptance for refugee documentation, which creates what several researchers call "legal limbo" (Hage, 2009; Eriksen, 2021). There are laws that allow refugees, at least on paper, to have fundamental rights; however, there is a lack of regulations that allow them to enjoy their rights. Thus according to our findings, this has created frustration and hopelessness as they constantly look for a silver lining. For example, there were challenges to accessing different services because there needs to be an official recognition of the Refugee ID card. It is essential to point out that documentation is mentioned in the Refugee Act 2021, which states that the refugee has the right to obtain identification and civil registration documents (Kenya Law, 2022).

Another important consideration is whether obtaining citizenship would result in a sense of security and belonging for the refugee. It is important to note that although the constitution states that anyone who has lawfully stayed in the country for seven years has the right to apply for citizenship, however refugees face difficulties in doing so. As previously stated in the theoretical framework, Hovil (2014) emphasized that obtaining citizenship does not guarantee the refugee a sense of security or community if the host community does not accept the refugee from the beginning. However, Hovil's (2014) mindset contradicts our findings, as several refugees stated that allowing refugees to access services provides them with a sense of security and belonging.

The consequences of a lack of national agreement on which ID cards are valid created enormous difficulties in finding refugee employment opportunities. The refugee has the right to work and pay taxes in Kenya, as stated in the Refugee Act 2021 (Kenya Law, 2022). Despite that Act 2021 states that working is permissible, our findings show that all 13 respondents and five out of 13 FGDs believe that refugees face significant barriers to employment. As stated in our theoretical framework, the ability to work is one of the requirements for successful integration into society, according to various researchers

(Jacobsen, 2001; Ager & Strang, 2008). For example, one of the "markers" adopted by Ager and Strang (2008) is the ability to sustain livelihoods through employment. In addition, they believe that having access to employment will provide the refugees with more opportunities, such as getting to know the host community and learning the local languages.

According to our findings, refugees are permitted to work in Kenya. However, a class M work permit is required, according to Tanya. When applying for a class M permit, a refugee must state in his or her application that no Kenyan can do the same job, which creates obstacles to obtaining this work permit. According to Ager and Strang's (2008) theoretical framework, this creates immense obstacles for the refugee to integrate. For instance, a lack of employment makes gaining social connections and a sense of safety and stability in life difficult. We argue, however, that making it more difficult for refugees to find work will only create a parallel society in which refugees are forced to work under insecure conditions, potentially exposing them to exploitation or danger. For example, Paul, as previously stated in the result, worked as a chef, while his assistant, a Kenyan who was paid 50% more than him. It is noteworthy that the government clearly states when applying for a class M permit that working in Kenya is permissible if no other Kenyan can do the same work - indicates that there is a perception that refugees are not a part of society. This creates a separation between the host community and refugees. We would therefore emphasize that the issue of belonging is a fundamental aspect of local integration and that without the acceptance and involvement of the host communities, the country's integration process will be hampered.

7.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

We conducted 13 semi-structured interviews and nine focus group discussions as part of this research to understand better what refugees in Kenya go through once they arrive in the host country and what measures may need to be implemented to allow refugees to integrate. According to our findings, the government has implemented initiatives and regulations to help refugees improve their socioeconomic situations, including access to employment and educational opportunities. These regulations have been an effort, but they are far from perfect, leaving refugees in limbo and hoping for a silver lining to feel less stuck. We want to emphasize that the lack of national agreement on which ID cards are valid is the most significant barrier to integration, as it has created enormous difficulties in finding refugee employment, education, and health care access. We want to emphasize that these issues are avoidable if the government establishes clear regulations and demands on various authorities or stakeholders who act as gatekeepers. Thus, based on our findings, we employed 14 recommendations to influence practice and policy while shaping the global effort to find durable solutions for refugees.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that this research has limitations because we did not have the opportunity to interview relevant governmental officers, which would not only have enriched our findings and recommendations but would also have provided a better understanding of which plans are expected to be implemented to fulfill the Refugee Act. As a result, we hope that future research will include interviews with refugees, RLOs, and other stakeholders in order to find a common solution to reach SDG 10.

7.1 Recommendations

Based on our findings, interactions, and discussions with refugees and relevant stakeholders, 14 recommendations were developed. These recommendations, of course, are simply guidelines aimed at key stakeholders. In our view, these recommendations are critical for successful local integration; however, if further restrictions on refugee ID cards are imposed, the potential benefits of local integration in Kenya may be hampered. We hope these recommendations catalyze productive discussions and innovative solutions, ultimately leading to a peaceful and coexisting community.

Limitations with Refugee ID Cards

- To the **Department of Refugee Services (DRS)**; A national evaluation of refugee ID cards could be conducted to determine what steps could be taken to prevent discrimination against people who possess the card. The evaluation should thus address how the state can work to ensure that all personnel in the public and private sectors have a national consensus on which ID documents are valid.
- To the **Ministry in charge of land transactions and related operations**; According to current legislation, "foreigners" can only rent housing and thus cannot purchase land. We recommend that the government establish policies that recognize the Refugee ID card and their right to access land.
- To the **Central Bank of Kenya**; Even though the Refugee ID is a valid document, it is difficult for refugees to open a bank account and access services. Therefore the Central Bank could establish clear guidelines for its employees regarding acceptable ID documents and the recognition of refugee ID.
- To the **Ministry of Information, Communication, and Telecommunication (ICT) & DRS**; accessing a SIM-Card and registering the SIM card is a major barrier for refugees since the provided ID document is deemed invalid. Therefore, we recommend ICT and DRS to not only recognize the ID card, but also educate their employees in all official stores and retailers concerning which ID documents are valid.
- To the **Ministry of Information, Communication, and Telecommunication (ICT) & CBK**; Refugees should have access to mobile money services such as M-Pesa and Airtel Money. Therefore, we suggest refugees ID cards be accepted as a valid documentation.
- To the **Business Registration Service (BRS)**; When registering a business on the government's e-portal (e-citizen), information other than the ID card must be filled out with the applicant's current passport from the country of origin. This is problematic since many refugees do not bring their passports when fleeing war. Furthermore, there is no option to select a refugee ID on the e-portal. Addressing these issues will make it easier for refugees to establish businesses in Kenya.
- To the **National Transport and safety Authority (NTSA)**; An account must be created through the TIMS e-citizen portal when registering a vehicle or renewing a driver's license. Despite the fact that a refugee ID is a valid document, there is no

selection option on TIMS, therefore suggest that NTSA address this issue as it limits refugees' ability to engage in business and other transactions.

Further Evaluation on Citizenships

- To the **Director of immigration Services and DRS**; A national evaluation could be made regarding obtaining citizenship in Kenya. Refugees who have lawfully stayed in the country for seven years have the right to apply for citizenship. However, applying for citizenship is currently a time-consuming and expensive process. It is in everyone's best interest to recognize that refugees in the country are likely to stay, and thus an assessment of how the citizenship process can be made shorter, less bureaucratic, and more affordable is needed.

Increased Digitalisation

- To the **Ministry of Information, Communication, and Telecommunication (ICT) & relevant government services**; More services should be made digital. Currently, if you apply for certain documents via e-portalen, you must also visit Nyayo House or DRS offices in Nairobi to pick up the document. This is both time-consuming and costly.
- To the **Department of Refugee Services (DRS) & Ministry of Information, Communication, and Telecommunication (ICT)**; All existing community services should be listed on a national website. It will inform refugees about their rights and where they can obtain these services. This website could provide information about, for instance, the application process to university, how to open up a business or which documents are required to apply for a refugee ID. This enables refugees to obtain vital information from the internet without having to visit government offices.

Improvements in Education & Awareness

- To the **Ministry of Education**; It is difficult to enroll in universities for people with grades from different grading systems, especially from French-speaking countries. Converting foreign grades to the Kenyan points system should thus become more affordable.
- To the **Ministry of Education**; A birth certificate is required in Kenya to attend primary or secondary school. This is an obstacle for refugee children over the age of

eight who were born in countries outside of Kenya. As a result, the parent must go to the DRS to request an exception letter allowing the child to attend school. This procedure, however, takes time. We propose that the Ministry of Education exempt applicants from registering birth certificates when applying for school and instead allow the usage of the Alien or Refugee ID card number.

- To **all government sectors**; All public sector employees may benefit from attending training on who is a refugee and what rights a refugee has. The police force, hospitals, and other public sectors could receive training several times a year. The aim is to reduce prejudice while also increasing knowledge within the host community.

Municipal Level

- To the **Department of Refugee Services (DRS) & RLO's**; There are currently no government agencies where refugees can learn about their rights and services. Thus, several integration centers are proposed throughout the country, including Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kalobeyi. These centers could provide refugees and host communities with information on topics such as how to enroll in university, which documents are required for a business or work permit, and which RLO/NGOs offer language classes.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Outline of Project Timetable

Week 5 - 13 (2023)

Length (weeks)	Activities
1	In Nairobi, Kenya. Planning the stay.
1	Finding an interpreter
5	Interviews will take place at different organizations e.g., UN agencies, CSOs but also political actors. Interviews and discussions will be transcribed.
1	Analyze the data. Ask for feedback and advice from relevant stakeholders on our primary result. We will also travel back home the same week.

Appendix B. Semi-structured Interviews

Overview of actors participated in semi-structured interviews

Respondent	Occupation	Category	Experiences with Programmes	Communication	Date
Respondent A	Head of operation - UN Agency	UN	20+ years of experience working with humanitarian issues.	Westlands, Nairobi	06/3-23
Respondent B	Co-founder of RLO in Kakuma camp	Refugee, Somalia	Relevant experience and understanding of local integration as a refugee.	Zoom	09/5-23
Respondent C	Humanitarian field operation	IO	10+ years of experience working with humanitarian issues.	Zoom	30/3-23
Refugee Consort Of Kenya (RCK)	Representative for RCK	NGO	5+ years of legal experience working with refugees.	Kilimani, Nairobi	16/3-23
Kituo Cha Sheria (KITUO)	Representative for KITUO	NGO	5+ years of experience working with legal advice	Zoom	11/5-23
Youth Voices Community (YVC)	Representative for YVC	RLO	5+ years of experience with refugee advocacy	Nasra Gardens, Nairobi	22/3-23
Umoja	Representative for Umoja	RLO	Refugee	Nasra Gardens, Nairobi	29/3-23
Gilbert Asukulu, L'Afrikana	Executive Director of L'Afrikana	RLO	10+ years of experience with	Nasra Gardens, Nairobi	31/3-23

			refugee advocacy and peacebuilding. Experience with		
Andhira Kara	Refugee Advocate	Researcher	Refugee Advocate, and previous Lead Country Resarcher-Kenya at LERRN	Lavington, Nairobi	22/3-23
Ferd Moyomba, CPM	Lecturer at MKU Mount Kenya University Parklands Law Campus. Currently teaching: introduction to Forced migration & International Refugee law.	Lecturer	10 years of academic experience and over five years of legal advocacy for Kituo Cha Sheria.	Parklands, Nairobi	29/3-23
Student A	Student - Mount Kenya University	Refugee, South Sudan	Relevant experience and understanding of local integration as a refugee.	Westlands, Nairobi	16/3-23
Student B	Student - Kenyatta University	Refugee, South Sudan	Relevant experience and understanding of local integration as a refugee.	Kenyatta, Nairobi	21/3-23
Student C	Student- University of Nairobi	Refugee, DRC	Relevant experience and understanding of local integration as a refugee.	Westlands, Nairobi	01/4-23

Appendix C. Focus Group Discussions

Overview of focus group discussions (FGD=9; N=63)

FGD ID	Participants	Age range	Country of Origin	Communication	Date
FGD - F1	6	20-35	DRC, Burundi,	Kabiria Rd, Nairobi	09/3-23
FGD - F2	6	30-65	DRC, Uganda,	Kabiria Rd, Nairobi	09/3-23
FGD - F3	6	20-40	Tanzania, DRC	Kabiria Rd, Nairobi	09/3-23
FGD - M1	8	25-65	DRC	Kabiria Rd, Nairobi	09/3-23
FGD - M2	2	30-45	Burundi	Nasra Gardens, Nairobi	29/3-23
FGD - M3	3	40-50	DRC, Republic of the Congo	Nasra Gardens, Nairobi	29/3-23
FGD - SG1	10	18-21	Kenya	Zoom	20/3-23
FGD - SG2	11	18-21	Kenya	Zoom	20/3-23

FGD - SG3	11	18-21	Kenya	Zoom	20/3-23
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FGD - F: Focus group discussion of refugee females.

FGD - M: Focus group discussion of refugee males.

FGD - SG: Focus group discussion of law students (mixed genders).

Appendix D. Interview guide NGO/CSO/RLO

Questions for NGO/CSO/RLO

1. Can you describe your role and responsibilities within the organization with respect to refugee issues?
2. How would you describe local integration?
3. How do you assess the current situation for refugees in Kenya?
4. Have you experienced any challenges in the implementation of the new Refugee Act 2021 by the government?
5. What steps are being taken by the government to ensure the protection of refugee rights in Kenya, particularly with regards to healthcare, education, and employment?
6. How does the organization engage with local communities and stakeholders in Kenya to support durable solutions for refugees?
7. How do you see the intersection between humanitarian assistance, development, and peacebuilding in your work with refugees in Kenya?
8. How does the government or other UN agencies support local integration efforts in Kakuma refugee camp?

Appendix E. Interview guide Lecturer

Questions for lecturer

1. Could you tell us about your experience working with refugees in Kenya?
2. How do you assess the current situation for refugees in Kenya?
3. How do you think the new refugee act will affect local integration efforts in Kenya?
4. What role do you see education playing in local integration for refugees?
5. In your view, what are some of the key priorities for policymakers in promoting durable solutions for refugees in Kenya?
6. How important is it to involve refugees themselves in the design and implementation of local integration policies?
7. Looking ahead, what do you see as the biggest opportunities and challenges for local integration efforts for refugees in Kenya?

Appendix F. Interview guide FGD/Students

FGD questions & Student A-C

1. How long have you lived in Nairobi?
2. What would it mean to be fully integrated in society?
3. How would you describe your experience with accessing healthcare services in Kenya? What are some of the challenges you have faced?
4. What are some of the barriers you have faced in accessing education? How do you think these barriers could be addressed?
5. Have you been able to find work in Kenya? What are some of the challenges you have faced in finding employment?
6. Can you describe your experience with the legal system in Kenya? Have you faced any challenges related to your refugee status or legal rights?
7. How can the government and other stakeholders work together to promote peaceful coexistence between refugees and the host community?
8. Imagine that you are a policymaker in charge of designing programs to help refugees integrate into Kenyan society. What would be your top three priorities and why?
9. You are a person who has been living in Nairobi for one year. You are interested in starting your own business, but you do not have access to the resources or support you need to get started. What would you like to see happen in order to help you start your own business? How could the government or NGOs help you in this situation?

Appendix G. Interview guide UN agencies

Questions for UN agencies

1. Can you describe your role and responsibilities within the UN agency with respect to refugee issues?
2. How do you assess the current situation for refugees in Kenya?
3. Have you experienced any challenges in the implementation of the new Refugee Act 2021 by the government?
4. What steps are being taken by the UN agencies to ensure the protection of refugee rights in Kenya, particularly with regards to healthcare, education, and employment?
5. How does the UN agency engage with local communities and stakeholders in Kenya to support durable solutions for refugees?
6. How do you see the intersection between humanitarian assistance, development, and peacebuilding in your work with refugees in Kenya?
7. How do you involve refugees in the design, implementation, and evaluation of projects and programs in Kenya?
8. How do UN agencies support local integration efforts in Kakuma refugee camp?
9. How do UN agencies balance the needs of refugees with those of the host community in its local integration efforts in Kakuma?