

**THE GENDER PERSPECTIVES OF SOMALI REFUGEES IN EASTLEIGH, NAIROBI
CITY COUNTY, ON REPATRIATION TO THEIR COUNTRY**

**LUCY W. KIAMA
REG. NO. N69/8081/2006**

**A PROJECT PAPER SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF ANTHROPOLOGY,
GENDER AND AFRICAN STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN GENDER AND
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

2015

DECLARATION

This project paper is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any University

Signature Date.....

Lucy W. Kiama

This project paper has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Signature..... Date.....

Prof. Simiyu Wandibba

DEDICATION

To all the refugees in Eastleigh who were interviewed for this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	vii

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Statement of the problem.....	7
1.3. Objectives of the study.....	9
1.3.1. General objective.....	10
1.3.2. Specific objectives.....	10
1.3.3. Assumptions of the study.....	10
1.4. Justification of the study.....	10
1.5. Scope of the study.....	12
1.6. Limitations of the study.....	12
1.7. Definition of terms	12

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction.....	14
2.2. Literature Review.....	14
2.2.1. Global, regional and national overview of refugee situation in Kenya.....	14
2.2.2. Security concerns during repatriation.....	18
2.2.3. Disruption of family unit	21
2.2.4. Access to livelihood and other social services.....	26
2.3. Theoretical framework.....	29
2.3.1. Theory of repatriation.....	29
2.3.2. Relevance of theory to the study.....	29

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction.....	31
3.2. Research site.....	31
3.3. Research design.....	33
3.4. Study population and unit of analysis.....	33
3.5. Sample population and sampling procedure.....	34
3.6. Data collection Methods.....	34
3.6.1. Semi-structured interviews.....	34
3.6.2. Key informant interviews.....	34
3.6.3. Focus group discussions.....	34
3.7. Data processing and analysis.....	35
3.8. Ethical considerations.....	35

CHAPTER FOUR: GENDER PERSPECTIVES OF SOMALI REFUGEES IN EASTLEIGH OF THEIR REPATRIATION TO SOMALIA

4.1. Introduction..... 36
4.2. Demographics of the respondents.....36
4.3. Gender perspectives, attitudes and fears.....41
4.4. Gender perspectives on security of the family.....44
4.5. Gender perspectives on access to livelihood and other social services.....50

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction.....57
5.2. Discussion.....57
5.3. Conclusion.....60
5.4. Recommendations.....61

References.....62

Appendices

Appendix 1: Semi-structured questionnaire.....66
Appendix 2: Key informant interview guide.....69
Appendix 3: Focus group discussions guide.....70

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 2.1: Conceptual model.....	30
Fig 3.1 Location of Eastleigh.....	32
Fig 4.1 Age of respondents.....	37
Fig 4.2 Marital status of respondents.....	38
Fig 4.3 Educational level of respondents.....	40
Fig 4.4 Income levels of respondents.....	41

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My special acknowledgements go to my supervisor, Prof. Simiyu Wandibba, for his invaluable guidance, selfless leadership and close supervision for this project. I also acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Fred Ikada, who patiently spared time and his expertise to review this report.

I am greatly indebted to my course work lecturers: Mr. Isaac Were, Prof. Onyango-Ouma, Dr. Owuor Olungah, Dr. Wilfred Subbo and Mr. Kibe Kiragu.

Finally, special thanks go to my husband, Charles Kiama, my daughter, Joan Kiama and my son, Jeff Kiama, for their encouragement and moral support as I worked on this project paper.

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out, in Eastleigh, which is a suburb within Kamukunji Constituency, Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study examined the attitudes of the Somali refugees in that area regarding their impending repatriation to Somalia. In particular, the study looked at their security concerns, fears regarding the unity of their families and their access to meaningful livelihoods. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

The study reveals that all urban Somali refugees have fears, attitudes and concerns regarding their security, unity of their families and their access to meaningful livelihoods due to the planned repatriation to their country. Their main fear is the security situation in Somalia which informs the negative attitude that they have regarding voluntary repatriation. They are clear that despite the various reports of relative stability returning to some parts of Somalia, such information is not conclusive. The refugees feel that the security conditions in their country are still life-threatening and thus the negative attitude towards immediate return. Both men and women fear that repatriation will lead to further disintegration of family units and change in gender roles. They also fear that, they will lose their livelihood opportunities and social amenities they have been enjoying in Kenya as well as the opportunities for quality healthcare services, education, access to shops and other trading facilities.

This study, therefore, recommends that the Federal Government of Somalia should seek more funding and technical assistance to enhance the activities of the AMISOM troops in the country. It should also initiate the process of improving infrastructure and social amenities; set up modern healthcare facilities, schools and market centres as well as improve the transport and

communication network. On its part, the government of Kenya should continue to honour its international obligations in accordance with the tripartite agreement as well as encourage refugees to make informed choices to repatriate voluntarily. It should refrain from *refoulement* of refugees to Somalia. The study also recommends that similar studies be done for camp-based refugees, as well as studies related to gender issues of refugees undergoing local integration in their countries of asylum and resettlement in third countries.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACT	Action by Churches Together
AU	African Union
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CTD	Conventional Travel Document
CVA	Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis
DRA	Department of Refugee Affairs
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAT	East African Time
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
GoK	Government of Kenya
IAGAS	Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies
ID	Identification
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IED	Improvised Explosive Devices
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
KDF	Kenya Defense Forces
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity

RCK	Refugee Consortium of Kenya
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Following the collapse of the Somali government and the outbreak of civil war in 1991, many Somali nationals were forced to flee to neighbouring countries in search of safety and protection. Sharing a common border with Somalia, Kenya has received wave after wave of refugees throughout the prolonged internal conflict in South and Central Somalia. A year after the collapse of the Somali government, in 1992, Kenya had received approximately 285,000 Somali refugees. By 2006 this number had almost tripled (Lindley, 2011: 3).

In 2011 alone, as the Horn of Africa suffered the worst famine in sixty years, an estimated 150,000 Somali refugees crossed the border into Kenya. The majority of these refugees found their way to the Dadaab refugee camps established by the UNHCR in 1991. Currently home to 425,938 registered Somali refugees, Dadaab is now, unofficially, Kenya's third largest city. There are also approximately 170,000 refugees in Kakuma camp in Northwestern Kenya near the borders of Uganda and South Sudan. In addition, there are over 55,000 registered refugees living in Nairobi and other urban areas (Grant *et al.*, 2012: 9).

Since the commencement of the influx of the refugees into Kenya as from the early 1990s, the country has been grappling with the issue of management and protection of refugees due to lack of financial resources. This fact stands corroborated by the current state of camps which are overpopulated and almost getting choked by the large numbers of refugees. Due to this state of

affairs as well as the non-informal encampment policies, it became prudent to allow some refugees to be registered and be permitted to reside in urban areas hence giving rise to the ‘urban refugee community’ (Maina and Karanja, 2013: 13).

The major distinction between the camp refugees and the urban refugees, apart from the territorial location, is the level of livelihood support rendered by the government of Kenya, the UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations. Even though both sets of refugees are entitled to support from the stakeholders, lack of resources seemingly set in some affirmative action strategies that were geared towards striking a balance between the two sets. This is to say, it was presumed that the urban refugees are exposed to a wider economic sphere which makes them self-reliant as compared to the camp refugees hence the need for limiting livelihood support for them (Abu Sa’Da and Bianchi, 2014: 88).

It is estimated that there are over 33,537 Somali refugees registered in Nairobi, with the majority residing in the Somali-dominated Eastleigh neighbourhood. There is little doubt that there are many more undocumented Somali refugees living in Kenya. Persistent conflict and the re-occurrence of drought and famine in South-Central Somalia has brought instability to the entire Horn of Africa region (Cabrol, 2014: 6).

Following a string of kidnappings of tourists and foreign aid workers, Kenya launched the “Operation Linda Nchi” (‘Operation to protect the Country’) in October 2011. The country justified its military intervention by citing Al-shabaab attacks on Kenyan soil, including the killing of a British man and the abduction of his wife from a beach resort, the abduction of a French woman from her home on Manda Island in Lamu County, and the abduction of two

Spanish Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) staff working in Dadaab refugee camps (Grant *et al*, 2012: 16).

Since the start of Operation Linda Nchi, Kenya has suffered from growing insecurity with a series of low-level attacks in Nairobi, Mombasa and throughout North Eastern Region of the country. Attacks are largely blamed on groups connected to or sympathizing with Al-shabaab. However, Al-shabaab itself has claimed direct responsibility for very few of these attacks. The attacks have led to reprisals against Somali populations living in Kenya including those of Kenyan origin. The Kenyan military and police have been blamed for some of these attacks. Xenophobic attacks carried out by members of the public have further contributed to the rising sense of insecurity among the Somali community (Aljazeera News, 2012a).

Between 18thNovember and 19thDecember, 2012, there were five separate grenade attacks in Eastleigh, killing 16 people and injuring 42, including the Kenyan-Somali Member of Parliament, Honourable Yusuf Hassan (Aljazeera News, 2012b).

On 18th December , 2012, the then Commissioner of the Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA), Mr. Badu Katelo, issued a directive ordering all refugees and asylum seekers to leave urban areas and relocate to Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. Following outrage by the UNHCR and human rights advocacy groups, the Kenya government reluctantly agreed not to enforce the order and, on 22ndJanuary, 2013, the High Court of Kenya issued an injunction temporarily halting the relocation of refugees to the camps pending a full inquiry (UNHCR, 2013a). Nevertheless, the approaching 2013 General Elections contributed to repatriation rhetoric among Kenyan politicians.

According to the Sabahi News of 3rd May, 2012, during the February 2012 London Conference on Somalia, Kenya's then President, Hon. Mwai Kibaki, said that Kenya could no longer carry such a large refugee burden. To this end, he urged the international humanitarian community to take advantage of areas in Somalia liberated from Al-shabaab by the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) and the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) since October 2011 to return the Somali to their home country. The same sentiments were echoed by Kenya's Internal Security Cabinet Secretary following deterioration of security in the country, particularly in Nairobi and other major towns, blamed on refugees. The escalation of insecurity incidences through targeted killings and use of explosives led to deaths of quite a number of innocent civilians and law enforcement officers (Sabahi News, 2012).

As early as May 2012, President Mwai Kibaki requested the assistance of the international community to help in the repatriation of Somali refugees to recovered areas in Somaliland and Puntland (Grayson, 2013:42). President Kibaki added that the Dadaab camps were unsustainable and that they were draining national resources. This was further cemented by a joint communiqué issued by Presidents Mwai Kibaki and Hassan Sheikh Mohamed noting the plight of Somali refugees residing in north-eastern Kenya and pledging to “work together and with the international community to come up with modalities for their orderly return to Somalia to rebuild their lives and participate in the development of their motherland” (Abdi, 2012: 2).

Immediately after his inauguration as the fourth president of Kenya, President Uhuru Kenyatta set the discussion on repatriation of Somali refugees as a key agenda of his presidency. Bilateral discussions between Kenya and Somalia were rolled out by first holding discussions with his

Somalia counterpart, Hassan Sheikh Mohamed, on 27th April, 2013 at State House Mombasa and thereafter attending an international conference on repatriation in London on 7th May, 2013. In both meetings, the Governments of Kenya and Somalia agreed on a road map to repatriate the 493,649 Somali refugees from Kenya. The two observed that some relative peace had been restored in the troubled Horn of African state under the leadership of President Mohamed and it was time the refugees returned home to reconstruct their country and as part of the long-term objective of stabilizing Somalia. President Uhuru Kenyatta observed that the overcrowded camps at Dadaab refugee camps posed growing and serious security threats to Kenya and the region and the Kenya government could no longer bear such a large refugee burden (Botelho and Leposo, 2013:15).

Meetings calling for repatriation of Somali refugees have been held both in Kenya and Somalia with key stakeholders such as UNHCR. The UNHCR regional strategy and plan of action entitled “Enhancing the Search for Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees”, acknowledges that with renewed support and attention from the international community, and for the first time in over twenty-three years, Somalia is showing tangible signs of a return to normalcy and stabilization especially in Somaliland, Puntland and some areas in the South Central part of the country. This positive trend has been characterized primarily by an improvement of the political and security landscape as a result of the election of a new president and parliament followed by some successes in containing radical militias and their allies (UNHCR, 2013a: 2).

UNHCR and the humanitarian community consider these developments as brighter prospects for improved conditions in Somalia and that there are prospects for refugees to explore the option of voluntary repatriation. These considerations led to the drafting and signing of the tripartite

agreement for repatriation of Somali refugees from Kenya. The tripartite agreement was signed on 10th November, 2013 by the Government of Kenya, the Federal Government of Somalia and UNHCR (UNHCR, 2013a: 3).

This tripartite agreement provides for the legal framework for the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Kenya. It sets out the general provisions and legal instruments which govern the voluntary repatriation, and reflects international standards and the responsibilities of all the three parties. The signing of the Agreement was followed by the establishment of a Tripartite Commission which will oversee the implementation of the Agreement, identify modalities and develop efficient voluntary repatriation and reintegration frameworks for voluntary, safe and dignified return of refugees within the envisaged three-year time period of the repatriation process (Cabrol, 2014: 5).

Gender as a topic is widely viewed in relation to the dynamic roles ascribed by the society to persons of either sex. In this scenario, the repatriation of the Somali refugees calls for a much more focused attention of the gender perspectives of these people from the current economic and social environment in relation to the new cultural, economic and social environment that they are going to encounter back in Somalia. It is against this background that this study set out to understand the gender perspectives of Somali refugees who live in Eastleigh, regarding their repatriation.

In conflict situations, reversal of gender roles due to separation of family members is inevitable. In her study of the gender issues facing refugee men, Jaji (2009) seeks to dismiss the perception that it is only women and children who face gender-related problems. She acknowledges that

during conflict situations, men are most perpetrators of the violence but also become victims and so face gender-related problems. Occasionally, women and children will run away leaving men alone and so women have to adapt to the new structure of family set up. In that sense, men are forced to relax their traditional way of life by abandoning their traditional masculine roles and take up new gender roles that were traditionally reserved for women and children (Jaji, 2009 : 177).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study assumes that men, women and children have different attitudes and fears as regards their safety, access to livelihood and their family unity. Refugees living in Nairobi and other urban areas in Kenya are not provided with humanitarian assistance and as such they do engage in different forms of livelihoods to provide income for their families. They also live together as extended families as a social support system to provide security and protect their families.

The tripartite agreement that was signed by the Government of Kenya, the Federal Government of Somalia and UNHCR on 10th November, 2013, was initiated and drafted by UNHCR to provide a legal framework for the repatriation of Somali refugees. The return is expected to be voluntary, in safety and in dignity. It is not clear if refugees were involved in the negotiations that led to the signing of the tripartite agreement. It is also not clear if the Somali refugees want to return and if the return is voluntary in character or involuntary.

Most urban Somali refugees have lived in Eastleigh for over 20 years and they enjoy relative safety in Kenya. According to UNHCR, Nairobi office, the refugees living in urban areas have

reported mixed attitudes and fears to different agencies that provide protection and assistance to refugees regarding their impending repatriation to Somalia (UNHCR, 2014a: 2).

Most parts of South and Central Somalia are still unsafe. Thus, most refugees have fears of leaving Kenya as they have been enjoying relative peace and accessing their human rights. Others, due to their past experiences of harassment by the law enforcement officers in Kenya, extortion of money and general insecurity fear similar harassment if the process of repatriation is not handled properly. Then there is a group who fear that repatriation will disrupt their families, leading to challenges in accessing meaningful livelihoods which can in turn lead to a reversal of gender roles. Somali men are usually the bread winners while women are caregivers. However, many Somali refugee women have been living as bread winners and as the heads of the families since they came to Kenya. These women fear that return could lead to their being ostracized and excommunicated by the indigenous Somali in their country of origin. Excommunication from the community usually leads to social stigma and this has serious negative effects on the children of such families (Thomson Reuters Foundation, 2014). Refugee families fear that repatriation may lead to separation of families leading to mushrooming of ‘unaccompanied minors’. Such minors are highly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse as they try to adapt to the new environment, either living with foster guardians or as heads of families (UNHCR, 2014a: 2).

Refugees in Eastleigh do access meaningful livelihoods either through employment or from engaging in entrepreneurial activities. They also receive remittances from their relatives and friends in the diaspora. Furthermore, they access social services like education, healthcare, water, electricity, free legal services and infrastructure. These social services and amenities have not

been re-constructed in Somalia. According to Thomson Reuters Foundation (2014), refugees fear undergoing hard times struggling to do with the insufficient social amenities.

The current level of security that the Federal Government of Somalia accords its citizens is still uncertain. Urban Somali refugees in Kenya enjoy safety and exercise their freedom of movement as they freely intermingle with Kenyan communities. However, there are fears of Al-Shabaab counter-attacks and an ineffective government administration structure which cannot guarantee safety in Somalia (UNHCR, 2014a: 3). The urban Somali refugees have undergone untold suffering and traumatizing experiences including loss of family members, properties, as well as sexual and gender-based violence. There are fears of re-traumatization of the refugees by return (The Guardian, 29th April, 2013). The study, therefore, sought answers to the following questions:

- I. What is the attitude of the Somali refugees in Eastleigh regarding their impending repatriation to Somalia?
- II. What security concerns do these refugees have regarding the unity of their families as a result of the impending repatriation?
- III. What fears do these refugees have regarding their access to meaningful livelihoods?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

To examine the attitudes and fears that urban Somali refugees living in Eastleigh are struggling with in regard to their repatriation to Somalia.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To determine the attitudes of the Somali refugees in Eastleigh regarding their impending repatriation to Somalia.
2. To describe the security concerns and fears of these refugees with regards to the unity of their families as a result of the impending repatriation?
3. To establish the fears these refugees have regarding their access to meaningful livelihoods.

1.3.3 Assumptions of the study

- I. The Somali refugees in Eastleigh have mixed attitudes regarding their impending repatriation to Somalia.
- II. The Somali refugees in Eastleigh have security concerns and fears regarding the unity of their families as a result of the impending repatriation?
- III. Somali refugees in Eastleigh have fears regarding their access to meaningful livelihoods as a result of the impending repatriation.

1.4 Justification of the Study

Repatriation of refugees is one of the most preferred durable solutions to the refugee question compared to local integration in the country of first asylum or resettlement to a third country of asylum. It is therefore imperative to understand and document the aspirations and fears that the Somali refugees have regarding their repatriation, so as to inform policy reforms and future programming that will consider gender dimensions in order to prevent recycling the problem that

is being addressed. This will also identify existing gaps in order to inform related future academic studies as well as to build on the existing research regarding refugees.

Bradley (2006: 35), in his publication in Forced Migration Online resource titled ‘Returning of Forced Migrants’ says “While research on return has often concentrated on the macro-level perspectives of the national governments and international organizations involved in the facilitation of large-scale repatriation movements, it is increasingly recognized that more research is needed that examines the perspectives of returnees themselves, the gender dimensions of return, and the impact of return on communities of origin, as well as on vacated host communities. Field studies on return often examine only a short portion of the return process; future research on return may benefit from a longer-term perspective on the process.

However, little has been done in relation to the gender perspectives of the two groups of people who are going to unite after a long period of separation. Thus, the researcher felt that ‘unless something is done to address this issue, we may be taking back the urban Somali refugees to their kin state for a few days tour’. The findings in this paper, if considered will go a long way in assisting the stakeholders in supporting the returnees during the post-repatriation phase and set a significant precedent for the forthcoming repatriation processes. With understanding the aspirations and fears of the refugees, better programming for repatriation, then repatriation will exert its position as the most viable durable solution for the urban refugees who will henceforth be looking forward to going back to their kin state and carry on with their lives.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study focused mainly on the estimated 33,537 Somali refugees living in Eastleigh, in Nairobi County. The study targeted adult men and women refugees of 18 years and above, and focused on their fears and inspirations regarding their repatriation to Somalia. The study also examined gender perspectives as collected from the primary data as well as the literature review regarding the perspectives of their repatriation, and was guided by the theory of repatriation.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Eastleigh is both a residential estate and a business hub which is popularly referred to as *Mogadishu ndogo* (Kiswahili phrase meaning Small Mogadishu) as it is densely populated with Somali refugees and the Somali of Kenyan origin. It is, however, associated with high levels of insecurity. This insecurity is a risk to the researcher. Communication in the Somali language and dialects, was also a challenge. In addressing the above mentioned limitations, the researcher tried to exercise due care in the course of data collection by ensuring that this was done in the mid-morning hours so as to allow them enough time to continue with their business. She also wore a long dress so to fit in with the Muslim women. She also engaged the services of trained interpreters of Somali origin, who served as a medium between her and the respondents in order to address the language barrier. To minimize the insecurity, the researcher visited the respondents in the company of Somali colleagues.

1.7 Definitions of Terms

Asylum seeker A person who arrives in Kenya seeking protection and is in the process of having his/her application for the status of refugee determined.

Attitude	The personal perception that a person has about something that is about to happen, is happening or has happened and may either be positive or negative.
Culture	The knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and values shared by the Somali community as influenced by their gender, religion and history.
Gender	A social construct that defines differential roles of men and women, and of boys and girls. Gender is also defined as the social construct of masculinity and femininity which is enacted through learnt rather than innate behaviours.
Family unit	A group of people related by blood, marriage, law or custom and reside as a nuclear or extended unit.
Livelihood	The means by which the Somali refugees secure the necessities of life and it encompasses their capabilities, assets, income and the activities they engage in to secure the necessities of life.
Security	The extent to which the government of Kenya has been able to ensure safety of the urban Somali refugees living in Kenya. It also refers to the he anticipated ability of the Federal Government of Somalia to ensure safety of the returnees.
Refugee	A person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality who now resides in Eastleigh, in Nairobi County.
Returnee	A person who has voluntarily returned to their home country in safety and dignity following a period of absence from their country due to war or other calamities.
Repatriation	The process of returning a person to their country of origin or citizenship.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights and acknowledges the efforts of different scholars and practitioners regarding how men, women and children are affected by repatriation particularly with regard to the security of the family unit, access to meaningful livelihoods as well as the general attitudes and fears relating to the forthcoming repatriation. The review is done in line with the study objectives and using the following sub-headings: global, regional and national overview of the refugee situation; the security concerns of repatriation; disruption of the family unit; access to livelihood and other social services. The chapter also discusses the theoretical framework that guided this study.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Global, Regional and National Overview of the Refugee Situation

The UN since its establishment after World War II, has been working towards restoration of a peaceful society and ensuring respect for human rights. The most significant impact that was witnessed was the forced displacement of persons. It is for this reason that the UNHCR was established on 14th of December, 1950 by the UN General Assembly Resolution 428(V), to provide international protection for refugees and explore ways of seeking permanent solutions for refugees (Ikanda, 2009: 9).

There are more than 40 million people currently displaced by conflict or persecutions around the world, 16 million being refugees while the remaining 26 million are IDPs (UN, 2008, cited in Ikada, 2009: 9). According to the 1951 Refugee Convention, a refugee is defined as any person

who, "...as a result of events occurring before 1st January, 1951 and owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality..." (Ikanda, 2009: 9).

UNHCR was primarily formed to address the European refugees who had been displaced during the Second World War. However, it now focuses more on the sub-Saharan Africa, southern and Western Asian regions that have the largest refugee populations in the world. Although, it was originally hoped to be dissolved upon finding permanent solutions to the massive refugee victims of World War II, this has not been the case. In fact, the number of refugees has relentlessly been rising by each passing decade. By 1975, their number had reached 2.4 million, which increased to 10.5 million by 1985 and by 1995, the number of persons receiving protection and assistance from UNHCR had soared to 27.2 million (Ikanda, 2009: 9).

Africa is the most affected continent by the refugee problem, following the disintegration of the Somali government in 1991, political upheavals in Sudan and Ethiopia, and the politico-ethnic instigated crisis in the Great Lakes Region mainly affecting the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Burundi, all of which are member states of the African Union. Africa is home to 9 out of 20 countries that lead in producing refugees around the world and it also has around 30% of the world's refugees, despite the fact that Africans constitute only 13% of the global population. The principal cause of Africa's refugee problem is armed conflict and civil strife (Okoth-Obbo, 1995, cited by Ikada, 2009:9) which is due to ethnic intolerance, abuse of human rights, monopolization of political and economic power, and refusal to respect for democracy (Rutinwa, 1999, cited in Ikanda, 2009: 10).

Article 2 of the 1969 OAU Convention, Governing the specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, requires its member states to use their best endeavours consistent with their respective legislation to receive refugees and to secure the settlement of those refugees who, for well-founded reasons, are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin or nationality. As a result, Kenya found itself playing host to a number of forcibly displaced persons from its neighbouring countries. Somalia, which borders Kenya to the East, has a large number of refugees in Kenya at an estimated number of 425, 938. This started in the early 1990s following the overthrow of Siad Barre's government (Banki, 2004: 24).

The external displacement continued with the prolonged civil and political upheavals hence steadily increasing the number of men, women and children entering Kenya to seek asylum. Most of them settled in the camps while a few others found their way to urban centres. As at January 2013, 56,000 asylum seekers and refugees were registered with UNHCR in Nairobi and other urban centres in Kenya. The largest segment of this group is comprised of the Somali (33,844), followed by Ethiopians (10,568), and nationals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (7,046). A minority comes from Eritrea, South Sudan and the Great Lakes (urbanrefugee.org, 2014).

Since 2012, the Government of Kenya has been under pressure to repatriate all refugees back to their countries on perceptions that they are the cause of a series of insecurity incidents that have occurred around the country particularly in Nairobi, Coastal region as well as the North-Eastern regions. More resentment has been expressed against Somali refugees whom the government has on several occasions linked to the Al-shabaab terror group of Somalia that has been associated with a series of attacks around this country. This has been premised on the reason that Somalia is

slowly gaining stability and it is now time to repatriate its citizens to go and assist in rebuilding their country (Mwanga, 2012: 28).

Currently, the repatriation of Somali refugees is imminent and the two states are committed to ensuring that it happens as soon as reasonably possible (IRIN, 2014). Among the lot that is expected to return is the urban Somali refugee community residing in Eastleigh. This group has adapted to the city lifestyle and taken over some significant gender perspectives that are relatively different from the ones they are going to encounter back in Somalia. They now seem more Kenyan and should have been integrated locally as a permanent solution to their refugee problem (Mwanga, 2012: 28).

There has been very little attention towards Somali refugees in urban areas in the countdown to repatriation as more focus is on camp refugees where information desks have been established to share information about the situation in Somalia. Somali refugees in urban areas are equally entitled to that information and considering their unique gender perspectives that they have adapted to in the city, something needs to be done with a view to assisting them get prepared in order to peacefully settle upon repatriation. Historically, countries that have employed repatriation as a durable solution for refugees have most often focused on the legal inclination at the expense of gender perspectives (IRIN, 2013).

Bradley (2006) notes that various studies have been conducted which draw inference to the concluded repatriation case studies and it is evident that there is always need to equally direct some significant attention on the gender perspectives of the returnees in order to reduce effects of repatriation.

In this countdown, the voluntariness of the process is somehow questionable considering the political statements being made in Kenya to the effect that Somali refugees must go back to their country, which may be perceived as contravening Article 24 of the Tripartite Agreement (IRIN, 2013and). It is essential to appreciate the fact that these people have been de-linked from their fellow countrymen for a significant length of time, and so some of the changes in gender perspectives are likely to differ sharply with those of their countrymen back in Somalia. The major issues under consideration here are their general attitude and fears, security of the family as well as access to livelihood opportunities (Bradley, 2006: 2-3).

2.2.2 Security Concerns of Repatriation

There are mixed attitudes and fears concerning the repatriation process. The major determinant of the form of attitude that these refugees have concerning the repatriation is their general well-being. Security of the returnees is a major issue that if not properly handled, will create a negative attitude among the target population and so escalate the fears within the refugees. In this sense, security is a three-tier component involving physical safety, material safety and psychological safety. In Kenya, urban refugees relatively enjoy all the three forms of protection and perhaps that explains why despite a few problems here and there, most of them would prefer to stay put rather than go back to their country (Cabrol, 2014: 5).

Physical security in this study denotes the refugees' personal security. As refugees, they enjoy the same level of protection as Kenyan citizens whom they have been intermingling with on a daily basis. When admitted into the country, they are registered and given an asylum seeking pass. Once they are recognized as refugees, they are provided with a refugee certificate which is

a refugee Identity Card (ID) almost similar to the Kenyan national ID. With the refugee ID, they can enjoy all forms of human rights just like a Kenyan citizen except the right to vote. Refugees also access a Conventional Travel Document (CTD) which allows them to travel in and out of the country and which is similar to the Kenyan passport. They also have a right to a class M work permit or business permit which allows them to access employment and do business legally in Kenya (GoK, 2006). In the absence of registration and the aforementioned documents, refugees are easily targeted for arbitrary arrests, harassment, sexual and gender-based violence and arbitrarily detained as illegal aliens by law enforcement agents (Grant *et al.* 2012: 9).

Kituo cha Sheria and RCK provide urban refugees with access to judicial services including free legal services and psychosocial support. For instance, after the government of Kenya issued a directive to have them relocated to the camps, human rights organizations came to their rescue and successfully petitioned the High Court to stop the implementation as this would have negatively impacted on their asylum rights (UNHCR, 2013a: 4). There has been immediate intervention in reported cases of arbitrary arrests of refugees especially after a series of terror attacks around the country. Police patrols are always conducted in Eastleigh with a view to enhancing security of the residents and deal with criminal elements like the ‘superpower’ which has been causing ripples among the residents. This kind of legal protection is not available in Somalia for the returnees. In that perspective, there is concern on how this physical security will be realized in Somalia in which most of the areas are still insecure (UNHCR, 2014a: 2).

The new government is still too inexperienced to effectively restore peace and order; there are still more than a million IDPs who have not been resettled yet (IRIN, 2013). The terrain of the liberated area is somehow dangerous considering the open landmines which have emerged as a

deadly risk for returnees and IDPs if the 2002 situation in Angola is to go by, and most of the returnees are not familiar with the terrain of the new places of settlement (Bradley, 2006: 35).

Allocation of land to returnees may be met with hatred from the locals as the government has not secured most parts of the country. In previous repatriations of the Somali who had sought asylum in Ethiopian, it was cumbersome for the government to secure land for settling the returnees. The access to firearms and other deadly weapons like the ones used by Al-shabaab, has proved tricky for the government to regulate hence raising doubts as to how the returnees will be shielded from such attacks (Grayson, 2013:21).

Regarding material security, refugees may wish to travel with the material possessions they have acquired in the country of asylum. This will only be possible if the Federal Government of Somalia allows them to cross the border without charging them customs duty. If the FGS charges duty at the border entry, there is potential for the vulnerable returnees to lose on the value of their material passions if they opt to sell them. This will also depend on the travel arrangements that the three parties will put in place as there are fears that refugees may not be accorded facilitation to carry their luggage (Grayson, 2013:21).

Psychological security is basically in relation to alleviating mental disturbances and it is also material in determining the attitude that refugees have on the thought of return. During the flight, people lose their loved ones, properties, their dignity, and they suffer a lot of trauma. Such a situation strikes the mind once again on the thought of return to their country of origin as it re-lives the memories hence the unfavourable attitude and fears. Women and children who had suffered SGBV cases have actually been assisted to get over such traumatic experiences. Similar

incidences can occur during return if it is not well planned and executed (Grayson, 2013: 23). Now, considering that they are going back to their kin state, some of them are likely to be heartbroken and develop a negative attitude as they fear coming to terms with the negative news on the whereabouts of their kith and kin, the ruins of their homes, their idea of settling as IDPs in their own country, etc. (Bradley, 2006: 30).

There is a high likelihood that some returnees will come face-to-face with those people who killed their relatives and pushed them out of their country (Noah, 2013: 39). In Kenya, many of them had identified people to talk to when distressed but such services may not be available in Somalia. There will be of course suspicion between the returnees and their countrymen who will be receiving them, a situation that will compound the idea of psychological safety. In Dumper's (2014: 24) comparative study of the repatriation of Guatemalan, Afghanistan and Bosnian refugees, one of the setbacks in repatriation was inadequate reconstruction by governments at the time of receiving returnees.

2.2.3 Disruption of the Family Unit

A family is the basic social unit of life. Communities exist because families are in existence and therefore community leadership tends to ensure protection and continuity of families. However, forced displacement of people hinders such efforts as it leads to massive disruption of families either temporarily or permanently. During such situations, women and children plus older members of the community are the ones who bear the burden of vulnerability as compared to men. More often, men will be out in the fields trying to counter the enemy while women try to ensure the safety of children (El-Bushra, 2000: 4-5). Even in situations of natural calamities, men leave homes for long distance journeys in search of food but not all of them return to support

their families. It is this circumstantial separation that ends up in temporary or permanent separation. In the worst of scenarios, parents take different routes while children take another route hence giving rise to ‘unaccompanied children’ refugees (UNHCR, 2014b: 4).

For the urban Somali refugees, upon arrival in Eastleigh, women who had been culturally socialized as caregivers assumed double roles. They took up their missing husbands’ positions as heads of families, providing for their families and at the same time carrying on as care givers. The men who had lost contact with their wives and children adapted to playing their traditional roles as well as taking care of household chores which had until then been a preserve of women. For the unaccompanied children, some of them were lucky to land in the hands of well-wishers who fostered them as their own while the unlucky cases found themselves engaging in forced labour where they were prone to sexual exploitation and other untold forms of exploitation because of their vulnerability. In other words, it dawned on the urban Somali refugees that they had entered a ‘survival for the fittest’ zone and they had to go extra miles to put food on their tables for their families (Grayson, 2013: 7).

However, life has not been all that smooth for families that did not break-up as both parents have to go out and work in order to contribute to family needs because jobs were not readily available for men to take them up and use the proceeds to support their wives and children. For those families undergoing hardships, some members like young girls opted out of the families and got married or were forcibly married off in order to ease the burden on the family. Such moves gave rise to young mothers some of whom were prone to gender-based violence leading to further break-up of young families (Grayson, 2013: 9).

Considering the fact that they will be returning to their country, there is plausible fear that history will repeat itself, that return will lead to further disruption of families. For instance, the process is expected to be voluntary however, it seems it might turn out to be forced as about 80% of the refugees have expressed the fear of going back yet the government is insisting that they should go (Cabrol, 2014:5). This means some refugees may want to find a way around it and hence disappear without the knowledge of other family members. Others may link up with their relatives who might not want to accommodate their spouses leading to family separation. The not so stable situation may lead to friction, cold war and even break up of violence that will definitely interfere with family units as it happened after the 1997-98 repatriation from Ethiopia (Grayson, 2013: 28).

There might also arise need for forcing returnees into reversing the new gender roles in order to fit in the traditional culture which might not be taken well and result in conflicts as women may no longer be allowed to position themselves as heads of families. This would obviously expose such families to disruptions because Somali cultural practices tend to discriminate against women (Grayson, 2013: 40).

While in displacement, many refugee and IDP women take on new and challenging roles as heads of households, camp leaders and organisers in the struggle for return. For example, Guatemalan refugee women in Mexico organised themselves into advocacy groups and were instrumental in pressuring the Guatemalan government to negotiate the 1994 Accord on the Resettlement of the Populations Uprooted by the Armed Conflict. However, upon return many of the women were pressured to relinquish their family-head positions in the community and return to their traditional gender roles. Ensuring that return is an enabling rather than disempowering

process for potentially vulnerable groups such as women and children, is a persistent challenge for the displaced as well as for the humanitarian practitioners who work with them (Bradley, 2006:5).

Returning to Somalia will induce a change of social status for women who would not be able to seek the same livelihood opportunities or lifestyle choices as in the country of asylum due to cultural prohibitions such as the ability to work, to remain unmarried or to speak out on their rights and on sexual abuse and exploitation. Whilst in Kenya, many refugee women have had the opportunity to receive education and skills which have translated into successful businesses, which they would not be able establish due to the imposition of gender roles in Somalia, thus weakening their ability to be self-reliant and their potential for self-realisation (Zewde, 2013: 2)

Single-parenthood as commonly practised in Kenya, a practice that some of the urban refugees have been assimilated into, may not see the light of day in their kin state due to extreme cultural practices. Young girls may be forced into early marriage in line with the cultural and religious practices of the locals. It is because of such fears that the UN Security Council Resolution 1375 on Women, Peace and Security encourages actors to adopt a gender perspective that addresses ‘the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction’ (Zewde, 2013: 3).

The religious practices of the original Somali communities prophesy the Islamic religion that has strict adherence to certain practices. However, the circumstances and the new environment in Kenya, has forced some refugees to relax their religious practices. Some women no longer adhere to the Islamic dress code and marriage laws, while some of the refugees have converted

to Christianity, and children do not attend *Madrassa* as would be the case if they were in Somalia (Toby, 2014).

A refugee is said to repatriate when he or she returns to his or her country of origin from the state in which he or she has been taking asylum. This leads immediately to questions about the concept. For example, many refugees have been born in exile and cannot be seen as returning anywhere; defined in this manner repatriation implies an inherited refugee status and idea of origins. However, others have argued that a group's national identity needs to be maintained, or even created where prior to flight nationality had little meaning for people, and is likely to fade over the years. This suggests it would be dangerous to assume any consistent conception of national identity between the generations and with it any common feelings towards repatriation (Bascom, 1994).

The term 'country of origin' is vague but what can go in its place? For governments the 'state of origin' appears to be more appropriate; once refugees have crossed the international border to their state of origin they have repatriated and become returnees. UNHCR (2014:3), states that repatriation should be 'preferable to the place of residence of the refugee in his country of origin'. Although this ideal appears to be rarely fully met, it suggests some expectation of refugees returning 'home', a restoration of the *status quo ante*. How far these concepts of return overlap with those of the refugees themselves is rarely clear as there has been very little investigation of refugees' perceptions of repatriation (Bakewell, 1996: 9).

Voluntary repatriation is the only form which is sanctioned by international law and forcible repatriation is universally condemned. However, the term voluntary is one which is used very

flexibly. It is not at all clear at which level of analysis refugees' actions are supposed to be voluntary. For example, if an individual within a household is not willing to return but the whole household as a unit returns, is that repatriation wholly voluntary? UNHCR upholds the 'voluntary and individual character of repatriation' (Bakewell, 1996: 11).

2.2.4 Access to Livelihood and other Social Services

Eastleigh being an urban centre is well connected to modern infrastructure and livelihood services as evidenced by the good road network, affordable housing facilities, ample business facilities, piped water, electricity, educational institutions, places of worship, healthcare facilities, as well as social and legal support from humanitarian agencies. The urban Somali refugees are now used to this kind of facilities and services some of which are offered free of charge. They have access to modern healthcare, their children go to Kenyan schools and access colleges, most of them engage in trade and they move around the country in search of basic needs and other much needed services. There are institutions like the City County hospitals and Refuge Point that assist urban refugees to access healthcare at affordable rates. For example, Windle Trust International assists their academic programmes while Heshima Kenya supports refugee girl children realize their dreams, etc. In her research on the social challenges facing Somali women refugees in Eastleigh, Kibinda observes that refugee women have access to social amenities like schools and business opportunities (Kibinda 2013:13),

The urban Somali refugees have found a way to integrate with the local Kenyan communities outside the camps (Grayson, 2013:28). They have also established businesses and are equally competing with the local Kenyan businessmen. Some of them have employed fellow refugees and Kenyans in their businesses not to forget mentioning that a good number of them have

bought cars which they use to travel around the country. In a nutshell, urban Somali refugees have risen from the level of being wholly dependent on the government and refugee agencies for relief aid to established businessmen and women who are significantly contributing to developing the economy of this country (Mwanga, 2012). However, there are still those Kenyans who feel refugees are a liability to this country and that it is high time they relocated back to their kin states (Ohta & Gebre, 2005:15).

Somalia has poor and ineffective medical facilities and systems that might negatively impact on the lives of the returnees. Currently, some humanitarian organizations have pulled out of some parts of Somalia because of the inability of the government to provide security for their workers. UNHCR has also been having problems accessing some parts of Somalia, particularly the southern parts because of the volatile security situation hence hampering their plans. With the limited resources and facilities, urban Somali refugees are going to have a rough time accessing the said social amenities as they will be compelled to do with what will be available at that moment. They will have to change from their current nature of being self-reliant to depending on donor aid and support in almost all dimensions until the time the government will arrest the instability situation in order to improve the livelihood of all its citizens (Grayson, 2013:41).

Grayson has counselled that more research should be done in order to ensure that the disparity in livelihood does not affect the re-integration of refugees after the repatriation. That being the case, it remains a prayer and the spirit of keeping hopes alive that Somalia will soon gain stability and forge sustainable development programmes for its citizens. She further observes that access to land and employment opportunities for the first returnees from Ethiopia in 1997-98 posed a great challenge to the then government. Expected areas of settlement which include Afmadow, Baidoa

and Belet Xaawo still have inadequate public infrastructure and basic services (Grayson, 2013:49).

In conclusion, there is need to appreciate the fact that the behaviour of men and women is indeed conditioned by social and cultural expectations and not basically by the differences between the innate and natural appearances. It is these behaviours that dictate the gender perspectives of the concerned groups. Thus, the gender differences will be noted not only at individual level but also within institutions like households, communities, schools, places of work, etc. (El Bushra, 2000).

Considering that the Somali community is a patriarchal one, refugee women will definitely undergo gender injustice in terms of the general treatment and lifestyle. They will have to take a back seat and tone down on their pro-active role of being in the forefront in addressing issues that concern them. El-Bushra is now calling for transformation of this gender injustice with a focus on equality of treatment, opportunities and rights. She is of the view that gender policies that do favour men at the expense of women go a long way in limiting their contribution in initiatives geared towards food security, wealth creation, markets, political processes among others. From a general point of view, situations of displacement often give rise to factors that compel both sexes to re-negotiate their gender roles (El-Bushra, 2000: 5).

In relation to the study in question, the commencement of the refugee situation for urban Somali refugees compelled them to adapt to the existing form of lifestyle in Kenya in the sense that men and women had to take up the necessary gender roles in order to fit into the new environment. Now that we are looking forward to the repatriation process, it is certain that there is need to

once again renegotiate the said gender perspectives in order to fit in their country as far as matters of security, family unity and livelihoods are concerned.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Theory of Repatriation

This study was guided by the theory of repatriation. Koser (1993) and Bascom (1994) have looked into ways of linking migration and repatriation. Koser (1993) suggests that self-repatriation is a result of refugees comparing conditions in exile with those at home. This theory states that the conditions in country of asylum can be categorized into key variables such as employment/income, access to information/risk, government policy on voluntary repatriation, individual attributes, family unity, security and environmental factors.

The structural factors influencing refugee decisions are so explicit that they cannot be ignored. The approach focuses on the different responses to repatriation by different groups of refugees. Age, sex, experience in country of asylum and socioeconomic class are factors which influence the various decisions for voluntary repatriation. The repatriation of Somali refugees is expected to be voluntary. However, with increasing and repeated political rhetoric, urging the UN to return Somali refugees or otherwise, the Government of Kenya will force them back to Somalia.

2.3.2 Relevance of the theory

The relevance of the theory to this study is that it indicates the distinction between voluntary and involuntary repatriation. It clearly explains that voluntary repatriation is preferred when there are pull factors among them, employment and better income, increased access to information/risk,

better government policy and systems by the host government, better security and environment. Voluntary repatriation leads to better capacities of the returnees.

The theory is also relevant to explain the importance of various resources and practices in a society and how the same can affect repatriation. This includes how refugees value access to meaningful livelihoods and social services. It also explains that gender roles are socially constructed and they can be reversed during repatriation. For example, the theory helps to understand that different social groups have different priorities, e.g. social contacts with local businessmen are perceived as being of great importance to a refugee household while this is not seen as significant by the host community or by a refugee agency worker. This can be conceptualized as shown in Fig.2.1.

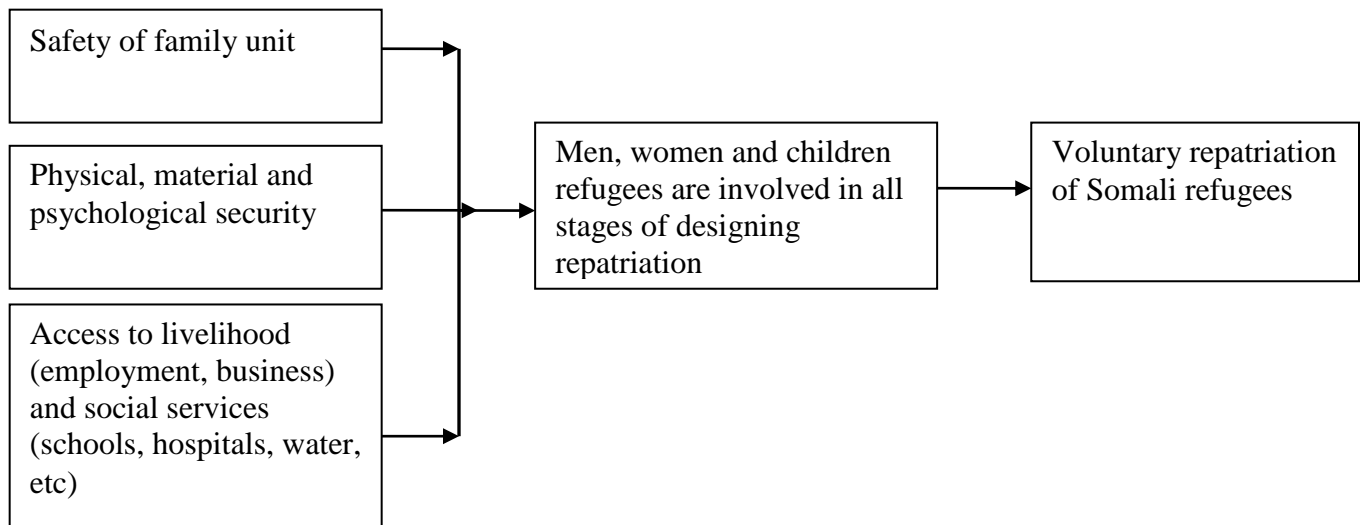


Fig. 2.1. Conceptual Model
Source: Koser (1994)

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was used in this study. It describes the specific procedures that were followed in undertaking the study including the research site, research design, study population, sample population, sampling procedure, data collection methods, data processing and analysis, and the ethical considerations of the study.

3.2 Research Site

This study was conducted in Eastleigh, which is a suburb within Kamukunji Constituency, Nairobi City County, Kenya (Fig. 3.1). It is located east of the central business district (CBD), and is predominantly inhabited by the Somali, some of Kenyan origin while others are Somali immigrants and as such, it is nick-named *Mogadishu Ndogo*, meaning Small Mogadishu. Eastleigh is also described as “a country within a country with its own economy” because of its robust business enterprises and vibrant economy. There are approximately 33,537 registered Somali refugees (UNHCR, 2013a:2), but it is presumed that there are many more undocumented Somali refugees living in the area.

Eastleigh is well served with most basic social amenities including nursery, primary and secondary schools; there are several tertiary institutions surrounding it. Refugee children also access the public and private universities in Nairobi and within the whole country. There are several health facilities, financial institutions, mosques, churches and it is well served with a tarmacked road network and public means of transport. There is piped water and affordable

electricity for refugee homes. There are also several business enterprises including restaurants run by Somali and Ethiopian refugees.

Eastleigh is easily accessible to Pangani and Kamukunji police stations as well as the Moi Airbase Barracks. Most of the houses within are cost-effective for low income earners and as such viable for the Somali refugees. Eastleigh borders Mlango Kubwa and Mathare slums which are occupied by low income Kenyans but still accommodate some of the refugees (UNHCR 2013b, 3).

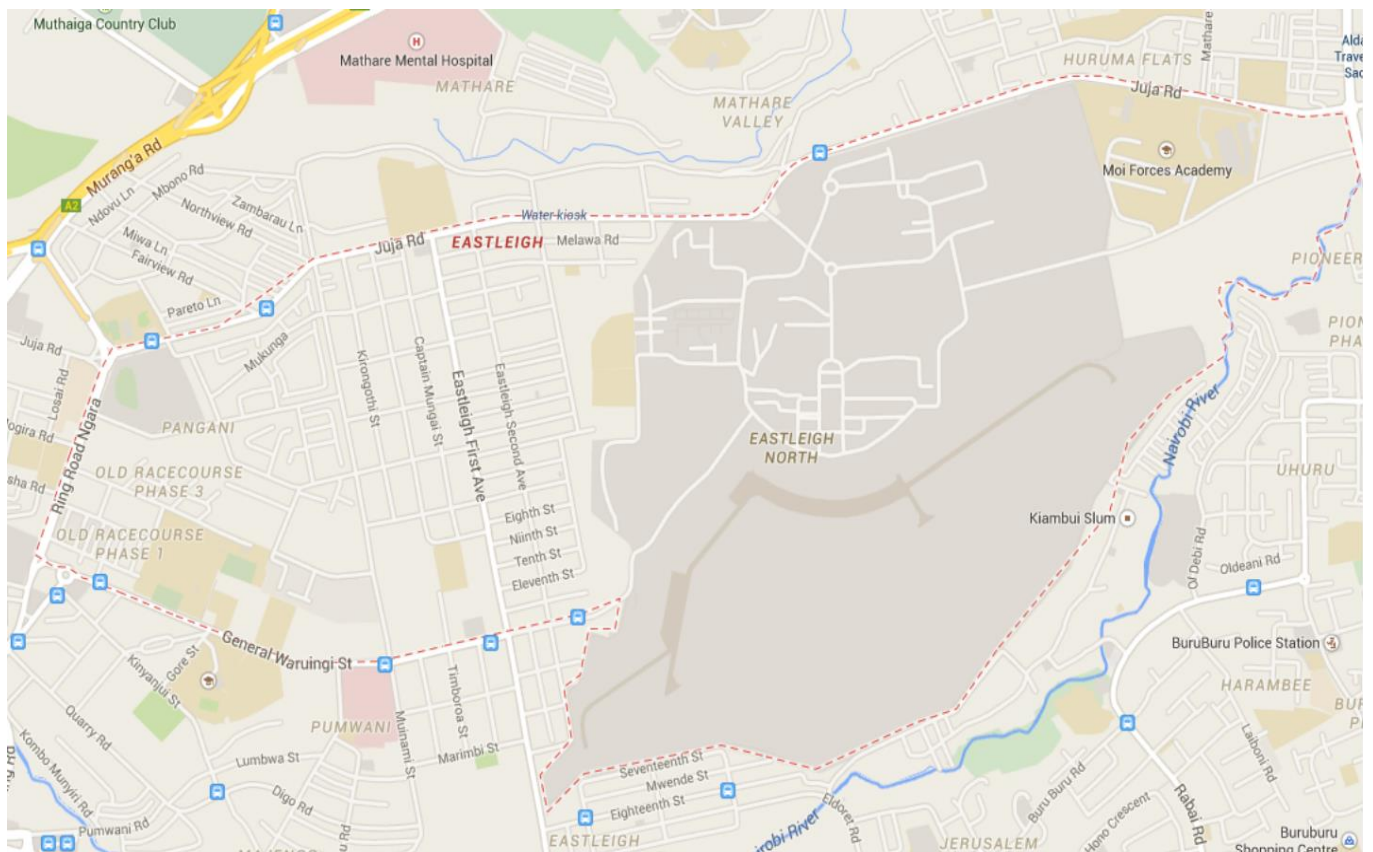


Fig. 3.1: Location of Eastleigh

(Source: www.noloshacusub.net)

3.3 Research Design

This was a cross-sectional study and it used a mixed research approach to collect data. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The quantitative data was processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Microsoft office package version 19 to run the frequencies and percentages of responses. On the other hand, qualitative data generated from the focus group discussions and key informant interviews were transcribed and analysed (identified, coded, themed and categorized the patterns in the data). The analysis was conducted manually to complement the quantitative results which unearthed and uncovered people's attitudes, fears, and concerns regarding their impending repatriation to Somalia

3.4 Study Population and Unit of Analysis

The research targeted the urban Somali refugees living in Eastleigh. The unit of analysis was the individual man and woman aged 18 years and above.

3.5 Sample Population and Sampling Procedure

The sample population was derived from the registered urban refugees, from the UNHCR register which served as the sampling frame. The sample population consisted of 100 respondents, 50 men and 50 women. These were sampled from the above mentioned sampling frame using the simple random sampling procedure.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The researcher interviewed 50 men and 50 women refugees using a semi-structured questionnaire (Appendix 1). The questionnaire consisted of both closed and open-ended questions, and was used to collect data on the refugees' concerns regarding their repatriation in general, the security of the family unit and their access to livelihood.

3.6.2 Key Informant Interviews

The key informants comprised 3 opinion leaders, 3 refugee agency staff and 1 staff from the department of refugee affairs (DRA). A key informant interview guide (Appendix 2) was used to collect data regarding the attitudes and fears they had concerning the safety of the family units and access to livelihoods.

3.6.3 Focus Group Discussions

Two focus group discussions were conducted, one comprised 12 men while the other consisted of 12 women. The separation of the groups on gender basis was informed by the historical Muslim cultural practices whereby women are not allowed to discuss issues affecting them in public in the presence of men. A focus group discussion guide (Appendix 3) was used to guide the discussions. These discussions were moderated by the researcher and were conducted in English, Kiswahili and Somali languages with interpretation where applicable. The discussions brought consensus of the refugees regarding the fears and attitudes they had with respect to their repatriation, the security of the family unit and their access to livelihood.

3.7 Data Processing and Analysis

Data processing started in the field, with checking for completeness of the data and quality control. The quantitative data was processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Microsoft office package version 19 to run the frequencies and percentages of responses. On the other hand, qualitative data generated from the focus group discussions and key informant interviews were transcribed and analysed (identified, coded, themed and categorized the patterns in the data). The analysis was conducted manually to complement the quantitative results which unearthed and uncovered people's attitudes, fears, and concerns regarding their impending repatriation to Somalia.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

This study touched on certain issues that refugees consider sensitive and confidential. The researcher ensured that informed and voluntary consent from the people targeted for the study was obtained way in advance. This included informing them of the purpose of the study, objectives and potential use of the findings. The respondents were also informed of their right to disqualify themselves or withdraw from participating in the study at any stage. Assurance of keeping and adherence to the principle of confidentiality was shared and a related document signed accordingly with the respondents. Universal principles of ethics were ensured, mainly regarding non-maleficence, beneficence, autonomy, fidelity, justice and veracity. This was done to ensure that the anonymity of the respondent was maintained, and no physical and psychological harm was inflicted on the subjects.

CHAPTER FOUR

GENDER PERSPECTIVES OF SOMALI REFUGEES IN EASTLEIGH OF THEIR REPATRIATION TO SOMALIA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. It starts by describing some demographics characteristics of the respondents and then moves on to present the findings as per the objectives of the study.

4.2 Demographics of the Respondents

4.2.1 Age

The ages of the respondents were a mix with 62% aged between 20 and 35 years. Those aged 36 to 45 years were 32% while those aged 46 years and above were 6% (Table 4.1). Age plays an important role in determining whether a refugee will embrace voluntary repatriation or not. This is because the duration of the war in Somalia has taken over 24 years and some refugees have lived in Kenya for virtually all their lives. The youth, on the other hand, have already established lives in Kenya. The middle aged have children that have already set up roots in Kenya and uprooting this would be an injustice to these children. The elderly would not survive going back into virtual nothingness. One can deduce that the largest age groups are the e most productive and work hard to make a living in the competitive urban environment in Kenya. This is attributed to the fact that most of the urban refugees are expected to be self-reliant with minimal reliance on humanitarian assistance.

Table. 4.1. Age of the Respondents

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
20-25	6	8	14	14
26-30	20	10	30	30
31-35	12	6	18	18
36-40	4	16	20	20
41-45	6	6	12	12
46-50	0	4	4	4
51-55	2	0	2	2
TOTAL	50	50	100	100

4.2.2 Marital Status

Marital status was an important characteristic that was used to categorize respondents. This is because of its close links to the term family and familial terms. In most cases, in an African cultural setting, a family consists of a mother, father and children. However, a Somali refugee's family may consist of extended family members such as aunts, uncles, adopted children and relatives as well as neighbours and friends.

As a result of the prolonged conflicts and hunger calamity in Somalia, most couples have in one way or the other been separated and find themselves heading individual households. Marital status played an important role in this study because the decision for voluntary repatriation depends on not only individuals but to a greater extent, the leaders of the respective refugee family units.

Findings in Fig.4.1 show that 90% of the respondents were single either because they were not married, are separated, divorced or widowed while 10% were married. The number of respondents that were still married in the country of asylum was very low, in comparison to those that separated. Divorce was relatively high among male respondents than among their female counterparts.

Widowhood may be attributed to actual family separation during flight from Somali. The impact of the war is, however, notable with regard to the respondents that have lost spouses. The large numbers of the combined divorced, widowed and separated respondents is a big indicator of the nature of the heads of the families while in asylum. In such households, the remaining spouse has to fill in the gap of the one that is not there. This implies that they are responsible for not only providing for the family but also making pertinent decisions regarding matters likely to affect the family such as repatriation in this case.

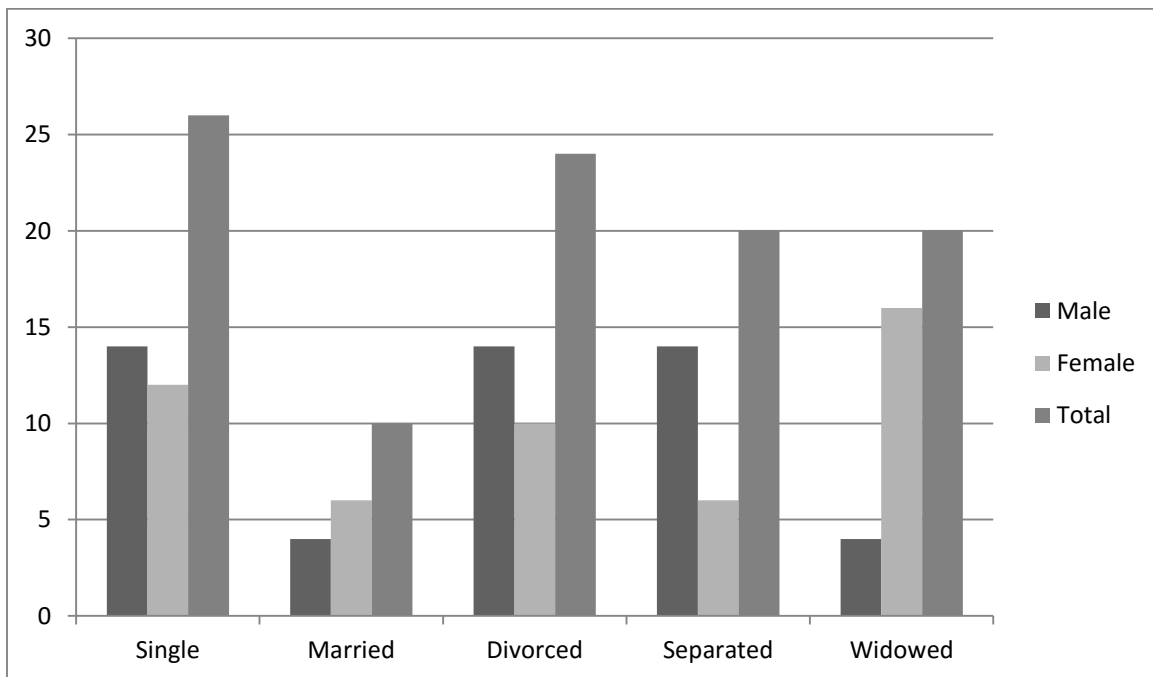


Fig. 4.2. Marital Status of the respondents

4.2.3 Education

The level of education is an important determinant of literacy in a community. The respondents were categorized according to their level of education to be able to understand the impact of access to social amenities like schools. The Somali culture prefers males to have an education while the females should not. This essentially prepares the males for the all too important task of heading the family and, by extension, making decisions for their respective families.

The findings suggest modest educational achievements by the respondents. Ten percent had no formal education, 36% had attended *Madrassa* and 30% had completed primary school (Fig. 4.3). *Madrassa* is the Muslim school where children are taught about their religion. It is notable that female refugee respondents seemed to have overcome the stereotype associated with the education of the Somali girl child and those living in Eastleigh had gone ahead and embraced education as indicated in the primary, secondary and university levels. The high levels of basic education by the respondents are attributed to easy access to educational facilities within Eastleigh and its environs.

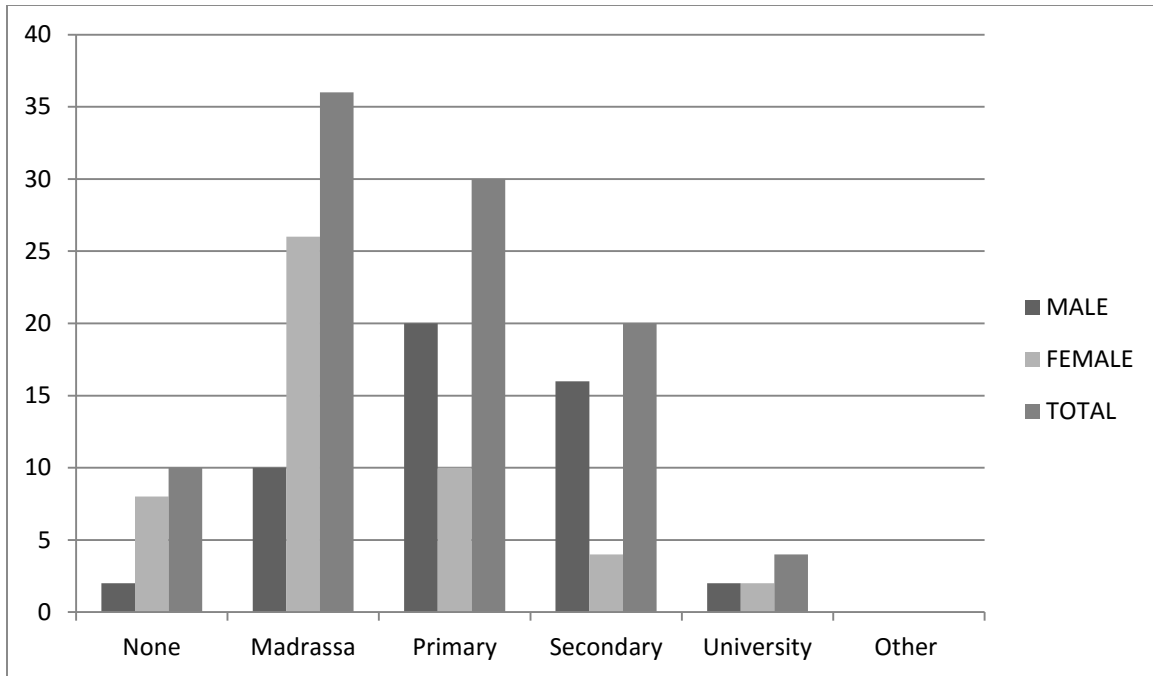


Fig. 4.3. Education Level of the Respondents

4.2.4 Income levels

Fig. 4.4 indicates that 60% of the respondents earn within Kenya shillings, 1,000-20,000. This income is earned by manual labour in shops including house helps. Those who are school going and/or dependants of their relatives and friends were 22%.

The level of income is a big determinant of whether they want to remain in Kenya or be repatriated, for they have already established their means of livelihood which can be destroyed if they went back to Somalia. Unlike the situation in Somalia, where the man is supposed to be the sole breadwinner, in the Kenya, both men and the women take part in income-generating activities to sustain their families.

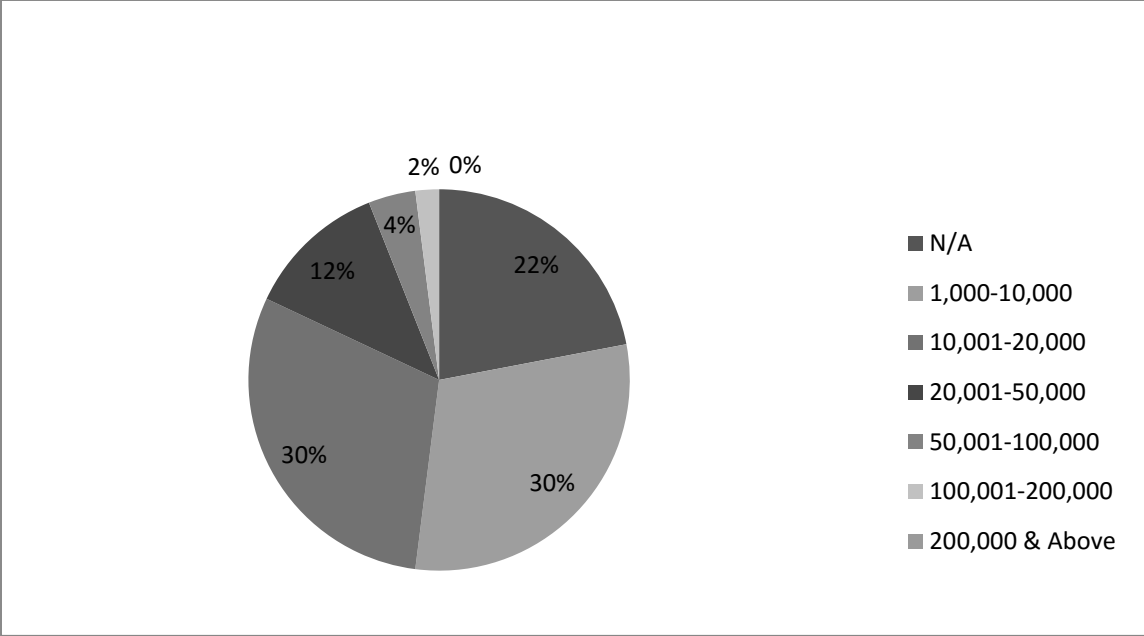


Fig. 4.4. Income levels of respondents

4.3 Gender Perspectives, Attitude and Fears

According to one Ahmed Mohammed (not his real name), Somali refugees are generally not willing to return to Somalia. He equated the thought of repatriation to the adage of one, which states that a man can take a donkey to the river with the hope that a thousand more men will be brought in to compel this donkey to drink water notwithstanding whether the donkey is willing to drink the water or not.

The security situation in Somalia is the main fear amongst the refugee population and informs the negative attitude that they have regarding voluntary repatriation. They are clear that despite the various reports of stability returning to some parts of Somalia, the refugee community leaders noted that such information was not conclusive. They reported that even the president of the Federal Government of Somalia is not secure despite the government machinery at his disposal.

They also observed that, at one point, the parliament of Somalia in Mogadishu was attacked by Al-Shabaab despite the presence of the government security systems.

Both men and women refugees acknowledged the efforts to restore peace in Somalia with the support of the international community are still on-going if the presence of AMISOM forces is anything to by. However, refugees note that the mission was to quell the Al-Shabaab menace however, the forces are still there and there are no indications when they will end. The refugees feel that the security conditions in their country are still life-threatening and thus the negative attitude towards immediate return.

The respondents informed the researcher that they feel victimized and stigmatized in Kenya when they are associated with the Al-Shabaab due to the recent wave of terrorist attacks in Kenya. They have been called terrorists by Kenyans by virtue of Al-Shabaab group having originated from Somalia. They are aware that Al-Shabaab have claimed responsibility for most of the terrorist attacks in Kenya and that they have vowed to continue causing havoc until the government of Kenya withdraws its forces from Somalia. Now, the question that most of the Somali refugees are asking is, 'How can they believe that their safety will be guaranteed if the very militia that is being fought in Somalia is causing bloodshed in Kenya?

The refugee leaders informed the researcher that Kenyans, including those of non-Somali descent, popularly referred to as *those from down Kenya*, are said to have been recruited into the Al-Shabaab. They cited the recent Garissa University attack where 148 lives were lost was led by a Kenyan youth. Several youths have been arrested and charged for belonging to the dreaded Al-Shabaab group. Therefore, they are in a dilemma as to whether the fight against Al-

Shabaab is bearing fruits or it is leading to the expansion of the militia group. They foresee the Al-Shabaab menace being transformed from a national threat in Somalia to a regional threat for the East and Horn of African region, and if not contained, it is likely to spread and become a continental threat.

Refugee men said they were afraid of the conflict situation in Somalia and hence fear for their lives. Both men and women fear that the country is not yet ready to receive the returnees and that the call for repatriation is a political process meant to hoodwink the international community that Somalia is gaining stability. Over 85% of the male respondents stated that the government should rise to the reality and tell the international community the correct state of affairs as far as its ability to accommodate and protect the returnees is concerned.

Men fear that repatriation will make their sons easy targets for forceful recruitment into Al-Shabaab and/or the government forces to be fronted in the fight against the Al-Shabaab. They also fear that Al-Shabaab might perceive them as spies having resided in a foreign country for long periods of time. The men fear being killed by Al-Shabaab, because they view all the Somali who live in foreign countries as being the ones who expose them to international condemnation and are thus likely to declare their return as a payback time.

The poor state of the socio-economic facilities will only serve to lure most of the men and youth into joining the militia. In the long run, this might lead to further disintegration of families and might leave their families without male members who can protect their women and children in times of need. As a result, women and their daughters could be subjected to sexual abuse and exploitation by the combatants.

Women refugees in Eastleigh are also unwilling to go back to Somalia. Among all the interviewed women, none of them expressed a positive attitude towards returning citing insecurity and lack of law and order in their country. They are of the opinion that they will definitely be subjected to harassment and exploitation by the Al-Shabaab. The society might also be unwilling to accommodate their new gender perspectives. In Kenya, they had the liberty to determine their lifestyle as some opted to stay unmarried while others have been able to live in monogamous marriages despite the dictates of their religion. Both men and women think that the girl-child education is an important factor that is not practised in Somalia hence the reason for frowning upon the planned repatriation.

Harassment by police was reported by 80% of the respondents as one of the major problems facing them in Kenya. They dread the fact that the Kenyan law enforcement agencies have been arbitrarily arresting them and extorting money from them in the name of dealing with illegal migrants and/or enforcing the encampment policies. According to one Mr. Abdi Arab (not his real name), *“No Somali refugee will ever forget the harassment that Somalis were subjected to by the government during the 2014 Usalama Watch Operation. However, despite all these tribulations, Somalis think it is better to stay in Kenya and endure the police harassment than go back to their country and face the wrath of Al-Shabaab.”*

4.4 Gender Perspectives on Security of the Family

During their flight from Somalia to Kenya as from the early 1990s, most of the family units were substantially disrupted because of the effects of civil wars and the Al-Shabaab menace. To some extent, men were the targets in these conflicts and this forced them to be actively involved in the conflicts not because they had certain agendas to achieve but ostensibly to protect their miserable

families. They used to leave their homes and join the fights with the hope that they will come back at the end of the day to join their families. However, to most of them, that marked the start of the separation with their families. Wives and children could wait for days, weeks and months to no end before coming to terms that their loved ones might have joined the militia or died. At the same time the conflicts seemed not to be ending, women and children were also being attacked as they lacked men who could protect them.

Women were thus compelled to step in their husbands' shoes and offer leadership for their younger members of their families. They had to provide for and protect their children. Male young children were being viewed as assets by the combatants. They would recruit them with a view to increasing their capacity, ability and severity. Boys as young as 12 years got recruited, radicalized and involved in the armed conflicts. According to the men, it is easier to influence the reasoning of children to believe in certain ideologies and thus grow up knowing that what they stand for is nothing but the "whole truth". Women reported that they left Somalia for fear of exploitations by the combatants, which is likely to happen upon repatriation.

Women fear that repatriation will lead to further disintegration of family units and change in gender roles. Somali men are traditionally the heads of families and sole providers while women are home caregivers. Children help with small chores at home for girls and cattle grazing by boys. Now, each household has a head irrespective of the composition. Women and children have been fending for themselves and they have been decision-makers in their households. They now fear these roles will be reversed again or the current status might be unacceptable in Somalia.

Women now work for gains in order to provide for their children by engaging in activities such as hawking while at the same time children come out to seek employment opportunities in order to lessen the burden of dependence on their mothers. The unaccompanied girl children sought for permanent opportunities mainly being employed as house-helpers while others were circumstantially forced into early marriages in order to get shoulders to lean on. Unaccompanied boy children had to seek employment in shops and hotels thus using the proceeds to sustain themselves.

The Somali men although aware of their cultural beliefs on the role of women in the society said they appreciate the need to allow women to compete with them under the same economy because they too shoulder demanding responsibilities. This is characterized by the current business environment in Eastleigh where women and men freely interact and trade together. Some shops and hotels are run by men and, to some extent, women have employed young men to assist them in their businesses while at the same time some Somali men have employed Somali women to assist them in their businesses. This is a major shift in gender roles for the urban Somali refugees. Both men and women are not ready to have their lives disrupted again by the repatriation.

All the respondents were unanimous that families are likely to be affected by the repatriation and there is a high likelihood that families will be separated. Men and boys are afraid that they may be compelled to be separated from their families unwillingly as they try to explore other alternatives with regard to better living standards. Considering the delicate security situation in their country, some men would prefer to precede their wives and children in order to go and assess the environment in the designated areas of settlement so that they can be in a position to

make the right decision as to whether their families can go or opt to stay in Kenya. Others may want to move out of settlement areas to seek other livelihood opportunities elsewhere. The other group of men and boys are thinking of remaining in Kenya and continue with their livelihood opportunities and support their families from their country of asylum. However, they are not sure if the stakeholders would cooperate on this issue and they fear that such a step might mark their separation with their families. Under the same line of thought, they expressed fear that they might precede their families but the remaining members may opt not to follow them and remain in Kenya leading to splits in the family.

Another threat for men is the ongoing conflict between the government allied forces on one side and the Al-Shabaab on the other side. They are afraid that they might be got in the crux and be killed leaving their beloved families behind. At the moment, it seems the intention of Al-Shabaab is to disrupt the proper functioning of their government and may seize this opportunity and attack or recruit men into their forces in order to further frustrate the government. However, should men and boys be lured into joining the Al-Shabaab, they will definitely become the enemies of the state and be targeted by the government allied troops for elimination, a move that is going to disrupt their families further and forever.

Forty percent of the respondents stated that men are already contemplating onward movement to other countries if repatriation of all Somali refugees is forced. With such a threat, it is unlikely that they will carry their families with them as most are likely to proceed with the hope that they will come back for their families after settling down. The impact of such a move is further separation of the families as their wives and children will be left with no one to look up to.

Consequently, women and children fear that they will be left without people to look up to for

protection as men and male children will not be available. They will be left exposed to all forms of victimization like sexual exploitation, wife inheritance, forced marriages, early marriages, and harassment by Al-Shabaab and other indigenous Somali as well as the possibility of creating another humanitarian crisis in their country as there are fears that their government may not grant them adequate protection.

Women and girls too, have their own immediate fears concerning the repatriation as far as family unity is concerned. Most of the women have taken up new gender roles and have over the time become comfortable in those roles. However, in contemplation of the traditional society of the Somali set-up, they fear that they might not be allowed to continue with the current way of life that they have taken up in Kenya. In line with the cultural setting, they are supposed to be home care-givers and not to take a lead in providing for and protecting their children. Such women are apprehensive of the fact that they are likely to be forced into marriages and the same may apply to their daughters who are still minors. The impact will definitely be further disruption of the existing and already disrupted families hence the negative attitude for women towards repatriation.

Lack of security and adequate government protection is the starting point for fears towards repatriation. All the respondents believed that if the government will be able to provide adequate security, then all their fears will be emptied into the Indian Ocean and they will be competing for space on the buses that will be ferrying them back.

On a positive note, there are those refugees who are optimistic that they might be going to rejoin their family members in Somalia in case they are alive and traceable. They will get to link up

with close relatives who are now familiar with the current state of affairs in their country and will offer them the necessary support. Such a situation will lead to strengthening of family units as people who had been separated for long will be linking up. They will be able to marry up the various gender perspectives from two different fronts and if handled well, they are likely to get the best out of it.

However, there are those who fear that despite the fact that they might link up with some of their family members, there will be creation of more tension as the returnees would be viewed from a negative perception on allegations of having abandoned them to suffer in the wake of conflicts and, therefore, they may not accept them back and/or they may make their lives miserable in the name of revenge. Hence, some members of the family fear that they might be compelled to abandon their families and seek to stay in other areas to avoid coming into contact with those who might perceive them negatively, a step that might lead to further breakdown of the family units.

The cultural practices of the Somali people allow for early marriages of young girls, a practice that is not allowed in Kenya. Women fear that in case they settle back in Somalia, their young daughters will be forced into early marriages hence separating them from their families. Their young sons, on the other hand, may be compelled to join the different combative forces, either on the government side or the Al-Shabaab side. This move is likely to separate such children from their families and they may not link up again hence disrupting the family units.

According to DRA, children and the youths who are in various academic institutions in Kenya will be allowed to remain behind in order to continue with their schools. Considering the state of

education in their country, they might opt not to go back because of the notion that their government has not embraced education as much as is the situation in Kenya. They might therefore not want to return to their country at whatever cost marking a permanent separation with their families.

Lastly, there are those refugees who are in the process of being resettled in second countries of asylum like the United States of America, Canada, Australia, Europe, etc. In most cases, vetting is done at individual level and there have been situations whereby members of one family have been separated leaving others behind. They now fear that the repatriation may make the identified resettlement caseloads be fast-tracked leading to some refugees being resettled individually and thus leaving behind their family members to be repatriated back to Somalia. This will disintegrate the family units further.

4.5 Gender Perspectives of Access to Livelihood and other Social Services

Unlike in Somalia, both boys and girls in Kenya have equal opportunities to access education. According to the Somali refugee women, girls were not allowed to study beyond *madrassas*. However, in Kenya the constitution protects and promotes girl child education and refugee girls have been enrolled in various academic institutions whereby some sponsor themselves while others are sponsored by refugee agencies like Jesuit Refugee Services, Windle Trust International and Heshima Kenya, in order to pursue their studies. Boys too have not been left out of these sponsorship programmes and most of them are excelling in different academic fields as is the case with their Kenyan counterparts. Most refugees believe that Kenya as a country has embraced education unlike Somalia and this explains why the country has enjoyed a prolonged period of peace and stability.

There is access to modern healthcare facilities in Eastleigh for both Kenyans and the refugee community. Most of the refugees lauded the partnership between the UNHCR and the Nairobi City County Council health facilities which have been offering free healthcare services for the refugees provided that one has the valid refugee documentation. There are other agencies like Heshima Kenya, Refuge Point and MSF which have been aiding in terms of medication either by direct treatment or by reference to other hospitals for further treatment and they do take care of the huge medical bills. The Jubilee government has introduced free maternal services for women and refugees too have not been locked out of this programme hence reducing maternal deaths. In fact, one of the major maternal hospitals in Nairobi is situated in Pumwani which is within Eastleigh hence easily accessible to the refugee community.

Other organizations, for example the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and the Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) provide psychosocial counselling services free of charge to those refugees who have undergone trauma either because of the untold suffering they underwent in their country or any problems they might be facing in this country. These organizations have established sub-offices within Eastleigh in order to make their accessibility easier. There are gender desks at the police stations where refugees, mostly women who have been subjected to GBV cases, are reported and handled with the utmost confidentiality that they deserve.

Access to justice for the refugee community in Eastleigh has always been guaranteed. UNHCR in partnership with Kituo Cha Sheria and RCK is always on the watch out to ensure that the refugees do access the highest standard of justice in accordance with the law. The said organizations have lawyers who are always on call in case any refugees come into conflict with the law and they have been making interventions at the police stations for the refugees who have

been arrested and actual representation before the courts of law at no cost. They watch briefs for reported cases of sexual exploitation and GBV in courts as well as following up on cases of those refugees who have been arrested because of documentation issues and most of the interventions, according to the refugees, have resulted in their release.

During the *Usalama* Watch and the operations that are regularly mounted in the wake of alleged terrorist attacks, officers from the said three agencies have been making regular police visits at various police stations around the city and especially around Eastleigh to intervene for refugees and asylum seekers who got arrested and detained there hence enhancing their access to justice and ensuring that they are granted fair hearings. One of the landmark ruling, is the public interest litigation case that was filed by various refugee humanitarian agencies in the High Court at Nairobi after the government directive to relocate all urban refugees to the camps which led to quashing of the directive. This was as big victory for the urban refugees particularly those from Somalia who had become the major target for the police.

The residential and business houses in Eastleigh are affordable to the Somali refugees hence ensuring their access to shelter which is a basic need for all human beings. We have low cost houses going for as little as KES, 1,000 per month. The business premises are quite affordable and are available in plenty for the refugees to rent for their economic gains. Some of the refugees were not business people in their country but because of the wider market they are exposed to in Eastleigh, they have turned into enterprising businessmen and women and would prefer to carry on with their businesses in Somalia upon repatriation. Others have even rented stalls within the Nairobi Central Business District as characterized by the presence of Somali traders on Jamia Street within the city who sell new clothes, shoes and electronics. Other Somali refugees are

hawkers on the streets of Eastleigh which are frequented by Kenyans from different parts of the country who come to buy new clothes and shoes.

Eastleigh estate is supplied by affordable electricity that serves residents and their businesses which also serves to enhance security in the areas because of the very many security lights that are situated along the streets and on high buildings. The area is also supplied with adequate piped water for domestic and economic use. In addition, it has several hotels like the Magnificent Nomad Palace Hotel that serve as sources of employment not only for the refugees but for Kenyans as well. There is the improved road transport network within the area making it accessible. Lastly, there are several mosques and churches which make it easier for them to worship and walk to their business places without incurring transport expenses.

Financial institutions like Jamii Bora Bank, Western Union Money Transfer services, M-Pesa services, etc., are available to the Somali refugees in Eastleigh thus enabling them to manage their business finances effectively. The proximity to Gikomba market enables them to access cheaper food-stuffs for their survival. According to the women, no single refugee has ever died of hunger in Eastleigh as food is cheaply available to all of them. HIAS organization has also been assisting in terms of social assistance for those refugee families that are not stable hence making their lives smooth and manageable.

The biggest fear for the urban Somali refugees in anticipation of the repatriation is the uncertainty as to whether they will be able to access these livelihood opportunities and social amenities in Somalia. Both men and women are concerned that their government has not embraced education as is the situation in Kenya. They fear that there are very few and ill-

equipped academic institutions in their country leading to low standard education. The refugees feel that there is no effective education system in their country like the Kenyan 8-4-4 system which most of them have been exposed to and has made them appreciate the need for investing in education. They are aware that most of the schools in their country were destroyed during the conflict and so far they have not been renovated.

They fear that there are no qualified and enough teachers in Somalia, since most of them ran for their dear lives to other parts of the world. Women are concerned that their country is not yet ready to promote girl child education as girls will only be allowed to enroll in *madrassas* and only boys will be allowed to proceed to higher levels of education. The refugees feel the government may not have the ability to sponsor education programmes for the returnees who have been enjoying sponsorship from humanitarian organizations.

The refugees are concerned about the few and poorly equipped medical facilities in Somalia. They wonder how they will access medical facilities since most of the population relies on the few medical services of the humanitarian organization mainly serving the over one million internally displaced (IDPs) in Somalia. They informed the researcher that the few humanitarian organizations do not implement their mandate effectively due to the security challenges posed by Al-Shabaab. There have been reported instances where such organizations have been compelled to pull out their staff out of some areas due to insecurity. They have suspended their services in some areas and most of the refugees fear that once they return, the Al-Shabaab will scare them away making them vulnerable to diseases and sanitation problems. Refugee women and girls have been accessing free sanitary towels here in Kenya but they are uncertain if they will be accessing such services in their country due to the poor state of facilities. Some refugees are

aware of cases where some of their countrymen crossed into Kenya to seek treatment services while others do come to buy drugs for their ailing relatives in Somalia.

Women think there will be high child mortality rates in Somalia due to poor delivery services and lack of skilled health care workers. They informed the researcher that, currently, most deliveries are done in homes due to lack of better facilities. There are very few institutions offering psychosocial support apart from the few international humanitarian organizations that are already overwhelmed by the large numbers of the IDPs. Additionally, the efforts of the said few agencies are being hindered by insecurity, poor infrastructure and communication in the country.

Somalia is not safe enough to sustain a robust business culture as has been the case in Eastleigh. Most of the urban areas, even though characterized by the presence of military forces, are still prone to attacks from Al-Shabaab as the attacks are always unpredictable and severe resulting in loss of lives by the innocent civilians. The government has not enacted laws and policies that can effectively regulate trading businesses. Women fear that they may not be allowed to actively engage in business activities as men do because of the exploitative and discriminative cultural practices in Somalia. There is also the fear of child labour in the business sector as male children would be involved in this instead of going to school. The poor transport and communication facilities may not allow them to effectively transport their business merchandise and other commodities to the market centres. The state of insecurity in the country is unlikely to attract international markets from the neighbouring countries, as happens in Eastleigh.

The poor financial sector with few financial institutions will also serve to hinder their desire to

improve their economy because there are hardly any banks in Somalia. There is the charcoal business that is mainly controlled by Al-Shabaab and that has led to massive cutting of trees leading to environmental degradation including desertification of formerly arable lands.

The constant bombings in major urban centres have led to interference with the power lines leading to inadequate power supply in most of the towns. There is also uncertainty about water supply in major towns and residential areas considering the fact that some of the refugees used to be nomadic pastoralists moving from one place to another in search of water and pasture for their livestock. The refugees also fear that there are inadequate job opportunities because of the scarcity of business opportunities in the country meaning that they will have to start from square one in establishing their own sources of livelihood despite the harsh and insecure environment within the country.

DRA is in agreement and points out that livelihood opportunities in Somalia are a challenge especially for the urban refugees for some time. Unlike the urban Nairobi environment where refugees are exposed to a series of livelihood opportunities and modern social amenities, it will take some time before Somalia marches the development status of Kenya and other neighbouring states that have not been embroiled in conflicts like it.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings and then draws conclusions from those findings. The chapter ends with recommendations based on the conclusions.

5.2 Discussion

The study findings indicate that urban Somali refugees are not yet ready to return under the current circumstances in Somalia. Their lives in Eastleigh have undergone several transformations in terms of their gender roles. Their family ties are closer, their access to livelihoods better and they enjoy relative security just like the Kenyans living in Eastleigh. This is extensively attributed to the exposure they are subjected to while living in Eastleigh. They have been coexisting with wider social and culturally diverse communities in Kenya. Just like in times of war, El-Bushra (2000: 4) confirms that men often go out in the fields to counter the enemy while women try to ensure the safety of children which supports the argument that repatriation back to Somalia, which is still insecure, would cause family disruptions.

The major factor contributing to this negative attitude is the general state of insecurity in Somalia. According to Cabrol (2014:5), refugees fear going back home if the Kenya government decides to force them to return as this could lead to break-up of more families. These fears are likely to impact negatively on the repatriation and re-integration process because the majority of refugees are not prepared to return voluntarily. Cabrol (2014:5) notes that most of the urban refugees are convinced that the current form of protection they are accorded in Kenyan urban

areas cannot be guaranteed to them in Somalia.

Both men and women fear that return would expose their children as easy recruits into Al-Shabaab, while men fear being killed by Al-Shabaab because it views all the Somali who live in foreign countries as the ones who expose them to international condemnation. This was reaffirmed by Grayson (2013: 21) who states that access to firearms and other deadly weapons by Al-Shabaab is likely to cause more violence.

In a slight contradiction, however, a few of the target population have reservations with the manner in which the Kenyan law enforcement agencies have been treating them considering the constant police harassment, sexual and gender-based violence, extortion and arbitrary detention that have been witnessed especially during security operations as reported by Grant *et al.* (2012:9). Efforts to mitigate this challenge have however been fruitful as there are humanitarian organizations, for instance, the Refugee Consortium of Kenya and Kituo Cha Sheria, who make prompt legal interventions when refugees report cases of police harassment. This makes Somali refugees prefer the Kenyan asylum situation as opposed to protection by their state.

The general feeling of settling in a country that has not realized the importance of maintaining law and order is devastating to the refugees. Women fear that there could be possibilities of being subjected to archaic cultural practices like forced or early marriages, FGM, GBV and recruitment into militia groups at the expense of embracing education and other progressive ideologies, as noted by Grayson (2013:23).

Moreover, the study confirms that quite a number of families become separated during flight.

Refugees also fear that during repatriation, more disruptions of their families will take place and that they might never know the whereabouts of their relatives. Others fear that they might meet perpetrators of the conflicts who pushed them out of the country, as was extrapolated by Noah (2013: 39). However, it can also be argued that some of the returnees might link up with their relatives who might be surviving and this would expedite the integration process. Grayson (2013:28) observed on reviewing the 1997-1998 repatriation of the Somali from Ethiopia that negative attitudes can lead to suspicion and tension between the returnees and the host communities. This could degenerate into cold war and eventually lead to more conflict. Such a scenario could lead to further displacement and a vicious cycle of asylum seeking.

The study findings also indicate that refugees have valid concerns regarding access to meaningful livelihoods and relevant social amenities. According to Kibinda (2013:13) Somali refugees have been enjoying access to healthcare facilities, education, accessible markets as well as modern infrastructure like roads and electricity. The refugees are weary of the state of affairs in their country and are now uncertain if their government has the capacity to provide such social facilities and services. In the same vein, Grayson (2013:49) highlights the inadequacy of infrastructure in some of the proposed areas of settlement, for instance, Luuq and Baidoa, an observation shared by most of the returnees especially those who are having adequate access to infrastructure in Kenya.

Apparently, there are low prospects for girl-child education, women involvement in business and decision-making, low living standards for men, women and children as well as prospects for reduction in child mortality rates due to the poorly resourced healthcare sector as noted by Mohamed Yusuf in his report to the Voice of America News in 2014.

Most parts of South Central Somalia are still inaccessible due to poor infrastructure and insecurity, access by humanitarian agencies and government authorities is likely to pose a challenge and so limit the access of returnees to essential services and livelihood opportunities. This very fear was also expressed by UNHCR in their 2014 report to the effect that the state of insecurity and poor infrastructure was hampering their access to certain areas and services.

5.3 Conclusion

This study concludes that urban refugees living in Eastleigh have genuine fears and attitudes towards their repatriation to their country. It also concludes that urban Somali refugees are not prepared to return to their country voluntarily due to the general insecurity there. Thirdly, the refugees fear that repatriation will cause separation of the family unit, as they return to a country that is still insecure.

The presence of the Federal Government of Somalia, a parliament and the AMISOM, are good indicators that the country is gaining some level of stability. However, the level of insecurity is still very high in Somalia. The Al-Shabaab menace is still a major factor that makes Somalia ungovernable. This group has claimed many lives, destroyed property and violated people's human rights with abandon. There are still reports of continued conflicts between the Al-Shabaab, on one side, and the government forces in collaboration with AMISOM forces, on the other side. Even though there are some areas that have been fairly liberated from bandits, some of the government controlled zones are still under constant attacks by the militia.

The study also concludes that Somali refugees in Eastleigh have been coexisting with Kenyan local communities and most of them have locally integrated and adopted the lifestyles of their

hosts. To this end, both genders have had reversal of their gender roles, leading to men taking up roles that were culturally reserved for women, and vice versa. The study further concludes that both men and women would not wish to keep changing their gender roles, as it is likely to if they return to Somalia.

Considering the significant access to modern infrastructure and livelihood opportunities, the majority of urban Somali refugees have embraced modern forms of livelihoods and infrastructure and it is that development that is now causing them sleepless nights on the thoughts of going back to their country. Social services and amenities like schools, healthcare services, and large-scale businesses still remain a concern if the refugees are repatriated back to their country.

5.4 Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusions, this study recommends the following:

- The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) should source for funding and technical assistance to enhance the activities of the AMISOM troops in the country. This should be informed by the desire to find a lasting solution to political instability and the Al-Shabaab menace in Somalia once and for all.
- FGS should rally the international community, both development and humanitarian partners, to support reconstruction of Somalia. Once the basic infrastructure and amenities are reconstructed, this will address some of the fears urban refugees in Nairobi have and act as pull factors for voluntary repatriation.
- Similar studies should be conducted on camp-based refugees as well as for those undergoing local integration in Kenya. Research into the challenges and opportunities for urban refugees, and for those going for resettlement in third countries could also be useful.

REFERENCES

- Abdi, M. 2012. *Presidents of Kenya and Somalia Joint Communiqué*. Available at http://english.alshahid.net/archives/34032?utm_source=Alshahid&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Feed3A+AlshahidNetwork+28Alshahid+Network29. Accessed on 6th November, 2014.
- Abu Sa'Da, C. and Bianchi, S. 2014. *Perspectives of Refugees in Dadaab on returning to Somalia*. Available at www.msf-ureph.ch/en/caroline.abu-sada@geneva.msf.org, Accessed on 26th October, 2014.
- Aljazeera News 2012a. *Kenya sends Troops to attack Al-Shabaab*. Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/10/20111016115410991692.html>. Accessed on 6th November, 2014.
- Aljazeera News 2012b. *Kenyans Riot against Ethnic Somalis*. Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/11/2012112021333440883.html>. Accessed on 6th November, 2014.
- Anderson, M. and Woodrow, P. 1989. *Rising from the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster*. Boulder, Westview Press.
- Bakewell, O. 1996. *Refugee Repatriation in Africa: Towards a Theoretical Framework?* Occasional Paper 04/96, Centre for Development Studies, University of Bath.
- Banki, S. 2004. *Refugee Integration in the Intermediate Term: A Study of Nepal, Pakistan and Kenya*. New Issues in Refugee Research, No. 108. Geneva: UNHCR.
- Bascom J.B. 1994. *The Dynamics of Refugee Repatriation: The Case of Eritreans in Eastern Sudan*. In W.T.S. Gould and A.M. Findlay (Eds). *Population Migration and the Changing World Order*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bernard, R. 2002. *Research methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantative Methods*. New York: Altamira.
- [Botelho](#), G. and Leposo, L. 2015. *Kenyan official to U.N.: Relocate World's Largest Refugee camp, or we'll do it*. Available at www.cnn.com/2015/04/11/africa/kenya-dadaab-refugee-camp. Accessed on 4th September, 2015.
- Bradley, M. 2006. *Returning of Forced Migrants*. Available at www.forcedmigration.org/research-resources/expert-guides/return-of-forced-migrants. Accessed on 1st October, 2014.
- Cabrol, J. 2014. *Dadaab Refugees: An Uncertain Tomorrow*. Geneva: Medecins Sans Frontieres, Switzerland.

Cernea, M. and McDowell, C. 2000. *Risks & Reconstruction: Experiences of Resettlers and Refugees*. Canadian Journal of Sociology Online. Available at www.cjsonline.ca/reviews/resettlers.html. Accessed on 10th November, 2014.

Dumper, M. 2014. *Comparative Perspectives on the Repatriation and Resettlement of Palestinian Refugees: The Cases of Guatemala, Bosnia and Afghanistan*. Available at www.researchgate.net/publication/251124184. Accessed on 7th October, 2014.

El-Bushra, J. 2000. *Gender and Forced Migration: Editorial*. Forced Migration Review, 9th Edition. Available at www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR09/fmr9.2.pdf. Accessed on 30th June, 2015.

Republic of Kenya, 2010. *Refugee Act, 2006*, Revised Edition Gazette Notice Supplement NO. 97, Nairobi: National Council for Law Reporting.

Gebre, Y.D and I. Ohta, I. 2005 “Introduction: Displacement in Africa - Conceptual and practical concerns - “. In (I. Ohta and Y. D. Gebre, Eds.) *Displacement Risks in Africa*, pp. 1-14. Kyoto: Kyoto University Press.

Grant, K., R. Kimotho and E. Gerstner, 2012. *Asylum Under Threat: Assessing the Protection of Somali Refugees in Dadaab Refugee Camps and along the Migration Corridor*. Nairobi: Refugee Consortium of Kenya.

Grayson, L. 2013. *Durable Solutions: Perspectives of Somali Refugees Living in Kenya and Ethiopian Camps and Selected Communities of Return*. Nairobi: Danish Refugee Council.

Ikanda, F. 2009. *Deteriorating Conditions of Hosting Refugees: A Case Study of the Dadaab Complex in Kenya*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi.

IRIN 2013. *Briefing: Repatriating Somali Refugees from Kenya*. Available at m.irinnews.org/report/99117/briefing-repatriating-somali-refugees-from-kenya. Accessed on 8th November, 2014.

Jackson, M. 1996. Introduction, Radical Empiricism, and Anthropological Critique. In Jackson, M. (Ed.). *Things as they Are: New Directions in Phenomenological Anthropology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Jaji, R. 2009, *Masculinity on Unstable Ground: Young Refugee Men in Nairobi, Kenya*. Journal for Refugee Studies, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Vol.22.2:177-186

Kibinda, B. W. 2013. *Social Challenges Facing Somali Women Refugees: The Case of Eastleigh, Nairobi*. Dept of History and Archeology, University of Nairobi. Available at history.uonbi.ac.ke/node/1381. Accessed on 4th November, 2014.

Koser, K.1993. *Repatriation and Information: A theoretical Model*. Oxford: Berghahn Books.

- Lindley, A. 2011. *Between a Protracted and a Crisis Situation: Policy Responses to Somali Refugees in Kenya*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Maina, A. and Karanja, R. 2013. *Taking Stock: Domestication of the International Refugee Conventions and The Level of Implementation of the Kenya Refugee Act, 2006*: Nairobi, International Rescue Committee.
- Mohammed, Y. 2014. *UNHCR Seeks Repatriation of Somali Refugees* (Voice of America News). Available at www.voanews.com/content/unhcr-seeks-repatriation-of-somali-refugees/2423331.html. Accessed on 5th November, 2014.
- Mwanga, K. 2012. *Refugees, Nairobi's Urban Planning Concern: Solutions and Challenges*. Available at ced.berkley.edu/bpj/2012/11/refugees-nairobi-urban-planning-concern-solutions-and-challenges. Accessed on 6th November, 2014.
- Mark, Y. and Thomas, A. 2014. *Between a Rock and A Hard Place: Somali Refugees in Kenya*. New York: Refugee International.
- Noah, A. 2013. *Gay Somali Refugee Face Death Threat*. Available at m.allafrica.com/stories/201308192019.html/. Accessed on 25th October, 2014.
- OUA 1969. *Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa*. Addis Ababa: African Union.
- Sabahi News 2012. *Kibaki requests Aid for Refugee Repatriation*. Available at http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2012/05/03/newsbrief-04. Accessed on 2nd November, 2014.
- The Guardian News 2013. *Somalia Displaced Returnees*. Available at www.theguardian.com/global-development-ent/poverty.matters/2013/apr/29/somalia-displaced-returnees. Accessed on 6th November, 2014.
- Thomson Reuters Foundation 2014. *Refugees and Displacement*. Available at www.trust.org/spotlight/refugees&displacement/?tab-briefing. Accessed on 2nd November, 2014.
- Toby, L. 2014. *Somali Cultural Profile*. Available at <https://ethnomed.org/culture/somali/somali-culture-profile>. Accessed on 22nd November, 2014.
- UDHR 1948. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Geneva: UN
- UNHCR progress database on Somali Population Profiling. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/528102b49.html>. Accessed 25th October, 2014.
- UNHCR 1996. *Handbook of Voluntary Repatriation: International Protection*, Geneva, UNHCR.

UNHCR 2013a. *Enhancing the Search for Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees: Regional Strategy and Plan of Action*. Nairobi: UNHCR.

UNHCR 2013b. *Note on the Mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees and His Office*. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/526a22cb6.html>. Accessed on 18th October, 2014.

UNHCR 2013c. *UNHCR on the Directive by the Kenyan Government on the Relocation of Refugees from the Urban Centres to the Refugee Camps*. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/510275a09.html>. Accessed on the 21 of October, 2014.

UNHCR 2014a. *Protection and Building Resilience*. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c1e8.html>. Accessed on 6th November, 2014.

UNHCR 2014b. *UNHCR Country Operations Profile, Somalia*. Available at www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483ad6.html. Accessed on 6th November, 2014.

United Nations 1951. *Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*. Geneva: United Nations

Zewde, G. S. 2013. *Communiqué of the Open Day on Women, Peace and Security: Perspectives of Refugee Women on Voluntary Repatriation as a Durable Solution*. Nairobi: UN Women.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Semi-Structured Questionnaire

Informed Consent Form

Good day, my name isand I am student undertaking a Masters Degree in Gender and Development Studies at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a study on “Gender perspectives of Somali refugees on their repatriation back to their country”. This study is for academic purposes but may also be used by parties to the tripartite agreement to inform their programming during the repatriation process. You reserve the discretion of declining to undertake the interview, however, I will greatly appreciate if you agree to participate fully. On that note, I kindly request you to spare some time and answer a few questions that I intend to ask you. Do you agree to take part in this interview? (Tick where applicable)

- I. Yes (Proceed with the interview)
- II. No (Terminate the interview)

Questionnaire No.....
Time Interview starts..... ends.....

Part 1: Background

- 1. Name of Respondent (Optional).....
- 2. Sex of respondent.....
- 3. Age.....
- 4. Nationality
- 5. Marital Status
 - a. Married
 - b. Single
 - c. Divorced
 - d. Separated
 - e. Windowed

6. Registration status (No. where applicable).....
7. Family Composition (Current No.).....
8. Level of Education
 - a. None
 - b. Madrassa
 - c. Primary
 - d. Secondary
 - e. University
 - f. Other (Specify).....
9. Religion.....
10. Occupation.....
11. Monthly income (KES. 1000-10000, 10001-20000, 20001-50000, 50001-100000, 100001-200000, 200001& above).....

Part 2: Life in Country of Asylum

1. When did you arrive in Kenya?.....
2. How many members of your family accompanied you from Somalia?.....
3. Have you ever been to the camps? If yes, what made you move out?.....
4. Do you feel it is time for you to go back to Somalia?
Why?.....
5. Out of 10, how do you rate the asylum space in Kenya?.....

Part 3: Perspectives on repatriation

1. How long have you been in Kenya?
2. What form of assistance have you been receiving while in Eastleigh and from which agencies?
3. How much information have you received regarding the repatriation of Somali refugees?
4. In your opinion, what are your main concerns about this repatriation.

5. In your opinion, how will repatriation affect the families who have been living in Eastleigh?
6. In your opinion, how will the repatriation affect your access to meaningful livelihoods?
7. Do you think the repatriation will affect men and women, boys and girls the same way?
Give reasons for your answer.....
8. As women/men, what imminent fears are you having in contemplation of returning to your home country?
9. In exercise of your freedom of choice, would you prefer remaining in Kenya to going to Somalia, and why?
10. What concerns do you think should be taken into consideration in the countdown to your repatriation as regards your safety, the safety of families and that of your businesses or jobs?
11. What would you advise the different stakeholders such as the Federal Government of Somalia, GoK, UNHCR, CSOs and refugees themselves regarding this repatriation?

Appendix 2: Key-informant Interview Guide

Name of Informant (Optional).....

Occupation.....

Age.....

Sex.....

Agency.....

1. For how long have you interacted with Somali refugees in Eastleigh?
2. What form of assistance have you been extending towards the urban Somali refugees?
3. Are you privy to the information concerning the repatriation of Somali refugee?
4. In your opinion, what are the fears, attitudes or concerns of the urban Somali refugees regarding their repatriation?
5. In your opinion, do the refugees have concerns regarding the security of the family as a result of this planned repatriation?
6. In your opinion, what fears do the refugees have with regards to their sources of livelihoods (business and their jobs)?
7. Do you think the repatriation will affect men, boys, and women and girls the same way? Why?
8. What would you advise the different stakeholders such as the Federal Government of Somalia, GoK, UNHCR, CSOs and refugees themselves regarding this repatriation?

Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussions Guide

1. What are the major fears and attitudes facing refugees in Eastleigh with regards to the impending repatriation to Somalia?
2. What are the major concerns facing refugees in Eastleigh in relations to the safety of the family unit and their access to livelihood?
3. Which information do refugees know with regards to the current state of affairs in Somalia?
4. As a group, how do you think the repatriation will affect men, women, boys and girls the same way? Why?
5. What concerns do you think should be taken into consideration in the countdown to the repatriation of refugees as regards the family unit, access to livelihood and safety of refugees?
6. What advice do you have for different stakeholders such as the Federal Government of Somalia, GoK, UNHCR, CSOs and refugees themselves regarding this repatriation?

