COVID-19, Food Insecurity and South Sudanese Urban Refugees in Nairobi and Nakuru, Kenya

Cherie Enns, Samuel Owuor, Abbey Lin, Natasha Knebelow, Jacqueline Fanta, Cobby Achieng, William Kolong and Kristin Swardh

Migration & Food Security (MiFOOD)

Paper No. 19

Abstract

The challenges and struggles of refugees are well documented, mainly within refugee camps. However, more needs to be documented and understood about the exertions and hardships of urban refugees, including the experiences of young South Sudanese urban refugees living in Kenya. Although Kenya is one of the major countries that hosts refugees from South Sudan, it has adopted disparate policies for refugees in camp settings and those outside the camps. This divergent approach placed urban South Sudanese refugee youth in highly precarious circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rampant food insecurity for refugee youth was one of the key negative consequences. Applying a mixed-methods approach, including analysis of transcripts of focus group sessions and a review of food diaries, the results weave a narrative that provides insights to government, policymakers, community leaders, and donors responding to youth urban refugees to design more spatially and socially inclusive urban spaces.

Keywords

COVID-19, food security, South Sudan, refugees, migrants, youth, gender

Suggested Citation

Authors

Cherie Enns, Planning, Geography and Environmental Studies, University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, Canada

Samuel Owuor, Department of Geography, Population and Environmental Studies, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya

Abbey Lin, University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, Canada

Natasha Knebelow, University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, Canada

Jacqueline Fanta, University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, Canada

Cobby Achieng, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya

William Kolong, Pan Awell Development Agency

Kristin Swardh, University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, Canada

Cover Image

Focus group graphic recording by Sherald Elly, FactArt

Introduction

Globally, 1 in 3 persons, or 2.37 billion people, experienced food insecurity in 2020. This figure represents an increase of 320 million people in 2020 alone who did not have access to adequate quantity and quality of food (FAO 2021). The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent mitigation efforts put in place by many countries triggered a global crisis of immobility, resulting in disproportionate negative outcomes for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, who experienced intensified inequalities, worsened food insecurity, and increased socioeconomic vulnerability (Crush, Thomaz and Ramachandran 2021, Doustmohammadian et al. 2022, FAO 2021, Onyango, Crush and Owuor 2021). New studies have underscored the need for additional research related to the broadest implications of the pandemic for migrants and refugees, with a particular emphasis on understanding the unique challenges faced by different genders and ages in these contexts (Crush, Thomaz and Ramachandran 2021, WFP 2020).

A substantial portion of the people experiencing food security live in the continent of Africa, with an estimated 490 million people living in extreme poverty, indicating the definitive prevalence of food insecurity in the region (UNCTAD 2021). Considering the relationship between poverty, malnutrition, and food insecurity as critical influencers of migration (FAO 2021), examining these factors, as well as the role of COVID-19, is crucial, given the context of migration in Kenya. There is a regular entry of refugees into Kenya from neighbouring countries such as Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania (IHD 2020). South Sudan, where ongoing conflict persists, gained its independence in 2011. Over 4 million people were displaced when civil war broke out in this newly-formed country in 2013 (World Bank 2021). As South Sudanese citizens fled to neighbouring countries, Kenya saw a surge of refugees cross across its borders. Many South Sudanese refugees have sought asylum in Kenya because of its inclusive, 'open-door' asylum policy.

This paper seeks to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security among urban refugees in East Africa. It focuses on the lived experiences of South Sudanese youth refugees residing in Nairobi and Nakuru, Kenya. The paper offers analysis to fully comprehend the needs, challenges, and policy responses affecting urban youth refugees and improve strategies to respond to and address these challenges. The urbanization of refugees is on the rise, so it is more important than ever now to understand the linkages between food security, refugees, urban spaces and the unfolding of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conflict and Displacement in South Sudan

The South Sudanese community has a complex history, which dates to the colonial period when the British colonized Sudan. Sudan gained independence in 1956, but the north-south divide that emerged during the colonial period persisted (Ohio State University 2019, Seri-Hersch 2017). These sharp cleavages eventually led to civil wars in the country from 1955 to 1972 and again between 1983 and 2005 (Relief Web 2000). The second civil war was the most devastating, lasting over two decades and leading to millions of South Sudanese people being displaced (Relief Web 2000, World Bank 2022a), with many ending up in Kenya.

The South Sudanese refugees who found their way to Kenya did not do so without facing considerable challenges, including discrimination, harassment, lack of access to essential services, education and almost no economic opportunities, among other challenges (Jok and Mayai 2018). In 2011, South Sudan gained independence from Sudan, but this too resulted in renewed conflict and violence. Once again, South Sudan witnessed a civil war that lasted seven years (Human Rights Watch 2023, Jok and Mayai 2018). The continued political instability and conflict in the region, coupled with the recent extreme famine conditions and lack of economic opportunities, preclude South Sudanese refugees from returning to their country of origin.

Refugees in Kenya

Kenya has a rich history of hosting migrants and refugees seeking safety and better opportunities driven by factors such as food insecurity, conflict, limited economic opportunities, and extreme climate conditions in their countries of origin (WFP 2020). Some of the oldest refugee camps in Africa are in Kenya, namely, Dadaab and Kakuma, which are home to significant populations from Somalia (54 percent), South Sudan (25 percent) and Democratic Republic of Congo (9 percent) (FAO 2021, IHD 2020). However, in March 2021, the Government of Kenya announced they would close refugee camps (UNHCR n.d) with a plan for local integration and resettlement.

Kenya is attractive to migrants and refugees due to its centrality, available land, global connections, established migrant communities, arable land for farming and developed infrastructure (IHD 2020). As of 2022, Kenya had a total population of 54,027,487 million people with diverse international and internal migration backgrounds (World Bank 2022b). However, the continued inflows of migrants and refugees into the country has increased cultural, social, economic, political and resource use tensions between the host community and migrant and refugee populations (Betts et al. 2018, Elfversson et al. 2023, Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano 2010).

Despite being overcrowded, refugee camps function as crucial hubs to provide essential services for refugees, including facilitating access to food, educational opportunities and health services. The adverse circumstances refugees face in their well-being coalesce with reliance on the structured resources that the camps provide. The decision to remain in the camp goes beyond access to basic needs, as refugees can face fines or imprisonment if they live outside designated camps without proper authorization, contradicting Kenya's international obligations on freedom of movement for refugees (NRC 2018, Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano 2010). While statistics of registered refugees can be found; the number of refugees residing in Kenya is believed to be much higher, as refugees who do not pass through the designated camps are likely not to be registered with the authorities (UNHCR n.d).

The Refugees Act 2006 provided a framework for recognition, protection and management of refugees in Kenya. This Act has since been replaced by the Refugees Act 2021 which seeks to respond to the current context of refugee management in the country. The Refugees Act 2021 seeks to secure new rights and protections for refugees and asylum seekers through policies that protect their right to participate in various levels of the economy and social development (UNHCR n.d). Moreover, in 2017, the government drafted a Kenya National Migration Policy, which is yet to be adopted, with an overarching goal of providing guidelines for migration management (IOM 2018). However, Campbell (2006) and IHD (2020) argue that there is need for actionable measures to effectively uphold the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.

Upon arrival in Kenya, refugees have 30 days to register themselves, which most often occurs at a refugee camp. If refugees head straight to the cities, they require more support and guidance to complete the registration procedure. Language barriers and limited understanding of the legal framework further complicate efforts to differentiate between asylum seekers and economic migrants, leading to the inaccurate application of the migration regulatory framework and misclassification of legitimate refugees (IHD 2020). Moreover, Kenya's law enforcement agencies have experienced difficulties in recognizing and differentiating between legitimate asylum seekers and migrants with unresolved immigration status. Authorities and refugees alike are unclear about the types of documentation required and the rights of refugees in the country, leaving refugees in the cities without any assistance or legal protection from government officials, UNHCR and NGOs (Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano 2010).

Urban refugees, which is the focus of this paper, refers to refugees who have sought refuge in urban areas rather than the traditional camp settings in the host country. Since the concept was introduced in 1967, urban refugees have been historically regarded and conceived as a problem, mirroring the broader discourse surrounding refugee populations (Crisp 2017). In 2009, UNHCR repositioned their stance on urban refugees to expand their protective space, by indicating that urban areas "are a legitimate place for refugees to enjoy their rights, including those stemming from their status as refugees" (UNHCR 2009, p.5). The distinctive dynamics of urban refugee populations, characterized by their integration into local communities, present a challenge for humanitarian agencies in identification and assistance efforts in contrast to refugees in camp settings.

In contrast to the relatively confined environments of refugee camps, cities allow refugees to live independently, earn a livelihood, and work towards a brighter future. Many leave the camps for cities to improve their access to education and look for better opportunities. However, cities also come with their own set of unique challenges. Urban refugees often find themselves without the same level of support and engagement that they experienced in the camps. Generally, refugees, as legal "non-citizens," have distinctive legal and administrative constraints that limit their ability to secure

formal employment and freedom of movement despite provisions in the 1951 Refugee Convention (Omata 2020). While refugees can apply for a work permit and business licence, there are many barriers to the process and issues of identification documents (Vuni and Iragi 2023).

The complex systemic barriers urban refugees encounter profoundly impact their daily lives and overall well-being. Urban refugees frequently contend with legal and protection challenges resulting from formal status issues, discrimination, and barriers to accessing essential services and legal remedies. They also experience challenges of inadequate housing, underemployment, and marginalization (Addaney 2015, Bhagat 2020, Pape et al. 2022), and often compete with local workers for low-wage jobs (UNHCR n.d.). They face educational barriers such as non-recognition of prior learning in their country of origin, different educational experiences and linguistic competencies, and restricted access to birth certificates for refugee children. These challenges are made more difficult due to their vulnerability to constant risk of arrest and detention, harassment, extortion, susceptibility to sexual and gender-based violence, and exposure to human smuggling or trafficking.

The absence of relief agencies for urban refugees exacerbates their precarious situation, which has a direct negative effect on their food security situation and the difficulties they face in accessing essential services. It is estimated that over 60 percent of Kenya's urban refugees experience food insecurity, which is more evident in Nakuru, where 82 percent of the refugees originate from South Sudan (Pape et al. 2022, UNHCR n.d). Due to food insecurity, urban refugees often find themselves forced to accept whatever food is available, even if it does not align with their preferences, sometimes leading adults to forgo their meals to ensure that children are fed (UNHCR n.d).

According to the 2020-2021 Socio-Economic Survey of Refugees in Kenya, approximately 16 percent of refugees in Kenya reside in urban areas, a rate that continues to increase at about 4.4 percent annually, while the remaining majority (84 percent) are situated within camps (Pape et al. 2022). Figure 1 is a summary of urban refugees in Kenya by main countries of origin and location. The Socio-Economic Survey incorporates socioeconomic indicators at both household and individual levels, providing an inclusive overview of demographics, disabilities, housing characteristics, and access to services for both refugees and host communities while also exploring refugee-specific details related to livelihoods, education, food security, social cohesion, displacement trajectories, and intentions to move (Pape et al. 2022).

Using the Socio-Economic Survey findings (Pape et al. 2022), this paper highlights the following key aspects of the urban refugee situation in Kenya:

• 42 percent of working-age urban refugees are employed. Women are more likely than men to be self-employed in non-agricultural businesses, with domestic labour and petty trade common. Some urban refugees are involved in small businesses such as kiosks and restaurants,

Figure 1: Urban Refugees in Kenya by Main Countries of Origin and Location
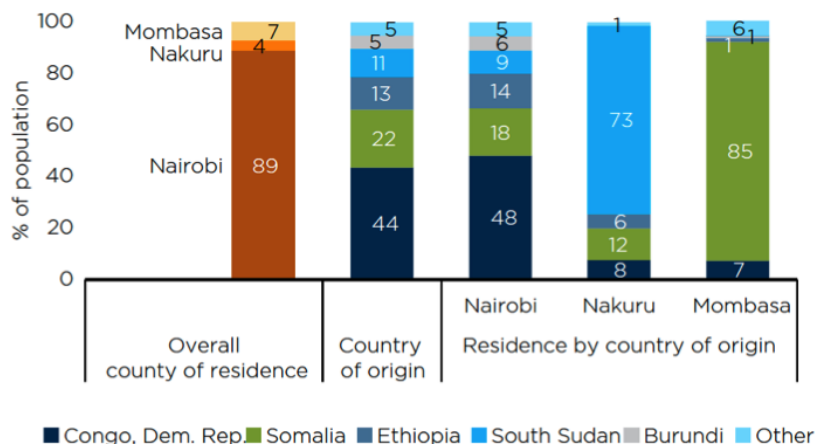
Source: Pape et al., 2022

driving taxis and *matatus* (privately owned minibuses), and running hairdressing salons.

- Among those outside the labour force, the main obstacles to securing employment are limited job opportunities and inadequate skills. In contrast, the primary support needed includes loans or credit and documentation.

- The common challenges faced by Nakuru-based refugees are exacerbated by staggering levels of food insecurity (82 percent) and low employment rates (12 percent). Nakuru hosts a significant young refugee population, mostly South Sudanese women-headed households.

- Urban refugees are more likely to have disabilities than urban nationals, with visual difficulties being the most common health challenge.

- Urban refugees' enrolment rates in educational institutions are strikingly low, especially for secondary schools. Women are less likely to have formal education than men. Different educational experiences and linguistic competencies can result in students falling behind or dropping out.

- Urban refugees are more likely to live in overcrowded rooms than urban citizens.

- Camp-based refugees have greater access to bank accounts but lower access to mobile banking and loans than urban refugees.

- Approximately 60 percent of urban refugee households, particularly those with fewer employed members, experience food insecurity and resort to consumption-based strategies.

- Camp-based refugees are less likely to have positive perceptions of trust in the host community; however, their perceptions of security are better than those of urban-based refugees. Approximately 93 percent of urban refugee households wish to leave Kenya, with less than 1 percent wanting to return to their country of origin, and most desiring to move to a different country. Despite

these strong migration aspirations, the average refugee in urban Kenya has resided in this country for seven years.

- Urban refugees in Kenya are characterized by a younger population, with 45 percent of them being 18 years and below (UNHCR n.d). Youth aged 15 to 19 years old make up the highest percentage of urban refugees (Figure 2)

COVID-19 containment measures that restricted mobility and disrupted food distribution pushed urban refugees, who were already vulnerable, at greater risk of poverty and food insecurity. Generally, there was a significant rise in food prices, widespread loss of employment and a critical disruption in remittance flows, which are integral to urban refugees' survival (Crush, Thomaz and Ramachandran 2021). Moreover, due to their legal status and precarious employment and living conditions, urban refugees were more vulnerable to COVID-19 illness and complications, and limited access to formal healthcare systems (Molenaar and Van Praag 2022). As migration continues, comprehending the intricate connections between food security, migrant populations, urban environments, gender dynamics, and the profound impact of COVID-19 have become critical topics for discourse. In fact, the increasing challenges of migration and food insecurity continue to be a significant concern in the global south (Onyango, Crush and Owuor 2021).

Figure 2: Age and Gender Distribution of Urban Refugees in Kenya
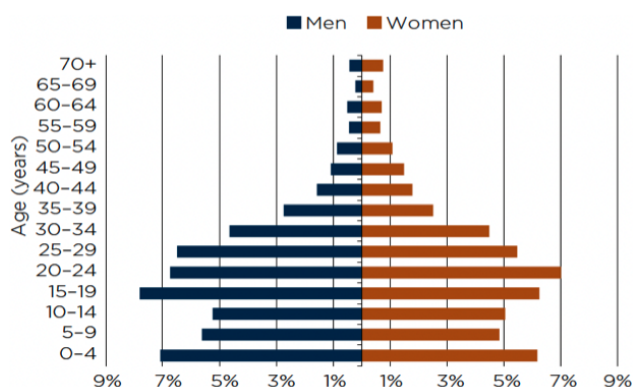
Source: Pape et al., 2022

Consequently, this calls for systematic research and information on urban refugees to understand their unique challenges (Malik 2023), including food security and broader systemic barriers that they encounter. This need for more research was emphasized as early as 2010 (Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano 2010). Moreover, the dynamic landscape of refugee situations in Kenya prompts the need for nuanced policy analysis to comprehensively explore the factors and policies influencing urban refugees' resettlement experiences.

Methodology and Data Collection

The study was approved by the University of Fraser Valley's Human Research Ethics Board (protocol number: 101144), as well as a research permit from Kenya's National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI/P/22/22432). The study is a collaborative, interdisciplinary research project carried out by the University of Nairobi and the University of the Fraser Valley under the MiFOOD Project of the Hungry Cities Partnership and MiFOOD Network. The findings are drawn from three focus group sessions held on the 2nd and 3rd of December 2022 (Table 1). The focus groups were semi-structured with guided questions (Table 2). A narrative approach was taken, having participants sit together and share their experiences and struggles as urban refugees in Kenya. Participants ranged from registered urban refugees to refugees still registered at a camp but opting to live in urban locations such as Nairobi or Nakuru. Food diaries were also distributed to be filled out by the participants, with the option to bring in any art or photos to express their situation with food access and consumption. This case study provides a personal account of the experiences of South Sudanese urban refugees. Similarities among experiences are analyzed while still including the narrative aspect of personal stories.

With the support of South Sudanese community leaders, the research team recruited 58 male and female South Sudanese participants, aged between 19 and 32 years old, who had recently arrived in Nairobi or Nakuru, Kenya. The participants were recruited using the exponential discriminative snowball sampling method in collaboration with South Sudanese community leaders. The three focus group sessions were (1) all male, with 28 participants; (2) all female with 13 participants; and (3) a mixed group of 3 females and 14 males. The all-male and all-female groups were South Sudanese refugees living in Nairobi, while the mixed group was from Nakuru (Table 1). The sessions were all held in an accessible community location in Nairobi, Kenya and facilitated by William Kolong. A local illustrator was brought in to observe and illustrate the key concepts and themes emerging from the sessions.

The study collected both quantitative and qualitative data. The interview transcripts were later organized, and units of meaning were developed using NVivo software. Following all ethics and safeguarding protocols, the researchers conducted community member-checking to confirm understanding. The South Sudanese community leaders' lived experiences were included in the project's conceptualization, design, and facilitation. They assisted in providing insight and wisdom as a community leader and recruiting participants for the focus groups. The qualitative data seeks to explore the stories of the migrants through semi-structured focus groups. During the focus group sessions, the participants were asked questions related to food security, including access to food and food availability (Table 2).

Table 2: Focus Group Questions on Food Security
1. How has the availability and accessibility of food changed since COVID-19?
2. Did the government do anything to support food security during COVID-19? If so, (a)how; (b) have they been beneficial or not; and (c) what was the support from organizations for food security like before COVID-19?
3. Have any organizations (for and non-profit) intervened to support food security during COVID-19? If so, (a) how; (b) have they been beneficial or not; and (c) what was the support from organizations for food security like before COVID-19?
4. Have the local communities done anything to support food security during COVID-19? If so, (a) how; (b) have they been beneficial or not; and (c) what was the community support for food security like before COVID-19?
5. Have you heard/experienced/seen any innovative ways developed for food security?
6. Do you have any suggestions or ideas for strengthening food security for South Sudanese urban refugees?

Participants were also asked to fill out a food diary and indicate how often and how much they ate throughout the week (Table 3). They were encouraged to bring any artwork or photos portraying their food situation. The combination of these two aspects of the study, including discussions during focus group sessions, highlighted what food security meant to the participants, encouraging a debate about interventions and innovations with critical stakeholders to address food security challenges among urban refugees. The focus group sessions were recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed to address the research questions.

Table 3: Food Diary Template					
Sunday	Time	Food	Quantity	Where it was obtained	Mood

Table 1: Session Demographics December 2022		
Session	Participants	Gender
1 (Nairobi)	28	All male
2 (Nairobi)	13	All female
3 (Nakuru)	17	Female (3)
		Male (14)

Key Findings

Specific themes were underscored in all the focus group sessions, as illustrated in Figures 3, 4, and 5. Across the three sessions, resource allocation, corruption, limiting policies and identity formation were the main issues underscored by most participants. They pointed out that urban refugees strive for empowerment and agency. However, they are not able to achieve this independence and self-sufficiency because of Kenya's policies that require them to stay within the refugee camps. In addition, refugees living in cities lacked the same support that their counterparts in the refugee camps were provided. When support, such as money or supplies, is provided by organizations, it is distributed unequally due to a lack of transparency and communication between refugees and the organization. The concept of community cohesion emerged as a theme, specifically how COVID-19 affected their ability to gather and share meals. In the women's focus group, self-identity, dignity, and family were often considered the core impactful aspects of their lives.

Limited Resources

Limited resources, coupled with a weak economic support, is an important challenge highlighted by most participants. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the participants noted that they were supported financially mainly by their family members, local communities, other South Sudanese mem-
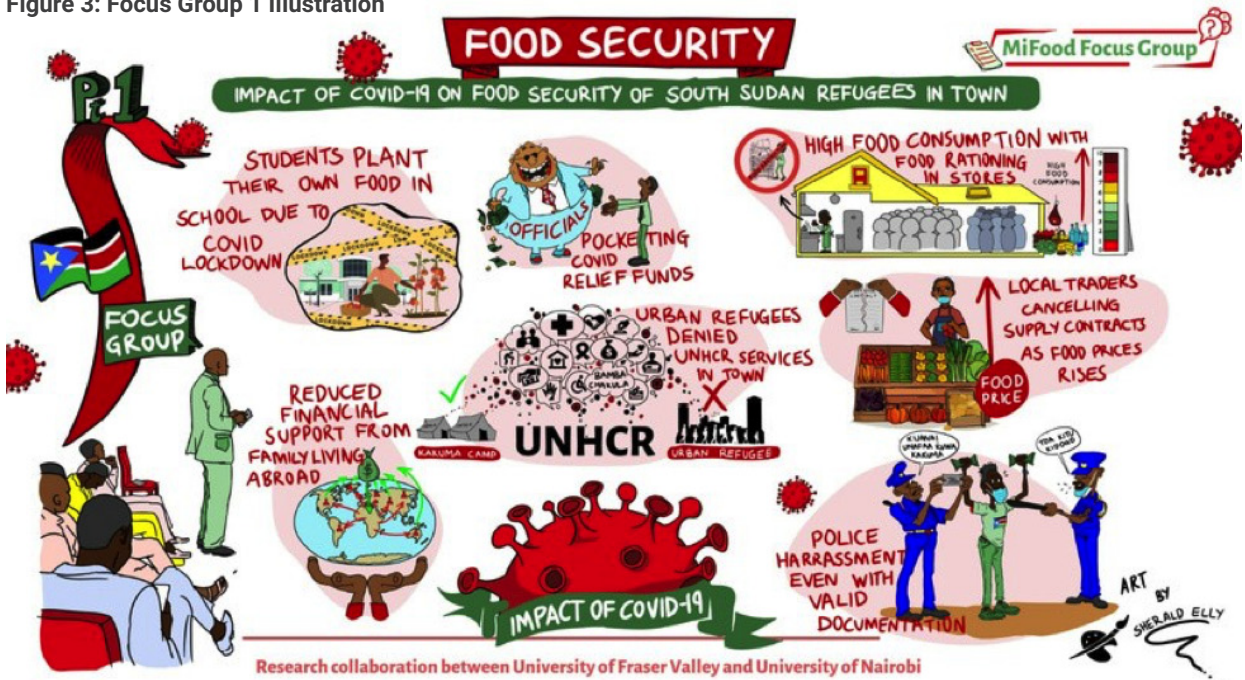
Figure 3: Focus Group 1 Illustration

Figure 4: Focus Group 2 Illustration

Figure 5: Focus Group 3 Illustration

bers, and from abroad (Table 4). Most of the participants mentioned that they received remittances sent from family or friends living in other countries before the pandemic. But these remittance flows decreased during the pandemic and had not returned to the pre-pandemic level. Religious organizations and churches in other countries provided some additional support to urban refugees in Nairobi and Nakuru.

Table 4: Types of Support During COVID-19	
Type of support	**Frequency of code**
Family	8
South Sudanese	6
Local community	6
Abroad	5
Organizations	4

Government agencies and international organizations such as the UNHCR were often discussed negatively regarding economic support offered to urban refugees. A male participant shared this observation, "[I] neither had assistance during COVID-19 or after. You have got neither UNHCR [nor] your government. That is a big no. [I was left] alone regarding food to assist the people." The participant expressed strong dissatisfaction with the lack of support, particularly food-focused assistance. Another male participant felt that there was a lack of transparency in how funds are allocated and shared that "refugees have been locked up [isolated], they don't even have access to the money being given by the donors."

Given the lack of direct support available, urban refugees were forced to rely on the decreased remittances sent by their families and friends. A female participant spoke about the difficulties of depending largely on external family support to survive, particularly from distant relatives. The participant also highlighted the scarcity of resources by sharing that "there is [not] any means of getting survival," suggesting that if she did not have access to alternative means of support, she would be experiencing harsh and tragic vulnerabilities affecting her family's existence:

> We don't get food unless I talk to my relatives who are far away to give us something to eat. That is how we survived. Other than that, there is [not] any means of survival here in Nairobi.

When discussing availability and access to food, a male refugee participant explained how the pandemic compelled refugees to unite and share limited resources, including their living spaces. He talked about being "stopped almost at gunpoint [to procure food]," noting the heightened competition and scarcity of essential supplies during the pandemic. At the same time, he noted that South Sudanese refugees came together as a community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

> We used to have a larger quantity of food in our houses. But when COVID came, it reduced because South Sudanese would adopt the concept of living together. Many people whose houses were close came in, and you share the little room you have, and now the demand for food increases. You are stopped almost at the gunpoint when you go to the supermarket. [You] drop that one and pick this one because the other person can pick the rest. So, it was a challenge that the food or the quantity you could consume was reduced.

Another participant pointed to the support and services available to refugees in camps compared to those living in cities. Registered refugees residing in camps receive essential services, such as food and healthcare, whereas once

they switch their status to an urban refugee, much of the support is lost. While the participant acknowledged she is formally recognized as a refugee, she has been often forced to support herself in the challenging urban environment.

> *If you're registered in the camp, there's food, there's free hospital, at least there's something you're given. But being an urban refugee, the only thing that you're given is the status. They [the government] don't support you to support yourself.*

Many participants expressed their frustrations about the lack of support from the South Sudan Embassy in Kenya and the Kenyan government. In addition, the participants highlighted the service gap, where refugees registered as "urban" cannot access the resources and support provided to refugees registered in a camp such as Kakuma. Not being able to access basic resources adds to the vulnerability of urban refugee and limits their socioeconomic integration in cities.

Inadequate and Corrupt Policies or Programmes

Urban refugees would like a conducive environment where they can freely apply for business licences and move freely without fear of police harassment. However, many felt this was impossible due to the current policies and corruption, which were further exacerbated during the pandemic. Many female refugees were operating small businesses, selling beads and clothes, and offering tailoring services, which they used to support their families. However, hurdles to the acquisition of business permits make it difficult for them to establish proper businesses and have a sustainable income. Furthermore, pre-existing programs that supported women-operated businesses were temporarily shut down during the pandemic due to the mobility restrictions and public health measures that were put in place by the government.

A participant discussed the profound economic shocks for their businesses due to the lockdowns, abrupt declines in consumer spending tied to economic contractions and stringent restrictions on movement within the city. Besides the national curfew, mobility restrictions and physical distancing measures, Nairobi was one of the cities in Kenya that experienced lockdown unlike the rest of the country. The lockdown, operational between April and June 2020, restricted movement into and out of Nairobi. In addition, the government prohibited hawking and gatherings and ordered closure of public spaces, malls, markets, restaurants and eateries. A direct effect of these developments was increased food insecurity for urban refugee households. "Everyone is feeling the effect of COVID-19," a female participant noted, conveying that the pandemic had far-reaching consequences that transcended refugee status, with marked adverse consequences for vulnerable communities.

> *My mom has a store where she sells clothes. It was tough because you find that there are no customers coming by because everyone is feeling the effect of COVID. Everyone is indoors, and getting money to buy food is difficult.*

Identity Formation and Refugee Identity

The theme of self-identity versus the refugee label was another key aspect emerging during the focus group discussions (Figure 6). The exercise of individual agency, or the ability to affect or direct change in their own lives and existing conditions, was a common challenge faced by participants due to their refugee status and perception of refugee youth. Participants wanted to avoid living out their lives in refugee camps and clearly expressed their preference to move to cities where there are more opportunities and be able to rebuild their lives by establishing businesses or pursuing their education. They accentuated the difficulties of being subjected to multiple stereotypes associated with the label or tag 'refugee'. Because of these stereotypes, their appearance and how they presented themselves had been questioned and denigrated. Participants noted that even though the 'refugee' label defined their formal status in Kenya, they wanted to maintain their distinctive cultural identity through their attire and without losing their self-dignity. Being South Sudanese and identifying within the South Sudanese culture and community was a core expression of their self-identity,

Figure 6: Concept Map of Identity for Urban South Sudanese Refugee Youth

Source: Authors' Construct, 2023

as accentuated by most participants. For refugee youth, empowerment was achieved through the support of family, friends, and the South Sudanese community.

When asked why they chose to move to the urban areas, the participants shared how they viewed themselves as more than only a "refugee" and did not want to be characterized in a limited manner by their refugee status for the rest of their lives. They said that they attempted to empower themselves and support each other to pursue what they wanted to do regardless of their refugee status and the struggles they faced because of this label.

> *I just wanted to explore. You know, to be a refugee, it doesn't mean that you have to be in the camp. You also have to meet people, interact and expand your brain because you cannot be born as a refugee and die at 13.*

A female participant remarked that refugees are expected to conform to the stereotype of extreme poverty to receive assistance or empathy. She explained that urban refugees do not fit the traditional image of refugees in camps and felt that support should be based on something other than appearances or location, by focusing only on need.

> *What I'm trying to say here is [that] you don't have to look like a beggar for somebody to help you. That's the problem. Also, with the UN and the rest of the world. They want to see refugees as refugees in the camp.*

Among the focus groups, there were challenges that both male and female participants faced. At the same time, shared issues and societal and cultural factors affect how each gender experiences it. While both men and women mentioned security as an important challenge, women refugees were particularly mentioned as being more vulnerable to kidnappings. Women being "kidnapped" was mentioned throughout the focus group discussion, although the participants did not explain the identity of the kidnappers.

Food Diaries and Refugee Food Insecurity

The food diaries completed by the participants during the focus group sessions (Figure 7) showed that many typically consumed only two meals a day (Table 5). These meals were generally described as single servings, although the participants frequently reported that their mood was "happy" while consuming these meals. Most meals were home-cooked,

but some participants, particularly the male participants, obtained some of their meals from informal restaurants known locally as *kibanda*. Many participants engaged in food-sharing practices, purchasing, and distributing items acquired from supermarkets, shops, local kiosks, or street markets. The commonly consumed items included rice, beans, *ugali*, and meat and included some vegetables, such as spinach and kale. No fruits were listed in the commonly consumed food items.

Figure 7: Participants filling out their food diaries

(Photo credit: Natasha Knebelow, 2022)

The study findings suggest that although participants have actively developed strategies to manage their food security challenges, such as sharing resources and maintaining positive attitudes during mealtimes, there are strong indications of food insecurity among South Sudanese urban refugees. The less than adequate frequency and size of their meals are important dimensions of food insecurity.

Many participants discussed the multiple and intersecting challenges they faced as urban refugees, such as lack of agency, corruption, stereotypes, and economic hardships (Figure 8). Their sense of personal identity is challenged by stereotypes through harassment from police and profiling by employers and locals. Economic challenges such as the affordability of groceries are made more difficult due to discrimination from employers and the inability to obtain business permits. The failure to obtain business permits revealed the connection of lack of agency, which presented many challenges to the participants. With the impacts of COVID-19, participants' lack of agency and economic challenges became more intense as things began to shut down. Participants who were students found themselves unable to attend classes as things shifted online and laptops were unaffordable to them, leave alone access to stable and affordable Internet.

Table 5: Daily Food Diary Analysis Summary Chart			
Most commonly eaten foods	**Areas where meals are mainly obtained**	**Average meals per day**	**Average mood**
Ugali, rice, *chapati*, *injera*, beef, beans, cabbage, kale (*Sukuma wiki*), spaghetti, fish, lentils, spinach, bread, *mandazi*, eggs, porridge	Home, restaurant, school	2	Happy

Throughout the three focus group sessions, a significant challenge that emerged was the Government of Kenya's policies and practices that tend to push refugees to stay in camps. The participants shared the challenge that they, just as much as everyone else, want to live a life where they are empowered to achieve agency rather than being confined in a camp for the rest of their lives. Many participants shared their struggles with moving around Nairobi, where they are often asked why they are not in a refugee camp (e.g., Kakuma). The reasons they identified for not wanting to stay in refugee camps included security issues and lack of opportunities. The discussion led to the participants expressing their struggles to obtain food in urban areas, as they struggle with getting work or do what they want to earn money to purchase food. While refugees can apply for a work permit and business licence, there are many barriers to the process, including identification documents of the refugee status, which some of them may be lacking.

The all-male focus group had 28 participants who were living in Nairobi. This group's main challenges during and after COVID-19 were police harassment, a significant rise in food prices, discrimination, and general lack of support from the government and the South Sudan embassy in Kenya. However, they noted that some organizations had helped provide cooking oil, soap, maize, flour, and beans to them. Religious organizations, for example, churches in Australia, were mentioned for having extended assistance to them. However, they indicated that a transparent donor platform with trustworthy distribution methods was needed to address corruption in such interventions.

The all-female focus group session had 13 participants, who were living in Nairobi. This focus group faced similar challenges to the all-male group during and after COVID-19. For example, participants spoke about police harassment and their inability to access services as urban refugees outside the refugee camp. The female refugee group discussion highlighted that many of their businesses were negatively affected due to curfews and other public health restrictions through the course of the pandemic. In addition, access to education became difficult as most schools conducted on-line classes, making it difficult for as their children required laptops, smartphones, and Internet access for it. Like the all-male first focus group, many women participants mentioned the host community's unfriendliness especially when they lived in refugee camps like Kakuma. This focus group was concerned about the gender-based insecurities, since refugee women are at a higher risk of being abducted. When asked for their thoughts or solutions to this problem, they suggested that the Government of Kenya should address the harassment of urban refugees by the police.

The final focus group session had 17 participants, consisting of three females and 14 males living in Nakuru. The South Sudanese refugees living in Nakuru experienced multiple challenges like those of their Nairobi counterparts. The participants identified harassment by police and lack of support from the governments of Kenya and South Sudan and other organizations including the UNHCR as their key problems. Most participants found themselves in challenging situations when they could not acquire the kind of support that those in the camps received, including being unable to access some resources, such as in Nakuru, because they were not citizens.

Some social practices among the South Sudanese refugee community compound these challenges. For example, participants explained that they like living together as a mini-community in extended households. In some cases, up to 20 people live in one household, making it challenging to provide food for everyone when most members have no real source of income. The participants spoke about collectivism and generosity as socially valued among the

Figure 8: Concept Map of Challenges for Urban South Sudanese Refugee Youth
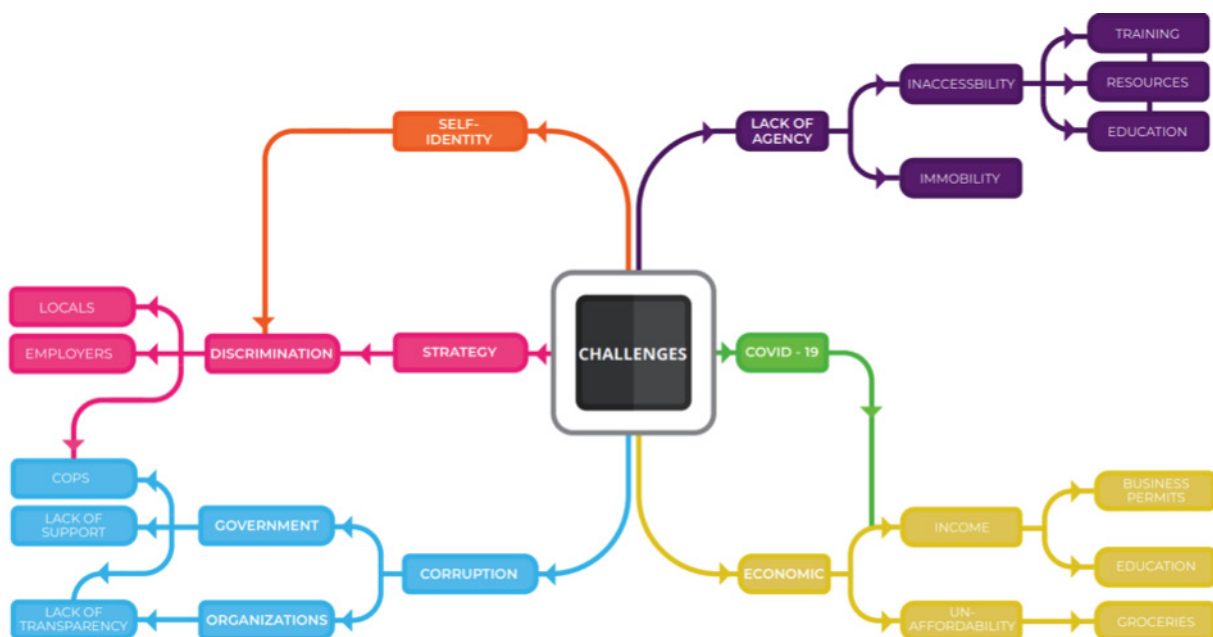
Source: Authors' Construct, 2023

South Sudanese community, which includes sharing meals with other members outside their family and household who may not have anything to eat. However, the movement restrictions during COVID-19 made meeting and supporting each other more difficult. Furthermore, the global economic consequences of COVID-19 had a marked negative effect on remittances and many participants received much less than expected or in lower frequency.

Support came in many forms from family, friends, government organizations, local communities in the residential neighbourhoods, and non-governmental organizations (Figure 9). Many participants found support through their family, friends, and the South Sudanese community in Kenya. A common way of helping was that groups of friends would pool small amounts of money together and send money to whoever in the group needed it most. Family and friends living abroad would also often send remittances. The local community in the residential neighbourhoods often provided emotional support through supporting each other and having each other over to share food, this branch of support was heavily challenged during the restrictions of COVID-19. Non-governmental organizations such as church groups, both local and international, provided supplies such as masks, soap, and groceries during COVID-19. A few NGOs also established programmes to provide training for jobs and education, though many of these were shut down during the pandemic. The participants noted that urban refugees need support from organizations such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) more than those living in refugee camps. Most of their financial support came from cash remittances from family or friends, also negatively affected during COVID-19. In addition, food support programmes, also known as *bamba chakula* (to get food), slowed down significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants expressed that they struggled to get enough food and, in extreme cases, allowed younger members and children in their families to eat instead of them. In other cases, some refugees dropped out of school to support their families.

When discussing solutions to these challenges, many participants favoured proposals that would empower them and provide them with greater agency to shape their own lives and their economic activities. Some suggestions included having the South Sudanese Ambassador(s) and political leaders connected with or living in Kenya being more actively involved with the urban refugee population and enabling the refugee-led organizations within Nairobi to make it easier for refugees to access basic services. It was also mentioned that it would be beneficial to learn from the pro-active refugee policies of neighbouring countries like Uganda on how they approach refugee support and empowerment, especially their strategy of providing land and gardening tools for refugees to develop land and farm for themselves. However, another participant felt that offering refugees land in Kenya would lead to more conflicts, as land issues are highly contentious in Kenya. Funding small business start-ups was also put forward, which would increase the agency of refugees and allow them to afford adequate types and amounts of food rather than rely on external support, which most participants felt only reinforces refugee dependency.

When asked what researchers can do to support their community, participants expressed the need for policy responsiveness and decision-making transparency. Many said that organizations or researchers come and ask them questions and then leave, never to be heard from again, consequently leaving refugees out of the influential decision-making and transformation processes that shape refugee lives.

Urban Refugees and Kenya's Refugee Legislation

National and international legislation are important components of refugee resettlement and integration in the hosting countries. Kenya adopted its national refugee legislation in 2006 to enact the provisions articulated in the 1951 UNHCR Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention. This legislation established the Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA), which was later replaced by the Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS) in 2016 and updated in 2022. In 2017, the RAS assumed a central role of overseeing the reception, registration, documentation, refugee status determination, and overall refugee management, with active support from the UNHCR. Following the determination of their status, refugees are expected to receive a refugee identity card, specifically, the 'Alien Refugee Certificate,' issued by the government that is valid for a period of five years.

In response to the need for expansive strategies to effectively address protracted refugee crises as articulated in the Global Compact on Refugees, Kenya has implemented

Figure 9: Mind Map of Support for Urban South Sudanese Refugee Youth
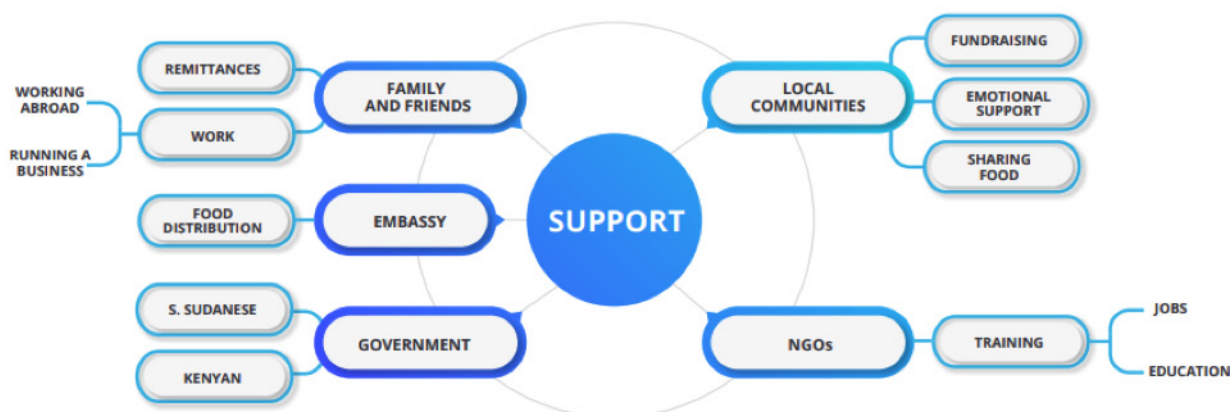
the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) through the Nairobi Declaration. It outlines the three main dimensions of refugee protection and support: enhancing the protection space for asylum seekers and refugees; supporting immediate and ongoing needs of asylum seekers, refugees, and host communities; and finally, promoting regional cooperation and international responsibility sharing in the realization of durable solutions for refugees (Malik, 2023).

These key aspects of the CRRF, along with the enactment of the Refugees Act 2021, mark a significant advancement in promoting and safeguarding refugee rights, addressing the root causes of displacement, and facilitating refugee integration into host communities (Malik 2023). The Refugees Act 2021 reaffirms the government's commitment to protect asylum seekers and furthermore, respond to some of the challenges that refugees encounter in Kenya. The following list summarizes key changes in the Refugees Act 2021 (Government of the Republic of Kenya 2021, RCK 2021):

- The Commissioner is now tasked with maintaining a register of refugees in Kenya.

- The updated Act recognizes vulnerable groups among refugees and asylum seekers, calling for appropriate measures to ensure the safety of women, children, persons with disabilities, older adults, and those who have been traumatized or require special protection.

- It guarantees refugees' right to engage in gainful employment or enterprise.

- It outlines the right of refugees to access and be issued with documentation to facilitate their ability to undertake economic activities.

- The Cabinet Secretary is granted the authority to designate specific counties to host refugees, a departure from the Refugees Act 2006, which only provided for the designation of areas.

- The Commissioner can order the relocation of refugees within designated areas and is responsible for sensitizing host communities about harmonious coexistence with refugees.

- Any refugee or asylum seeker wishing to change their place of residency is required to notify the Commissioner.

- It emphasizes the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees into the Kenyan economic and social activities and processes, promoting access to and recognition of refugee documentation.

- It encourages enhanced collaboration between Kenyans and refugees in the country's economic growth, such as through the payment of taxes.

Under international human rights law, the hosting state is responsible for safeguarding the rights of refugees, irrespective of their geographical location within the country. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the existence of national legislation, laws or policies must translate into adequate implementation of the protection and assistance for refugees. The legal context is especially relevant when considering the perceptions of refugees regarding their influence within the Kenyan political system. In the Socio-Economic Survey of Refugees in Kenya (Pape et al. 2022), nearly 7 out of 10 urban refugees expressed dissatisfaction with their ability to impact government decisions, highlighting a disconnect between national legislation and its practical implementation. However, there is a contrasting view among refugees regarding their capacity to express their opinions and views within their community leadership structures (Pape et al. 2022).

While refugee camps in Kenya have hosted refugees for nearly three decades, the camps and consequently, those residing in the camps face ongoing threats of closure or renewed displacement. The potential closure of the camps is attributed to diverse factors, including increased xenophobia towards Somali refugees following terrorist attacks (Bhagat 2020), negative interactions between host communities and refugees (Enns and Kombe 2023, Veney 2007), especially economic competition.

Discussion and Conclusion

Urban refugees are caught in a paradoxical situation in Kenya. On the one hand, they hold the real potential to contribute to the host country's economy, and on the other hand, they face constant barriers to accessing employment, adequate shelter, and citizenship rights within the context of prevailing urban poverty. These challenges were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Migrants and refugees who were already vulnerable to poverty and food security found themselves in an even more precarious position during the pandemic due to mobility restrictions, lockdown, and exploitation by police. Consequently, their disposability becomes apparent, exposing them to exploitation as they strive for survival within the broader refugee policy framework emphasizing self-reliance (Bhagat 2020).

Urban refugees in Kenya experience the nuanced complexity of their situation, acknowledging their potential economic contributions and the imperative to provide the support that facilitates their integration, all while avoiding reducing their acceptance solely to capitalist endeavours. The management of refugees in Kenya is intricately linked with the broader global political context wherein many governments, including Kenya, deal with economic challenges, necessitating decisions guided by economic imperatives. The governance approach, influenced by historical xenophobic policies and exclusionary practices, not only affects refugees but also impacts Kenya's citizens and other marginalized populations.

As Kenya moves towards a more urban integrative refugee policy, there is much to be learned from Uganda. Uganda

hosts the largest number of refugees in Africa and third globally as of 2020 (UNHCR 2021). Much of their strategies and policies focus on developing self-reliance by granting refugees the right to work, own land, have secure legal status and have freedom of movement (Betts 2021, UNHCR 2021). By July 2020, with the finalization of the National Development Plan, refugees will be fully integrated into national, sectoral, and district planning and statistics (UNHCR 2021). Uganda's approach to self-reliance has been widely praised for its success (Betts 2021). The lead author had an opportunity to work with youth organizations in refugee settlements in Ajumani, Uganda, in 2015. While there are challenges, increasing pressure and issues related to at-time competition with host communities, the opportunity to facilitate a sanctuary culture as a platform to bridge global collaboration is evident.

Globally in receiving countries, urban spaces draw in many asylum-seekers, migrants, and refugees because of the opportunities they present related to employment, economy, and resources (Manfredi-Sanchez 2020). Cities in Kenya such as Nairobi and Nakuru have become a "sanctuary city" for many asylum-seekers and refugees. Recent studies have underscored the need to foster such accommodative spaces, building on the inclusive African philosophy of "Ubuntu", which encourages connectedness and collective consciousness through solidarity and acceptance (Bauder 2023). As our case study shows, there is an urgent need to rethink the role and processes of refugee integration in cities. Participatory planning approach is an important mode through which support for urban refugees, particularly youth, can be enhanced, by highlighting and addressing key issues that circumscribe their lives.

This accommodative urban strategy must be complemented by efforts to clarify and implement existing regulations and policies that give full effect to the socioeconomic rights of refugees contained in the newly adopted refugee legislation in Kenya. An emerging critique by humanitarian relief agencies notes that its important provisions, such as "refugees shall be enabled to contribute to the economic and social development of Kenya" and "a refugee recognized under this Act shall have the right to engage individually or in a group, in gainful employment or enterprise, or to practice a profession or trade where he holds qualifications recognized by competent authorities in Kenya," leaves too much room for interpretation (IRC, nd.). Kassa (2019) contends that urban refugees use their own agency to overcome the barriers and challenges they face. However, there is a need for develop the concept of sanctuary by concretely linking it with spatial justice to enforce meaningful changes in refugee policy in Kenya (Enns and Kombe 2023)

All stakeholders, including humanitarian agencies and governments, must work with refugees, including youth, to strategize how to integrate urban refugees into the socio-economic structure and safeguard their fundamental rights under international law. Safeguarding refugees' fundamental rights aligns with moral and legal obligations to uphold human dignity and justice. In this context, policy changes must be made in collaboration with the local community

for meaningful integration that enhances overall stability and facilitates positive economic and cultural exchanges. Engaging local perspectives informs contextually sensitive policies, ultimately strengthening the effectiveness and sustainability of refugee policies through a collaborative approach.

Historically, the UNHCR mandates that resources within Kenya should focus on the refugees living in refugee camps, which leaves those who choose to leave the camps without much support and, due to their legal status, vulnerability to harassment by local authorities. By strengthening the legal status of urban youth refugees and opening access to business licensing entrepreneurial development, including training and skills enhancement, South Sudanese urban youth refugees will be better able to meet their basic needs and create legitimized businesses. Such skills-building can enhance their livelihood and positively contribute to the economy and community.

The current literature and key results from this study indicate that migration, gender, and poverty are intimately linked with food security for urban youth refugees. As urbanization expands, more and more people migrate to urban spaces for a better future. Stakeholders, community leaders, and the government must work collaboratively to create clear and concise policies and make headway toward meeting targets related to improving migration systems so that everyone can have access to food and the opportunity to work and better themselves. Support in refugee camps can be adequate yet very restrictive regarding life opportunities outside the camps, especially for the youth.

How can policymakers extend assistance and build a framework to recognize, protect and build capacity through supporting urban youth refugees? There is a dire need for neighbouring countries such as South Sudan to work with the Government of Kenya to create clear and smooth immigration policies that are fair and just. As the provisions of the Refugee Act 2021 are implemented, refugee rights will be extended beyond the camps and into urban areas. Yet, the seamless integration of relevant policies into all levels of authority is yet to be realized. Policies currently reinforce dependency, hindering the case of the study of urban youth refugees, restricting agency, and fostering long-term reliance on refugee aid and resources.

Many of the women in the study were prepared and equipped to establish a formal business to earn income. Still, this goal could not be realized because business permits are difficult for refugees. Additionally, the findings of the study indicate the need and desire for a movement toward social integration within Kenyan communities where the benefits of urban refugees to the larger society can be widely understood, and mutual respect can be established. Understanding the lived experiences of South Sudanese urban youth refugees in Nairobi and Nakuru can work toward building a foundation on which to design and implement policies and programmes that protect and uphold refugee rights and promote full participation in society, but only if urban youth refugees are included in the decision-making processes.

References

1. Addaney, M. (2015). Enhancing the protective space for refugees in Kenya and Uganda. *Africa Policy Journal*, 11, 71–75.

2. Bauder, H., Dreher, N., Lujan, O., & Asolo, O. (2023). Decolonizing migration studies: The case of hospitality, sanctuary, and solidarity. https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/centre-for-immigration-and-settlement/tmcis/publications/workingpapers/2023-03-WP-Bauder-Dreher-Luhan-Asolo.pdf

3. Betts, A., Omata, N., & Sterck, O. (2018). *Refugee Economies in Kenya*. Refugees Studies Centre. University of Oxford. https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/refugee-economies-in-kenya

4. Betts, A. (2021). The political history of Uganda's refugee policies. https://refugeehistory.org/blog/2021/7/15/the-political-history-of-ugandas-refugee-policies

5. Bhagat, A. (2020). Governing refugee disposability: Neoliberalism and survival in Nairobi." *New Political Economy*, 25, 439–452.

6. Campbell, E. H. (2006). Urban refugees in Nairobi: Problems of protection mechanisms of survival, and possibilities for integration. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19, 396-413.

7. Crisp, J. (2017). Finding space for protection: An inside account of the evolution of UNHCR's urban refugee policy. *Refuge*, 33, 87–96.

8. Crush, J., Thomaz, D., & Ramachandran, S. (2021). South-South Migration, Food Insecurity and the COVID-19 Pandemic, MiFood Paper No. 1, Hungry Cities Partnership, Waterloo. At: https://hungrycities.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/MiFOOD1.pdf

9. Doustmohammadian, A., Mohammadi-Nasrabadi, F., & Fadavi, G. (2022). COVID-19 pandemic and food security in different contexts: A systematic review protocol. *PLoS ONE*, 17, 1–9.

10. Elfversson, E., Höglund, K., Sellström, A. M., & Pellerin, C. (2023). Contesting the growing city? Forms of urban growth and consequences for communal violence. *Political Geography*, 100, 102810.

11. Enns, C., & Kombe, W. (2023). *Child Rights and Displacement in East Africa: Agency and Spatial Justice in Planning Policy*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

12. FAO. Food and Agriculture Organization. (2021). *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021: The World is at a Critical Juncture*. At: https://www.fao.org/state-of-food- security-nutrition/2021/en/

13. Gebre, G., Isoda, H., Amekawa, Y. et al. (2021) What explains gender gaps in household food security? Evidence from maize farm households in Southern Ethiopia. *Social Indicators Research*, 155, 281-314.

14. Government of the Republic of Kenya. (2021). *The Refugees Act, 2021. No. 10 of 2021*. At: http://kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/Acts/2021/TheRefugeesAct_No10of2021.pdf

15. Human Rights Watch (2023). *South Sudan at a Crossroads. Challenges and Hope 10 Years After Independence.* At: https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/07/09/south-sudan-crossroads

16. IHD. (Integral Human Development). (2020). Country profiles: Kenya. https://migrants-refugees.va/country-profile/kenya/

17. IOM. (International Organization for Migration). (2018). *Migration in Kenya: A Country Profile 2018*. https://publications.iom.int/books/migration-kenya-country-profile-2018

18. Jok, M. & Mayai, A. (2018). Kenya's Crackdown on South Sudanese. The SUDD Institute Weekly Review, August. https://www.africaportal.org/publications/kenyas-crackdown-south-sudanese/

19. Kassa, D. (2019) *Refugee Spaces and Urban Citizenship in Nairobi: Africa's Sanctuary City*. New York: Lexington Books.

20. Malik, S. (2023). *Tackling Kenya's Longstanding Refugee Situation: The Need for Comprehensive Solutions*. https://www.unhcr.org/blogs/tackling-kenyas-longstanding-refugee-situation-the-need-for-comprehensive-solutions/

21. Manfredi-Sanchez, J. (2020). Sanctuary cities: What global migration means for local governments. *Social Sciences* 9, 146.

22. Molenaar, J., & Van Praag, L. (2022). Migrants as 'vulnerable groups' in the COVID-19 pandemic: A critical discourse analysis of a taken-for-granted label in academic literature. *SSM – Qualitative Research in Health*, 2, 100076.

23. Ohio State University. (2019). Sudan in crisis. https://origins.osu.edu/article/sudan-darfur-al-bashir-colonial-protest?language_content_entity=en

24. Omata, N. (2020). Refugee livelihoods: A comparative analysis of Nairobi and Kakuma camp in Kenya. *Disasters*, 45, 774-790.

25. Onyango, E.O., Crush, J., & Owuor, S. (2021). *Food remittances, migration and rural-urban linkages in Kenya*. (MiFOOD Working Paper No. 2). https://hungrycities.net/publication/mifood-paper-no-2-food-remittances-migration-and-rural-urban-linkages-in-kenya/

26. Pape, J., Beltramo, P., Nimoh, P., Rios Rivera, L. A., Sarr, I., & Fix, R. (2022). *Understanding the Socio-Economic Conditions of Urban Refugees in Kenya: Volume C: Urban Refugees – Results from the 2020-2021 Urban Socioeconomic Survey*. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/184981636366231985/Volume-C-Urban-Refugees-Results-from-the-2020-2021-Urban-Socioeconomic-Survey

27. Pavanello, S., Elhawary, S., & Pantuliano, S. (2010). Hidden and exposed: Urban refugees in Nairobi, Kenya. https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/5858.pdf

28. Relief Web. (2000). The civil war in Sudan. https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/civil-war-sudan

29. Seri-Hersch, I. (2017). Education in colonial Sudan, 1900-1957. Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of African History. https://shs.hal.science/halshs-01514910

30. UNCTAD. (2021) Facts and figures: Economic Development in Africa Report 2021: Reaping the Potential Benefits of the African Continental Free Trade Area for Inclusive Growth. At: https://unctad.org/press-material/facts-and-figures-7

31. UNHCR. (2009). UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas. https://www.unhcr.org/fr-fr/en/media/unhcr-policy-refugee-protection-and-solutions-urban-areas

32. UNHCR. (2021). *Uganda: Refugee Policy Review Framework Country Summary as at 30 June 2020*. https://reliefweb.int/report/uganda/uganda-refugee-policy-review-framework-country-summary-30-june-2020-march-2022?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiA9ourBhAV-EiwA3L5RFs429XX1ppSEW3V-75u06DtuwYCz0h_b3rrsRZzSxVSv0ZNt2ZdebBoC9FUQAvD_BwE

33. UNHCR. (n.d.) Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Urban Areas of Kenya. https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/62c420664.pdf

34. Veney, R. (2007). *Forced migration in Eastern Africa: Democratization, Structural Adjustment, and Refugees*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

35. Vuni, F. J. & Iragi, B. (2023). *Refugees' access to work permits and business licences in Kenya*. https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/news/refugees-access-to-work-permits-and-business-licences-in-kenya-new-rlrh-report

36. World Bank (2021). South Sudan overview. https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview#1

37. World Bank (2022a). The World Bank in South Sudan. https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview

38. World Bank (2022b). Kenya overview. https://data.worldbank.org/country/kenya

39. WFP. (World Food Programme). (2020). *Populations at Risk: Implications of COVID-19 for Hunger, Migration and Displacement*. https://www.wfp.org/publications/populations-risk-implications-covid-19-hunger-migration-displacement-2020