UNDERSTANDING REFUGEE INTEGRATION:
A CASE STUDY OF SOUTHERN SUDANESE REFUGEES IN
NAIROBI: 1960-2005

BY
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DECLARATION

This is my original work and that it has not been submitted to any other institution for examination.

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C50/61895/2010

This project has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University supervisors.

Signature __________________________  Date ______________

DR. GEORGE M.GONA

Signature __________________________  Date ______________

DR. MARGARET GACHIHI
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving parents, Abedie and Maggie for their value and love of education.

To my sisters and brothers, thanks for making Dad and Mum proud.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to our heavenly Father, the source of my strength, zeal and drive who has assisted me in this academic journey.

My dear Mum, Mrs Margaret Abongo, thank you for your tireless prayers and endless questions on my welfare and academic progress. Mummy you are my source of inspiration, in every endeavour, I undertake. I love you Mum and thank you for imparting your life values on me.

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And to my family, my sisters Carol, Maureen and Deborah, my brothers Denise, Tom and Jimmy, your support and good wishes kept me focused to complete my graduate program. To my wonderful niece Cess, nephews Hillary, Meshack, Abed and Abeddie, I cherish you, and I hope you will never cease seeking knowledge…school never ends as auntie is always going back to school!

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Disclaimer

I took great efforts to represent an accurate perceptions of the Southern Sudanese refugees’ integration in Kenya in this paper. However should there be any shortcomings, mistakes or errors that may have been unnoticed I take responsibility.
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ABSTRACT

This project explores the concept of integration and interrogates the question of what constituted integration for Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya. The study frames these refugee’s experiences in Ager and Strang’s refugee integration indicators, namely that refugee integration occurs when refugees have equal access to Housing, Health Care, Education and Employment – the basic components of human livelihood, like the citizens of the host country. The study sought to find out whether these indicators are universally applicable.

The project contends that while the domains of refugee integration exist, some indicators are disguised. This creates a false illusion of the refugee integration, since the indicators are not obvious. The refugee integration domains highlighted by Ager and Strand do not necessarily connote integration in Kenya, as illustrated with the Southern Sudanese Refugees study in Kenya. Integration to the Southern Sudanese Refugees is acceptance of diversity and mutual co-existence with Kenyans.

The project demonstrates that while the United Nations Universal Act, article 25 obliges member states to integrate refugees, however it gives countries, a wide berth to define refugee integration on their own terms. As a result refugee integration experience is not uniform and is specific to different interpretation and terms of host countries conditions. The paper highlights that refugees have their own agenda and participation as they enjoy rights in host countries. Their agenda may falsely be interpreted as integration. Refugee integration can only be understood in the context of a specific country and not through a universal standard.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Debates on Integration
One of the challenges in refugee studies is the issue of integration, specifically, what does integration entail for both the refugee and host country. Integration is a key policy issue in refugee studies and a significant topic for public debate but despite this significance, the issue is not very well understood. The concept of integration has been used widely with different meanings. In some instances, it is viewed as a means of attaining self-sufficiency or a socio-cultural acquisition. Integration is also viewed as acceptance of refugees by host countries and society in terms of equal access to medical care, employment and other rights enjoyed by citizens of host countries. Yet, this is the very essence of the debate, i.e., what are the limits to this acceptability or accommodation? Is integration ever complete? Is it an on-going process of social or political negotiation, while the refugee settles in the new environment and gains acceptance? Alternatively, perhaps integration is a contract, dependent on longevity of a refugee’s stay in a host country.

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights inter alia states that everyone has the right to a standard of living.\(^1\) While this article and the Geneva Convention obviously recognize and assert the right of all refugees who are physically present in a state to be treated equally as citizens. They not be discriminated from accessing education, health care, housing as well as the labour market, most refugees are still being marginalised. Most host countries, despite being signatories of the Geneva Convention, do not guarantee refugees access to adequate standard of housing or health care. Consequently, the majority of refugees struggle to access housing as well as the labour market and education.

Though integration is critical in ensuring refugees transition and resettlement in host countries, there is no consensus on what standards should be applied across the board. As such, most countries struggle to define the term and often resort to what best suit their needs.

The term integration is indeed broad with varied meanings and interpretations. Integration can be involuntary, where one is obliged to fulfil a set of requirements as in the case of the

\(^1\) United Nations General Assembly, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," UN General Assembly
Dutch. The Hague Programme agreed to by the European Council in November 2004 considered integration as a top strategic priority for the creation of an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice within the European Union. In the Netherlands, integration is perceived as a socio-cultural process entailing acquisition of the Dutch language and a sound understanding of civic policy. Migrant individuals are accountable for their own integration in a policy known as ‘civic integration’, which can occur anywhere.\(^2\) The utmost extreme expression of the concept is the Dutch innovation of ‘integration from abroad’.\(^3\) Refugees who have been granted residence permits and want their families to join them, are required by Dutch law to have their family members take an integration test at a Dutch embassy abroad in order to be granted a temporary residence permit. Based on these varied interpretations, refugees can be perceived to be integrated based on economic, civic, cultural or legal parameters.

In France, integration is even more restrictive compared to the Dutch system. In November 2003, the French Interior Minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, restricted legal permanent residence of immigrants to a ten-year residence based on the ‘republican integration’ policy, which is informed awareness of French and principles of what constitutes the French Republic. Sarkozy defended the rationale by saying individuals intending to settle in France, are allowed, on condition of demonstrating values of French society as well as passing the language appreciation test and awareness of their society.\(^4\)

In other situations, integration refers to economic independence involving participation of refugees in income generating activities (livelihoods), while in other instances it is a sense of belonging or acquisition of citizenship rights. Polzer observes that integration can be viewed as method of refugee discussion for acceptability with local authorities.\(^5\) She postulates that, everyday experience of the refugee is a conversation to become a part and parcel of the local community by discussing, access to education, health and housing, as well as seeking social inclusion in the community through intermarriages and other social interactions.

Specifically, it has been determined that refugees tend to easily integrate if they can offer economic benefits to host countries. For example, in the 1980s, Ugandan refugees were

\(^2\) This study viewed refugees as migrant persons who have been forcibly displaced across borders.


\(^4\) Ibid, 252.

economically integrated in Juba in Sudan due to their contribution to food security by supplying cassava. They were said to have led to a drop in the price of cassava in Juba presumably because they were growing and marketing it.\textsuperscript{6} It is also worth noting that refugees easily integrate if they have ethnic affinity with host communities. For example, in South Africa, Mozambican refugees with requisite social or financial capital were ‘adopted’ by South African families of the same ethnic groups and were able to acquire citizenship documents through these ties. However, while this may be true of some refugee situations, most refugees reside in countries that have no ethnic closeness and struggle to integrate. Southern Sudanese refugees are of diverse ethnic groups, some groups may have close historical ties to the Karamojong, Kalenjin, Turkana, and Luo ethnic groups in Kenya, but do not often find social affinity with these groups.\textsuperscript{7}

While it is clearly articulated in the Geneva Convention that host countries need to offer protection to refugees, refugee protection remains a very complex issue and differs from country to country. The Geneva Convention established obligation for states to protect refugees from being returned to situations of danger and to grant them a range of rights as citizens. The large number of refugees has created apprehension for receiving countries. They are perceived as a threat to political, economic and social stability, even in traditionally hospitable countries.

Asylum countries have subsequently regressed on Geneva Convention and applies excessively preventive actions and policies meant to avoid lawful or physical entrance on their spaces. Specifically, many host countries have imposed tighter border control with increased use of technology, including digital finger printing, strict visa and passport checks to prevent people without appropriate documents access into the country. In addition, transport policy has been imposed on carriers to ensure they only transport people with valid documentation.

Developing and developed countries have expressed their displeasure regarding the international refugee system. As can be attested by the remarks of Tanzania Home Affairs Minister, Ramathan Omar Mapuri, during the fifty-fourth session of UNHCR’S executive


committee in 2003, is appealing for attention to Africa’s host countries challenges and burden in refugee protection. He stated,

Concentration on sheltering and safe guarding refugees’ ought to be matched with purposeful ideals on accommodating and improving the existence of refugees. Host countries should resist the lure of refugee selection, nonetheless they should be accommodative all refugees similarly to their citizens. Involvement of refugee participation in the well fare of a country should reinvigorated, recognized and credited.

His statement raises concern on the resettlement and integration of African refugees given that developed nations have addressed refugee integration through managed settlement of new arrivals. Increasingly, they have adopted stringent immigration policy aimed at closing doors to refugees from Middle East, Asia and Africa. This means the solution to refugee hood lies in Africa and much more for Kenya, given the number of refugees she hosts. According to United Nations High Commission of Refugees, Deputy Representative in Kenya, Abel Mblinyi, “Kenya has the highest number of refugees in the world.” Out of the five million refugees in Africa, Kenya has been hosting more than one million of them for many years.

The refugee problem in Africa occurs due to a multiplicity of factors, entailing a colonial legacy of structural inequality compounded by efforts to maintain the status quo on one hand and efforts to reverse structural inequality. In addition to this is a post-independence struggle to rebuild a state nation, which is characterized by leadership wrangles and internal conflicts resulting in population displacement. This is epitomized by the cold war proxy played out in Central Africa and parts of Southern Africa, which has resulted in massive population displacement. Indeed the causes of Africa’s refugee problem are varied, with political corruption, lack of respect for the rule of law and human rights violation having contributed to forced migration in Africa. There has been violence among refugees, which has resulted to further displacement. For example, when Rwanda sought to remove Hutu refugees who had fled the 1994 Rwandan genocide and settled in the Eastern region of the Democratic

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8 Honourable Mapuri speech during the fifty-fourth Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee in 2003.
Republic of Congo in 1998, the intervention triggered a multinational war in the Democratic Republic of Congo.\footnote{Ibid, 506.}

African refugee flow shows no signs of abating in the near future given the frequency of civil wars. In February 2011, civil unrest occurred in three African countries, Egypt, Algerian and Libya, which caused a large numbers of population displacement. Hence, the integration of refugees is vital to the socio-economic as well as political development of the continent and countries must consequently review policies related to refugees to ensure they not only provide short-term humanitarian support and assistance, but also have mechanisms and systems that facilitate refugee integration. This includes attainment of employment, housing, education, health and social connection between groups (including fluency in the language of host country).

1.1.1 Background to Refugeehood of the South Sudanese
The conflict in Sudan began a year, before Sudan achieved political independence from Britain in 1956. During the one-year transition period, 1955-56, administration was handed over to the mainly Arab northerners and the top echelons of the administration. They continued to propagate the marginalisation policies practiced by the British in addition to reneging on a promise to grant the South a federal system. This resulted in the Anyanya I uprising instituted by the South, as they sought to assert their independence from the North. A protracted war erupted that lasted for seventeen years, the civil war was eventually quelled through the 1972 by Addis Ababa peace agreement, which granted the South autonomy. However the peace did not last as war resumed in 1983 when the government abrogated the peace agreement.\footnote{Francis M. Deng, "Sudan: A Nation in Turbulent Search of Itself," The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 603, no. 1 (2006): 155-162.} The protracted civil war Anyanya II in Sudan resulted in population displacement and an influx of refugees in to Kenya, with most of the refugees taking refuge at Kakuma at the Kenya Sudan border.

During the first year of refugee influx, the Department of Immigration under the Ministry of Home Affairs was charged with determining the eligibility of refugee status and those seeking refuge in the country had to undergo individual interview to determine their refugee status. However, in 1991 there were large numbers of refugees seeking shelter in Kenya from
war in Somali and Sudan. This influx led the government of Kenya to request UNHCR to assist in determining refugee status, as the commission was overwhelmed to handle the large influx of refugees and ended up giving refugees protection letters devoid of legal recognition in Kenya.

This state of affairs and the need to streamline refugee registration resulted in a joint resolution between the Kenya government and UNHCR to set up refugee camps. This occasioned the establishment of Kakuma Refugee Camp in 1992, which went on to host 12,000 Sudanese refugees by the end of the year.13

With the establishment of the camp, the number of refugees rose sharply and by October 1993, UNHCR reported that there were some 33,500 Sudanese refugees in Kakuma, while an additional 150,000 refugees fled into Kenya and Uganda by March 1994.14 Kenya accommodated the SPLM leaders in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi which served as their base political operation. This connection resulted to the presence of Southern Sudanese refugees in in Kenya and in other parts of the country as well as Nairobi, from the earlier warring years to date.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The frequency of population displacement in Africa necessitates an urgent need for formulation and/or actualization of an integration policy by African countries. There seems to be growing interest towards this end among some nations including Burundi and Tanzania where refugees have been integrated. In 1963, Rwandan refugees were successfully integrated in Burundi, when the Burundi government realised the unlikelihood of the Rwandan refugees returning home. Aside from Burundi, Tanzania also has an active refugee integration program, which it used to host and integrate thousands of Rwandan refugees fleeing from political persecution in the 1980s.15 In 1980, the Tanzania government granted citizenship to approximately 30,000 refugees mostly from Rwanda as the hope of returning home faded and political vulnerability produced an outcry for naturalization. Despite the implementation flaws inherent in both instances, Tanzania’s naturalization policy as well as Burundi’s

13 Ibid.
refugee integration policy are worthy of recognition and deserve to be emulated by other
countries in Africa.\textsuperscript{16}

Aside from Burundi and Tanzania, Uganda has also demonstrated successful integration of
refugees, especially refugees from Southern Sudan. In Uganda, economic integration of
Southern Sudanese has been supported by government policy of gazetting /allocating land for
refugee habitation, initiated in the 1940’s, government-led refugee resettlement is still being
practiced to date.\textsuperscript{17} Refugee settlements are established in rural areas where the population
density is sparse. Ethnic similarity between the refugees and host has influenced the seamless
settlement. The Southern Sudanese refugee freedom of movement in Moyo in Uganda has
facilitated their self-reliance and incorporation in their organization. Certainly, they have
accomplished to mix with the indigenous community equally, they remit taxes, have
investment and have married Ugandans.\textsuperscript{18} What has been the experience of Sudanese
refugees in Kenya? How has the Kenya government facilitated Sudanese settlement and
economic engagement in the country?

Unlike Tanzania and Burundi, Kenya despite hosting large numbers of refugees over a long
period, appears not to have clear policies on the integration of refugees nor structures to assist
refugees to integrate. The police, immigration and home affairs ministry are all involved with
handling refugees with no clear roles and functions for each agency. According to Caritas
Europe,\textsuperscript{19} integration is a governance issue that involves all and entails accepting different
lifestyles and display willingness to share rights and responsibilities. How has the local
Kenyan community displayed willingness to accommodate the Sudanese refugees, or the
Sudanese refugees’ willingness to adapt and become indistinguishable from the rest of native
Kenyans? Does the knowledge of Swahili or acquisition of Kenyan education make the
Sudanese feel integrated in Kenya? What are the factors that influence Southern Sudanese
choice in residing in Kenya? How do they access livelihood and what enables them access
the livelihood?

\textsuperscript{17} Christopher Garimoi Orach and Vincent De Brouwere, "Integrating Refugee and Host Health Services in West Nile districts, Uganda," \textit{Health Policy and Planning} 21, no. 1 (2006): 55.
This study explores Southern Sudanese refugees’ experiences and perceptions on integration as articulated by Ager and Strang’s views on integration. The study uses the integration policies of developed countries as a point of reference. There exists a gap in integration studies, which can shed light on integration from a refugee perspective, this study seeks to fulfil. Of specific interest would be to analyse the refugee experience of Southern Sudanese with regard to their quest for livelihood improvement, citizenship and political participation in governance issues in Kenya.

Kenya has hosted Sudanese refugees since the 1970s, despite lack of clear policy or structures to assist refugees’ integration. While some individual Southern Sudanese refugees have found a footing and made a home in Kenya, there is need to determine whether they consider themselves integrated and whether they intend to settle fully in Kenya or whether Kenya is a temporary residence as they await to return to South Sudan once peace is restored or relocate to Western countries. Similarly, given the prolonged length of stay of some of the refugees in Kenya, there is a possibility that they may have formed an attachment to the country and established a new culture, an amalgamation of their original cultures and the cultures of the host communities. Consequently, the study sought to find out whether the refugees have established a new identity given their interactions with local communities or they have proactively sought to maintain their cultural identity. In addition, the study attempted to find out factors that have influenced the refugees to remain in Kenya though there had been relative peace in South Sudan from 2006 – 2012.

1.3 Objectives of the Study
   i. To investigate how language facilitated integration of Southern Sudanese refugees
   ii. To examine how Southern Sudanese refugees access education and employment
   iii. To determine how Southern Sudanese refugees access housing and health care
   iv. To examine how the Kenyan government supports Southern Sudanese integration

1.4 Justification of the Study

Though there is extensive literature on refugee integration, the focus has been on the interaction between individuals and/or groups and host states as well as around cultural assimilation and economic access. In addition, most of these studies in integration have focused on refugee integration in Western countries and a few African countries but none has focused on refugee experience in Kenya. The study of Southern Sudanese refugee’s
integration was justified because there was hardly no literature available about them in Kenya. The majority of research studies have also tended to focus on the migrants influence on communities as well as the limitations of international refugee protection but very few studies have dwelt on the prolonged stays of refugees in host countries. There is need for a detailed analysis of how refugees manage in host countries in order to determine their integration experiences, that is are they self-settled or have they been assisted to settle and also how they gain their livelihoods. Brukare’s thesis on integration of Cypriots examines the assumed theory that co-ethnicity supports integration; her study reveals refugee views on integration and the failure of the theory in the Cyprus case. Though the case of the Cypriots disproved that co-ethnicity facilitates integration, this case study will seek to determine whether ethnic affinity between some Southern Sudanese refugees and local Kenyan communities, such as the Luo, Turkana, Nubians and Kalenjins, has facilitated and accelerated their integration experience.

Given that no study has been on Southern Sudanese refugees, or refugees’ integration in Kenya. An analysis of the integration experience of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya is imperative. Such a study will provide a basis for understanding what factors influences refugees to settle and remain in Kenya as well as provide insights as to whether refugees perceive themselves as being integrated based on whether they have equal opportunities and rights as their host. Based on the findings, policy makers and humanitarian agencies can then develop strategies and mechanisms to support and facilitate refugee integration in Kenya.

Findings of this study will determine whether the indicators of refugee integration are universally applicable. The findings will also contribute to explain what integration means in the Kenyan context. In addition, the findings of this study will contribute to the debate around the consequences of marginalization of refugees as a minority group as well as contribute to studies on integration of refugees within Africa, an issue that has not been critically explored.

1.5 Scope and Limitations
This study explores factors that influenced integration of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya, Nairobi was used as a sample. The study was limited to the period 1960’s when a

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majority of Southern Sudanese refugees moved to Nairobi to seek refuge. Nairobi was central, as some of the refugees used the base for their political activities. The year 2005, South Sudan signed a peace agreement and this should have marked the end of their refugeehood.

This study borrows a lot from other parts of the world, as an explanation of how refugees have experienced integration. It is an effort to determine and understand the relevance of the integration indicators in the case of Southern Sudanese refugees in Nairobi.

The study was limited to Nairobi because of accessibility of refugees in additional of the town being a Central Business District. Chances of refugees residing in Nairobi, who might have had the opportunity to experience diverse social connection and accessibility due to their mobility were taken into account. The study sought the views of Southern Sudanese refugees with regard to them having a sense of belonging or ‘feeling’ of being Kenyan.

In the analysis of the levels of integration of Southern Sudanese in Kenya with the key domains of what constitute a successful integration, there is a likelihood of comparing one advantage group of refugees with other disadvantaged groups, which is a challenge. This is especially true, as there are class differences between Southern Sudanese refugees. Some having the financial means or political affiliation with the government of the day, in accessing housing education, employment and health, while others are dependent on humanitarian assistance. Though the study acknowledges the existence of class stratification between the refugees, constructed on the refugee background or affiliation in Kenya, the focus of this study is self-settled refugees who live outside camps, consequently, the finding of this study might not be applicable across the board. The findings that motivate integration may not be applicable to all Southern Sudanese refugees due to social classes.

The study acknowledges the challenge of covering all the far-flung areas where refugees are hosted in the country due to geographical vastness, financial constraints and the time frame of the project paper, consequently, the study focused on refugees in Nairobi. Nairobi was considered a right a sample to represent the country. During the fieldwork, there was reluctance from refugees in answering questions posed to them due to suspicion and fear but reliance on referrals from fellow citizens studying at the University of Nairobi and a religious figure provided a break through.
Another challenge was language and visible impatience displayed by respondents particularly when interviewing them in a structured method. It was at times difficult to comprehend the accent of Southern Sudanese refugees. I let them narrate their experiences and avoided use of a questionnaire to gain their confidence. While this research was being carried out Southern Sudan gained independence from the North in July 4 2011. I was forced to omit the word refugees when referring to the Southern Sudanese after facing hostility from respondents. They considered themselves as aliens and/or foreigners but not refugees. They found the term refugee derogatory and stated that to them South Sudan had been liberated from the North and were as such, free from bondage. With a free country, the Southern Sudanese considered themselves as foreigners even if they came to Kenya as refugees.

The Southern Sudan country was of interest to some Kenya citizens who considered it as a source of investment and business opportunity. This heightened the suspicion of Southern Sudanese refugees I was dealing with. They were suspicious of the sudden interest in them. I also encountered南方 Sudanese refugees who requested for anonymity after providing information on housing and employment access. The validity of their response had to be tested further. Secondary sources like newspaper articles had to be analysed to collaborate or invalidate the oral data received.

Some of respondents indicated they wanted to maintain their peace while in Kenya and hence gave guarded responses. I returned to the field after my initial study in 2012 due to comments on my work from my supervisor. The reviews made this research lengthy and unfortunately the political situation became unstable with power struggle and war in Sudan erupted as I brushed up my findings.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Refugees: A refugee is defined as a person who owning to well–founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race , religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group of political opinion , is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.21

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This study adopts the term refugee to all Southern Sudanese in Kenya disregarding whether they have formally registered with the UNHCR offices and the Kenya government or whether they have regularized their status by going back to Sudan and returning to Kenya as aliens. The term refugee will be used, as there has been no cessation of refugee status from Southern Sudan despite peace prevailing in 2012.

**Integration:** The 1951 UN convention on the refugees defines integration as a process that occurs on contact with a host over time. It emphasizes that refugees should be assimilated and naturalized. It defines elements of integration as economic, social, cultural and legal.\(^{22}\)

**Civic integration:** Civic integration was coined in the Netherlands, the policy was pronounced in 1998, it requires generally non-EU individuals to complete a twelve–month of hundred hours of Dutch language tuition, as well as of six hours civic education, a pre-qualification for the labour market.\(^{23}\)

**Republican integration:** Republican integration is exemplified under French law, as familiarity of French language and the values of the French Republic. Republican integration has the idea of growth of alien rights subject to the length of stay.\(^{24}\)

### 1.7 Literature Review
Numerous studies on refugee in Europe, Asia, Africa and Kenya that have been done, in most cases, the research focus on advocacy against encampment of refugees, a practice favoured by international refugee regime. Refugees have often been perceived as subjects of humanitarian charity organizations with the underpinnings of their situation as a temporary phase. Debates have been argued that humanitarian agencies benefit from refugee residing in tents to get donor funding and use their plight to source for funds and maintain their organization existence. It has been observed in Europe that housing affects overall physical and emotional wellbeing of refugees to feel ‘at home’. The general condition of housing, size, amenities, locality and security of tenancies influenced refugees’ sense of security and belonging in the UK.\(^{25}\) Many refugees get distressed and are apprehensive about their safety

\(^{23}\) Polzer, “Negotiating Rights” 250.
\(^{24}\) Ibid.
and security and do not think about integration until they are sure about their safety and security.

Studies on refugee integration have been carried out in Europe in-depth, with few dealing with integration from refugee perspective. In Africa, Polzer argues that the international refugee protection system for the past forty years has hindered understanding of local integration. She avers that integration has been overlooked or actively prevented by intervening institutions because assumptions of refugee protection. Polzer superficially touches on integration as a concern for those refugees whose countries of origin have achieved some peace and stability but choose to continue to reside in host countries given the opportunities available in these host countries and also because the host countries have become ‘home’ in various ways. This is similar, to the case of Southern Sudanese refugees who have been in Kenya since 1970s and continue to stay on despite the relative peace in South Sudan from July 2014. While this study was being conducted, Southern Sudan experienced stability. This implores the question whether this group of Southern Sudanese refugees have preferred integration in Kenya in lieu of returning home.

A number of studies advocate against international refugee regime but focus less on host attempts or failure to integrate refugees. For example, while Polzer espouses integration as the natural and ideal solution at the inception of the International Refugee regime in 1950s, Crisp argues out why African states have rejected local integration from the 1970s in favour of encampment. Their concerns, he argues, include economic and environmental burdens on poor countries (and in richer countries), security concerns, anger at being abandoned by richer nations, fear of domestic ramifications of popular xenophobia and the perceived need to reassert sovereignty over porous borders. Crisp’s study on integrations looks primarily at the assumption that refugees will remain indefinitely in their country of asylum and find a solution to their plight in that state though he does not state how refugees find solutions or whether they actually find solutions to their plight in host countries.

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26 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
Numerous South Sudanese refugees have found their way to urban centres away from the camp settlements in Kakuma. What has been their experience in search of livelihood opportunities? Crisp suggests that refugee integration should not be left to individuals but appropriate programs should be designed to facilitate integration, as is the practice in the West. What programs have been put in place by the Kenyan government to facilitate integration and what are the experiences of Southern Sudanese refugees with this? Cavagheri’s article on livelihood opportunities and financial inclusion of refugees in refugee camps illustrates the multidimensional aspects of poverty and includes refugees as the insecure and voiceless. According to him, livelihoods should be the first refugee emergency response. Livelihood is an integral part of integration. Hence, refugees should be integrated upon arrival in host communities. How have the Southern Sudanese refugees been supported to secure their livelihoods in Kenya? Do they have freedom of movement that would protect their livelihood? What has been the focus on the productive capacity of the Southern Sudanese refugees?

While others like Crisp and Cavagheri advocate for refugee assistance programs, others like Chambers are more concerned about the opportunity costs refugees have on host communities.

Chambers raises concern on refugee centrism and states that refugee studies have refugees as their focus, researches start and end with refugees. He diverts from refugee centrism to refugees adverse impact on rural host population. According to Chamber in rural- refugee areas the host who gain on the refugee programs are often the “better off” and are more visible. He identifies the host, who become poorer, labelling them the “hidden ones.” The poorer host is his main focuses on the refugee - rural host population. He further illustrates how distribution of food aid, serves a connection between the refugee and rural populace. The bond between the refugee and indigenous is of reciprocity all progress that prevents resentment. The services of food production or exchange to borrow from Polzer are ‘negotiated’, which is integration. However, Chambers fails to demonstrate whether in instances where refugee services are supported and organized by host countries local communities are less strained.

Chambers mainly advocates for the allocation of resources and assistance to host communities to steer economic development projects because development initiatives are needed by both refugees and poorer host communities to improve their food and livelihood systems. Consequently, economic development projects should be viewed as integral components of integration, which are necessary for refugee economic participation. The latter is unlikely to occur unless the host communities embrace refugees and refugees participate in the local economic systems. However, Chambers does not address how productive activities occur.

However, Berry argues that for integration to occur an individual must have an awareness of preserving their unique values, despite additional new associations. The host and migrant culture should be compatible where cultures conflict there is minimal integration. According to him integration is purposely selected (forced or voluntary). They can decide on how to conform or preserve their distinctive values of from mixing with the indigenous or exclude themselves by isolation through having minimal interaction with the host population.

Marginalization can equally be enforced particular with the refugee initial experience. This is perpetrated either in refugee holdings during arrival or limitation of access to resources. Refugee experiences a basic dissimilarity relative to the host, which impacts on their integration. Their seclusion in the host society as their status is determined and having no choice to participate in the society hamper their integration. Their seclusion informs them of lacking similar rights as the indigenous; this is ingrained mentally and takes a lengthy process to erase as they navigate to attain their livelihood. Other variables that affect the process of integration negatively are refugee age upon arrival, education level of the refugee and enforced dependence as their status is determined.

Miller, Chambers, Schneider and Polzer all concur that during the 1960’s refugee influxes were at border areas occupied by ethnic kinsmen in Africa. Land was abundant and refugees were welcomed due to labour constraints. African nations, to varying degrees, have sought to integrate refugees into their communities as African tradition revers hospitality and communities have historically provided a safe haven for those fleeing wars, famine and

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drought. Miller supports the idea of seamless integration across borders due to kinship by pointing out that ethnic Somalis of Ethiopia, in many cases, became easily absorbed into the community structures of Somalia and Djibouti.

His assertion is supported by the experience of the Fangs of Equatorial Guinea, who sought and obtained asylum in Gabon and the Cameroon and had little difficulty in adjusting to the culture of their kinsmen. Another case in point that supports the theory of refugees seeking refuge among kinsmen across border is the case of the Shagaan, a Mozambican community. In Bushbuckridge, the ‘Shagaan’ Mozambique refugees who fled civil war in mid-1980s were integrated by the local host community based on the shared language. Direct interaction among the locals and refugees was facilitated through shared ‘Shagaan’ kinship, workforce movement, which encouraged thoughtful administrative nature, self-settlement and property allocation. The Shagaan language and supportive local social framework assisted the refugees to establish their own space despite a hostile and xenophobic national attitude towards outsiders’ across South Africa. The use of Shaggan language to attain refugee sustenance proposals that language is of higher significance compared to fragmentation of nationality and citizenship.

In addition, it is apparent that ethnic/cultural affinity and identity cannot be underestimated as it can be preserved across borders, as was the case of the Shagaan refugees and the local hosts, who despite being by the Kruger National park still found commonality and shared traditions, language and culture. Miller also avers that in essence, refugee integration in Africa entails the accommodation of kinsmen across borders and may not be referred to per se as integration but rather simply what Miller refers to as ethnic ‘spill over’. In this regard, refugees have little.

Based on the varied experiences of various refugees, this study will seek to determine whether refugees from South Sudan have been subjected to the spirit of African hospitality in

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35 Ibid.
36 Fangs are Bantu speaking ethnic sub group of the Niger -Congo Language
38 Ibid.
Kenya. As was the case of the Fangs and the Shagaan, or have they been subjected to hostilities by the local hosts. In addition, the study also seeks to determine whether they have any affinity with specific tribes or whether the lack of shared kinship in Kenya has made it difficult for them to adjust to life in Kenya.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

There is no agreed definition or clear conceptualisation of the idea of integration. Different scholars and practitioners have defined integration in various ways in Refugee studies. Nevertheless, this study adopts Ager and Strang’s theoretical formulation, which identifies four indicators of integration. According to Ager and Strang, a successful integration entails four key domains, namely, employment, housing, education and health.40

Ager and Strang, suggests that language facilitates refugee integration as it provides social capital41 that assists connection and eventually contributes to successful integration. They aver that social networks or bonds are created as people communicate, which indicates level of integration and illustrates that society are neither homogenous nor static and as people live in a plural, multi-ethnic and diversified societies where changes occur daily, mobility and migration are the norm.42 Consequently, there is need for societies to accept different lifestyles and display a willingness to share rights and responsibilities, with this being essential and a two way process.

For instance, the European Union member states have established a framework for integration that specifies the concept of integration modelled on the Hague Programme but structured according to a given country’s context. According to the European Union, knowledge of the host’s language, history and institution are indispensable to integration. Ager and Strang argue that language and accents act as symbols of integration and can be used as benchmarks to determine whether one is successfully integrated in the society or not. Consequently, it is critical to examine and determine the views of refugees in Kenya using language acquisition as a determinant of integration. Despite the lack of a definite framework for integration, there is need to determine whether the acquisition of English and Swahili languages have served to enhance the ‘social capital’ of Southern Sudanese refugees as

40 Ager and Strang, "Understanding Integration: 166.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
proposed by Ager and Strang.\textsuperscript{43} Has acquisition of these languages contributed to the development of social networks and links and has it established social bridges with their Kenyan hosts? In addition, it is important to explore whether the Kenyan citizens perceive those Southern Sudanese who have knowledge of Swahili or English language as ‘belonging’ and whether the knowledge of Swahili or English language facilitated integration of Southern Sudanese refugees or is it an indicator of belonging.

Aside from language, Ager and Strang identified employment as a factor influencing other aspects of integration, including economic independence, long-term plans, social bonding within the society and as a means to gain proficiency in the main language of the host country. What is the sense on integration in Kenya? Does the Kenyan labour market and government have the capacity to absorb refugees? How do the Southern Sudanese refugees fit?

Studies in the UK also reveal that education serves as an important aspect of integration, and is critical in assisting refugee children establish relationships, which subsequently enhances and supports integration. A number of support groups for parents provide a source of information to access a range of local services. Despite education, serving as a tool to foster integration it also provides challenges towards integration in the UK, due to language barriers, bullying, isolation and exclusion. Ager and Strang found out that certain schools provided language units for refugee children to facilitate their adoption in the new environment.

In addition, health is also identified as a salient factor in integration and various studies have demonstrated that good health served as an impetus for active engagement in the new society. However, access to health services however experiences challenges that hinder integration like language and cultural barriers. Establishment of specialized centres to address the physical and mental health needs of refugees and improvement of mainstream health services has assisted in refugee successful integration in the UK.

I feel that Ager and Strang are too presumptive in that they assume the indicators they suggest are applicable in most refugee contexts and this is not always the case because

refugee situations vary. Nonetheless, despite this major short come of the theory and in the absence of a clear theoretical framework of understanding integration, Ager and Strang’s ideas are a starting point in framing issues of integration in African and in Nairobi, Kenya in particular.

1.9 Hypothesis of the Study
i. Language did not facilitate Southern Sudanese refugees integration
ii. Southern Sudanese refugees’ do not access education and employment
iii. Southern Sudanese refugees, access to housing and healthcare is dependent on Kenyan government support
iv. Kenya government does not support Southern Sudanese refugee integration

1.10 Methodology
Primary data was sourced from oral interviews with refugees. The study was purposeful, Southern Sudanese refugees students studying at the University of Nairobi were purposely identified and formed the initial group of interviewees. This group was introduced to me by my supervisor. They provided an entry point to collect data for this project.

Upon interviewing the Southern Sudanese students, they further identified subsequent refugees and introduced them to me. This snowballed, in the snowballing I was introduced to other refugees who worship at Saint Luke’s Anglican Church in Ngumo. When the responses from the interview became repetitive and similar I stopped, the interviews. Thirty-five respondents were interviewed. The responses from the Southern Sudanese refugees interviewed provided the basis for the finding of this study.

The study was qualitative in nature and entailed documentary analysis of secondary data as well as qualitative analysis of primary data derived from oral interviews. Secondary data was primarily sourced from peer-reviewed journals, UN publications as well as newspaper articles. UNHCR refugee statistics in Kenya were used as a reference point in gauging the number of Southern Sudanese residing in Nairobi and as well as providing data on general welfare indicators of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya.
The study used open ended and guided questionnaires and respondents’ answers were analysed qualitatively to determine the level of integration of Southern Sudanese in Kenya as per the indicators of successful integrations as proposed by Ager and Strang. Specifically, the interviews sought to determine whether Southern Sudanese refugees are integrated in Kenya by establishing if they have access to employment, housing, education and enjoy equal rights like all others members of Kenyan society.

The study attempted to determine whether the Southern Sudanese refugees have a sense of Kenyan identity, whether they have a Kenyan cultural understanding of a nation or nation hood or assume citizenship. Due to the divergent perspectives on integration, the interviews and discussions with the refugees were open in order to fully explore issues of inclusion in Kenyan society.
CHAPTER TWO
LANGUAGE AND INTEGRATION

2.1 Significance of Language on Integration

Language acquisition has been touted as a key indicator to successful integration. A Sound grasp of the host country’s language by refugees gives them an advantage and enhances the sense of belonging and acceptance. The acquisition of the host language is of vital importance for refugees as it facilitates settlement and enhances their participation in the new environment. Language as a factor of integration compels the majority and minority to compromise and the onus is on the immigrants. Proficiency of the host language is frequently echoed as requirement in refugee integration in studies. Inability to comprehend and articulate the language affects refugee fiscal and social status. Therefore, refugees strive to attain the conventional language to fit in, as well as to improve their financial and social prominence.

In terms of integration, acquisition of the host language enhances the capacity of refugees to obtain information about schools, health care, social programs, and housing, as well as employment opportunities, unemployment benefits, civic and legal rights in their new countries. In addition, knowledge of the host language provides refugees with a deeper and wider understanding of the culture of their hosts and influences their adjustment in the new society. Based on this, it is evident that the acquisition of the host language contributes significantly to the well-being of refugees as it enables them to feel understood and enables them to communicate and when necessary explain their cultural differences. The latter is critical in minimising hostilities and conflicts based on cultural biases, thus promoting cohesion and fostering acceptance between the host communities and refugees.

Incorporation of new members in a community can be achieved through inspiration to learn the dominant language. However it can also be instrument of exclusion and repression when it becomes compulsory for membership in the community. This makes refugees struggle to learn the host language for genuine inclusion and participation in order to exercise their civic

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45 Ibid.
rights as well as their daily responsibilities. Oakes upholds, the use of language equally, as sign of traditional uniqueness, a standard for articulation and a foundation of solidarity, the basis for public administration and an instrument for building political communities.\textsuperscript{47} Knowledge of the host language assists refugees to progress in academic field if teaching is done using the host language like in Netherlands. Thus, language is the core of our individual and collective identities. One major strategy employed by the European Union member states to prioritize integration, is the establishment of a framework on integration that specifies and describes the concept of integration, which is clearly outlined in the Hague Programme. Member states draw from the programme and contextualize it to their own specific context, emphasis and pressure is on refugees to learn the host language. Cognizance of a country’s organisation, appreciation of their standards, language and institutions are among other things, states considered as being indispensable and critical to integration.

2.1.1 How Language Facilitates Integration

Language acts as a human resource and is instrumental in human relations and interpersonal communication. Knowledge of a given host language is fundamental in ensuring that refugees are able to negotiate for their livelihoods and rights. Refugees who have knowledge of the host language have greater capabilities of increasing their labour productivity and earnings. They are able to influence their earnings by making use of training opportunities available within their environment. Acquisition of the host language facilitates higher recruitment chances for the refugee. Knowledge of the host language and use stimulate the refugee to identify with the host. Further economic participation nurtures a refugee sense of achievement in the host society.

Language is a significant human resource for the refugee, knowledge of the host language provides refugees access to resources aiding them in different capacities. Proficiency in the host language increases the refugee’s social contacts and resources. The resources may extend to contacts that have knowledge of jobs placements position. Social contacts made through networking are significant to refugees in establishing connections to economic and employment opportunities, making it easier for them to earn a living. In addition, knowledge of the host language enhances refugee’s economic success as it increases the range of jobs.

they can apply in the labour market in which they have qualifications. Language also assists in the economic incorporation of refugees in the labour market.

Kanes and Van posit that “social contacts with natives is significant, because natives have naturally been exposed to the host society for a longer period, they are generally better educated, more often engaged in labour participation, and more often hold prominent jobs, making them better informed and more influential social contacts.”48 Van proposes that having a job can contribute to learning the host language, but learning the language can also contribute to finding a job. Moreover, having a job facilitates developing a wider social contact with majority members, these contacts contribute to the economic success of immigrants.49

2.2 Language as Social Capital

Communication between the refugee and the host are forms of social capital. Social capital refers to social resources individual draw upon within a community, and provides value to themselves and organization. Social capital is intangible but can be observed. It is the productive value of inter relationship and consists of network of relationship through in identity, familiarity, trust, clubs and religion. 50

49 Ibid.
50 Smith, S. S., & Kulynych, J. (2002). It may be social, but why is it capital? The social construction of social capital and the politics of language. Politics & society, 30(1), 149-186.
Figure 1: Language as Social Capital

![Diagram of Language as Social Capital](image)


For example, the Canadian government supports a policy of cultural maintenance among immigrant groups.\(^{51}\) The federal government developed a sponsorship programme whereby institutions such as church congregations and groups of at least five adult citizens could take a refugee family into their charge for a year.\(^{52}\) Cultural adaptation is easier for refugees if there is a trusted family member, or a cultural connection such as religious institutions or any other social network to which they can connect. Ethnic pluralism and respect for cultural diversity in Canada has contributed to integration of refugees.

Social networks among refugees are critical components of developing language. Language like wealth is accumulated over a period of social interaction and is a concrete form of social capital as it facilitates a network of relations. Social network are primarily based on shared nationality and language, expectation and identification. Most refugees across the world chose to reside in locations where they have a social network for example families, friends, relatives or fellow citizens and as immigrants, they habitually seek refuge in groups. At first

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\(^{52}\) Ibid, 110.
as guests they remain as guests with foreign language and foreign culture, admission to the host is through language with a primary objective is to establish ‘social bonds’. Host language acquisition enables the refugees to minimise hostility. With the knowledge of official and local languages of the host country, the refugees are able to articulate their rights or explain their way out of problems diffusing conflicts and gains more cultural understanding.

One case in point, which demonstrates language as social capital is the case of the ‘Zigula-speaking’ Somali refugees in Tanzania. The ‘Zigula-speaking’ refugees were recognized as descendants of slaves captured from Tanzania and later sold in Somalia. This Zigula community was later to relocate to Tanzania from Somalia as they sought to escape atrocities of the civil war in Somalia. On arrival in Tanzania, the Zigula went to the authorities claiming they were descendants of the inhabitants of the Tanga region. The Tanzanian government responded by setting up a refugee settlement in Mkuiu in Handeni district where the Zigula language is spoken. Though the local community perceived the Somali refugees as violent initially, they were allowed to live together with the indigenous community, devoid of worry nor categorization, or extortion and not mistreatment by authorities. In the day-to-day interaction, the host community attitude towards the refugees changed and eventually incorporated the Somali Zigula refugees.

The Somali Zigula and Tanzania Zigula discovered they shared similar language and matrilineal grouping. They shared the ‘kolwa’.53 The kolwa grouping meant coming from the same place or sharing the same mothers ‘breast’, meaning relation. Consequently, this intimate aspect of the Zigula culture unknown to outsiders reveals familiarity or commonality between the Somali Zigula refugees and the Tanzanian Zigula community. In 2007, the Tanzanian government recognized the Somali refugee cultural and historical linkage with Tanga ancestry54 and offered the Zigula refugees the option of locally integrating and becoming Tanzanian citizens. The government allocated land for the naturalized refugees, who in turn were able to improve the infrastructure, agricultural cultivation, which improved the economy in Handeni district. Their experience depicts clearly the significance of language and shared culture in integration.

53 Kolwa kin in Kizigula literally means, “Originating from the same mother” or nursed by one mother.
Migration studies indicate that the combination of a strong ethnic identity and a national identity promotes adaptation. It would be assumed that refugees, who have escaped violence and persecution, would want to cut links and erase the identity of their home country. Ethnic identity is dynamic as it revolves in the responses of the host country attitude. A brief analysis of ethnic diversity in the Ottoman Empire is significant to this study as it reveals how ethnic pluralism facilitates integration. It also indicates how the Turkish–Muslims have preserved their ethnic identity. Ethnic and cultural diversity was maintained in Ottoman Empire through the ‘millet’ system that allowed the existence and preservation of ethnic diversity. The ‘millet’ system was important as an incentive to encourage, manipulate and mould civilization.

The system provided a degree of religious, cultural and ethnic continuity within communities, while on the other hand it permitted their incorporation into the Ottoman administrative, economic and political system.55 Upsurge of autonomy in parts of the world triggered disintegration with emergence of large-scale refugee problems. Refugees escaped persecution fleeing into the Ottoman Empire where they were granted rights to constitutionalize their ethnic and cultural values. They established religious centres for worship and education. The legacy of Ottoman Empire left a significant number of Turkish-Muslim in Bulgaria due to discrimination and violence. However, Turkish–Muslim refugees throughout the world have resisted forced assimilation or any efforts to weaken their identity as Turkish–Islamic. Tolerance of refugee cultural practice facilitates adaptation and integration and in the case of Southern Sudanese refugees, the church services provide them with an opportunity to bond and tighten their social network.

In Canada and Quebec in particular, multicultural policies, leaders and organisations are co-opted by different levels of government as they recognise and appreciate their contribution towards the efficient management of their communities. The Canadian government views the retention of one’s ancestral culture and identity as normal and positive. Vietnamese refugees realized that in order to manage their collective interaction with the Canadian society they had to establish their own associations and groups of interest. The associations catered for the needs of various groups, including the youth, women, professionals and businessmen. The groups contributed in facilitating integration of refugees by providing services and support,

acting as mediators between immigrants or refugees and the mainstream society. In addition, these groups ensured that cultural values and traditions as well ethnic identity remained meaningful. The groups also facilitated interactions with the authorities, with local authorities often enlisting the support of these ethnic organizations when dealing with refugee communities.

It is evident that social networks are critical for the transition and settlement of refugees in host societies. By acquiring the local languages, refugees are able to initiate and establish relations with host communities and this enables the refugees to develop social contacts and ties increasing their participation in the new society. This in turn accelerates social bonding thus building social capital. Refugees consequently benefit from the information they attain from and influence of the host social contacts, which eases settlement. Social networks among Southern Sudanese refugees are critical components in the acquisition of local languages, which enables the Southern Sudanese to form social bonds as well as minimise hostility. With the knowledge of local languages as well as English and Swahili, they are able to articulate their rights or explain their way out of problems diffusing conflicts and gaining more cultural understanding.

2.2.1 Language Acquisition and Refugee Integration in the Netherlands

Prior to 1998, immigrants learnt the Dutch language on their own, with minimal regulation from the state language proficiency among immigrants was not up to standard. Language courses were availed by approved formal institution or informally. It was a challenge for some refugee groups, such as for women with children to access these courses, as provision of childcare were not included. In 1998, the Netherlands enacted the “Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers” law, which regulates refugee entry and assimilation. The law clearly stipulates conditions for migrants to learn Dutch language.

Currently, the Netherlands has a number of state-led measures and interventions intended to address immediate refugee needs. The state provides skills-based trainings at the refugee receptions centres aimed at facilitating gradual refugee structural and institutional integration and adjustment in Dutch society. Though the government endeavours to ensure refugees have the skills to adjust to life in the Netherlands, the seclusion of refugees in asylum centres, which are located in secluded areas for years before they are issued with residence permits, has had a negative effect on refugee experiences. This isolation is a major issue, with many
refugees feeling it is a form of discrimination, which affects language acquisition and consequently integration, as was expressed by one residing in asylum centre, who stated, “During the stay in the asylum centre you are nobody and you are not allowed to have dreams.”

As knowledge of Dutch is crucial in ensuring refugees are able to participate in Dutch society, especially in term of employment and economic mobility, refugees with no knowledge of Dutch knowledge on arrival are often at a disadvantage. Consequently, they are often forced to rely on family or friends to enrol them for language courses in order to attain proficiency as the language courses offered at the asylum centres are not adequate to meet employment-level proficiency. Given the limiting nature of the state language courses, refugees have to pay for extra classes in order to improve their grasp of the Dutch language. This has become the norm, with many refugees expressing their dissatisfaction with the state-led initiatives. One refugee from Bosnia, said that he resolved to learn Dutch to improve his chances in development the Netherlands.

Though refugees in the Netherlands deem state controlled integration as desirable, some, however, perceive their adjustment is forced on them. With many asserting that after years spent in asylum centres, they find it difficult to find a footing in the society once they are finally granted permission to remain in the Netherlands. According to Korac, there is limited access to professional language training geared towards refugees. The adjustment of refugees would be much easier if they are given the opportunity to learn the Dutch language properly, language courses appropriate to refugee skills and needs, immediately after arrival. Refugees separation, multiplied with years spent in the refugee shelter, combined with poor training has given rise to refugees’ lack of collaboration, slowing integration.

Some counter inherent stress to integrate by shrinking their life aspirations and effectively excluding themselves from the wider society due to physical and language hurdles, as was demonstrated by one refugee. However, there are those who choose to make up for the time

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56 Kiefer, Zoe, David Roling and Ayaan Hirsi Ali, "One Way: Forward Former Refugees and Successful Participation in the Netherlands," Humanity in Action
57 Ibid
58 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
lost in asylum centres and strive hard to establish themselves by advancing their language skills. They set up their own goals and target to get involved in the Dutch society as demonstrated by Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a former refugee Somalia in the Netherlands. She was relentless on her pursuit for a better life she was informed the impossibility of her accomplishing education and acceptance to university however her zeal enable her realize her aspiration.  

2.2.2 Language Acquisition and Refugee Integration in the United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, sufficient knowledge of English language (knowledge of Welch or Scottish Gaelic) is a requirement for naturalization, which implies that ‘Britishness’ can be defined partly as the ability to speak English. In addition, a person must have sufficient knowledge about life in the United Kingdom and applicants for naturalization need to pass the “life in UK” test. According to the UK government, integration in the fullest sense can take place only when a person has been granted refugee status, so that they can make plans, including those for employment.

While local school authorities are compelled by the education act to admit refugee children, some schools refuse to take refugee children because they are not able to offer appropriate support either with the language or other matters that may affect children, while others feel that refugee pupils might move schools examination results disapprovingly low. In some localities, refugee students acquire English language with support teachers from the same linguistic and cultural background. These free English language courses are available through support groups, church and mosque initiatives, which provide refugees with extra classes to polish their English language skills. Additionally, some establishments, for example, Belfast metropolitan College (BMC) and International House, run free English language classes as a model of their teacher-training programme. These extra-curricular English language plans offers learning assistance to refugees. Classes are arranged for different English levels though not accredited. Refugees cannot use them to acquire English language certification, a requirement for tertiary education and in employment segments.

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61 Ibid.
63 The National Asylum Support Service (NASS)
Consequently, refugees seeking to pursue higher education or enter the labour market are forced to undertake English language for academic or professional purposes through International English Language Testing System (IELTS), which is a costly. A hindrance for refugees aspiring for higher education as it is the only certificate of proficiency in English language accepted by the Higher Education Institute in UK. This has caused frustrations among refugees, as expressed by one refugee, preliminary unit is approximately one thousand pounds with an extra cost of ninety pounds. It is a concern for most aspiring university students.65

A major negative impact of the UK dispersal policy is that it created areas of concentrated of unemployment with very limited opportunities for refugees, which hindered integration as without employment refugees have fewer opportunities to interact with local people and to speak English and consequently, struggle to integrate into society in the dispersal areas.66 In response to the challenges experienced by refugees, the UK government upgraded their systems through the Strategic Upgrade of National Refugee Integration Services programme (SUNRISE) under UK Borders Agency in 2005 to support refugees on individual caseworker after being granted leave to remain in the UK.67 SUNRISE assists refugees in the acquisition of admission for English language course, remuneration, accommodation and job hire. Under SUNRISE, adult refugees are eligible to enrol for English language classes for speakers of other languages (ESOL) offered by refugee agencies. However, despite these efforts, refugees still find it difficult to acquire adequate language skills due to shortage of classes as well as long waiting lists. In addition, absence of qualified teachers, poor infrastructure and lack of funds among others hinders registration of the English language by refugees.68

The varied refugee experiences in the UK impacts on refugee integration. Positive experiences based on extensive contact between refugees and the host communities promotes warm and open communications and relations between refugees and the hosts, while on the other hand, bad refugee experiences result in mistrust, fear and cautious relations with the host. Refugees who are exposed to harsh environment have limited opportunities to build

relationship or social networks with the hosts and as such, are unable to improve their English language skills, which in turn hinders their ability to access employment, housing, etc. and this adversely affects their integration. The driving factor for refugees to learn English language in the UK is to increase their economic position by being equipped for better employment opportunities.

2.2.3 Language Acquisition and Refugee Integration in Australia

Australia receives over ten thousands refugees annually and accommodating them is a task bearing owing to their wide-ranging requirements, instituted on their diverse backgrounds. The most important element that has been acknowledged by Australian authorities as being critical for expediting, refugee repositioning is attainment of English language. Refugee language acquisition in Australia is buttressed through government-funded ingenuities together with the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) programme, which offers specialised support under the Australian Government’s Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Scheme (IHSS) to facilitate refugees’ settlement and be independence. The support provided through the program includes the provision of initial information and orientation, accommodation, household formation, and health assessment and treatment. In addition, the Australian Government makes funding available to the states to provide adult and school programs for learning English.

Young refugees whose status has been confirmed are eligible to attend free full time English as a Second Language (ESL). The classes can be accessed in primary or secondary government schools. Free English language course is also available in English Language Centres through the New Arrivals Program (NAP). Students with permanent residence status and those who have stayed in Australia for six months or less are eligible for free programs. However they must demonstrate intention to attend primary or secondary school following completion of their English course. Permission of one year stay is granted to students whose backgrounds’ are traumatic such as refugee.

Adult refugees, learn English language through the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). It is a run by the government which provides free English classes for a period of five hundred

70 Ibid
and ten hours. AMEP contributes in settling refugees in Australia. It is eligible for refugee who register for the program at least three months of stay in Australia or in acquisition of residence status. The program has many options formal and informal. It offers courses that exists at specific institutions or community centres. English language course can be availed, as organised distance-learning courses. There is a choice of course that entails home-learning with assistance, from a trained volunteer tutors certified from the Home Tutor Scheme, one can opt for an independent study (with teacher support if required) in an Individual Learning Centre.⁷¹

Refugees under the Special Preparatory Program (SPP) are qualified for additional hours. The SPP offers tuition in consideration of their special needs from their pre-migration experiences, The SPP aids refugees to familiarize with the learning process before they embark on formal environment of the AMEP.⁷²

Refugees in Australia state that limited understanding of the receiving country’s language is a major obstacle to resettlement and integration. Refugees who are from non-English speaking backgrounds were determined to deny themselves other life aspirations in order to learn English language. Proficiency in English language was considered as key to gainful livelihood as well as accessing services necessary for their resettlement in Australia. Despite the efforts made by the Australian government to fast-track English language acquisition by refugees, they still face challenge to learn English language.⁷³

Acquisition of host languages, English in the case of Australia, is a challenge for many refugees, as they have to get by with other pressing needs including unemployment and lack of financial income as well as contend with experiences of racism and discrimination all of which can affect their acquisition of the host languages. In Australia, refugees who have minimal or no English background often lack confidence and self-esteem, which affects their acquisition of English. Limitation of English language skills impedes their access of basic services. Staining relation with groups among community.⁷⁴

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⁷¹ Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
⁷² www.unsw.edu.au accessed on 4th July 2014
⁷³ Colic-Peisker, “‘Ethnics’ and ‘Anglos’ in the Labour Force” 637.
⁷⁴ Eileen Pittaway, Chrisanta Muli, and Sarah Shtei, “‘I Have a Voice—Hear Me!’ Findings of an Australian Study Examining the Resettlement and Integration Experience of Refugees and Migrants from the Horn of Africa in Australia,” Refuge: Canada’s Journal on Refugees 26, no. 2 (2009).
2.3 Language Acquisition and the Integration of Southern Sudanese Refugees

My fieldwork set out to determine if language domain postulated by Ager and Strang, as an indicator of integration is relevant in Kenya. I sought out the views of Southern Sudanese refugees on integration in Kenya. Does the acquisition of English or Swahili language serve the Southern Sudanese refugees as ‘social capital’ as proposed by Ager and Strang? Does it contribute to social networks, links and social bridge to the Kenyan community? Do the larger Kenyan community perceive the Southern Sudanese who have knowledge of Swahili or English language as ‘belonging’? Has the knowledge of Swahili or English language facilitated integration of Southern Sudanese refugees or is it an indicator of belonging. Is the knowledge of the host language observed? While language acquisition is indeed a significant indicator of integration, it is also the standard of communication and a facilitator of interaction.

My field research interviews indicated that some Southern Sudanese Refugees made great efforts to learn local languages in order to effectively negotiate for their fundamental rights. One respondent said her language acquisition was through interaction with her host community.

I learnt Kiswahili and Turkana with my interactions with the community, Athul75, responded when I asked if she spoke any Kenyan language.

According to Polzer, integration is “progression of including newcomers into the current operational communal.”76 Southern Sudanese refugees require language skills in order to be incorporated into the Kenyan host community. Their ability to adjust culturally is an antecedent to establish social relationships with the host communities. The host country Kenya was appreciated whether on temporary or permanent basis due what it offers to the Southern Sudanese refugees’ new comers. As a minority group, the Southern Sudanese refugee interaction with the host faces challenges, hence the pressure to learn English or Swahili or the local language in order to fit in, a concept that Polzer advances.

Some Southern Sudanese refugees acquire English and Swahili on their own, either through interactions with host communities or by attending classes or schools for those who had the

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75 Rebecca Athul, interview by research in July15th 2012 in Ngumo Nairobi.
76 Polzer, “Negotiating Rights” The Politics of Local Integration,” 96.
opportunity and resources. One informant with financial resources indicated she enrolled for intensive English language classes to improve her proficiency of the language,

I attended English language classes in Lavington, I was very interested to improve my English as I had the time and opportunity, Akal\textsuperscript{77} narrated how she learnt English Language

One of my informants narrated how his daughters acquired Kiswahili and English language in School, yet he detested the Kiswahili language.

My daughters’ speak Swahili fluently, they learnt in school, Tor\textsuperscript{78} narrated Though Swahili is the national language and Kenya is proud of the language, there are no free language lessons provided to foreigners. Unlike English, that was imposed on Kenyans by the British Colonialists and is considered a foreign language, knowledge of Swahili among some Southern Sudanese refugees makes them feel ‘included’ among the locals and less differentiated. According to Oakes, approach to language is a method used to build social identities.\textsuperscript{79} The link of language and collective distinctiveness has been emphasized in many disciplines. Oakes avers that language is not only a standard of communication, a sign of uniqueness, a foundation of society, which enhances cognizance of belonging.\textsuperscript{80}

My field study revealed an interesting aspect of deliberate choice by some Southern Sudanese refugees, particularly those who came to Kenya as adults, to learn the English language in preference to Swahili. The global use of English was the pivotal motivator making it more attractive and worth investing in instead of Swahili. Most Southern Sudanese fleeing from the war in Sudan involuntarily come to Kenya, as their first host country. Some come to Kenya as a stopover as they strategize on how to go to Europe or America as illustrated

However, some Southern Sudanese were motivated to reside in Kenya as it offered them a base to gain skills cheaply by acquiring Kenyan education. For example, Rebecca Athul, a Southern Sudanese came to Kenya and settled in Kakuma camp where the United Nations

\textsuperscript{77} Racheal Akal, interview by research, Nairobi, 29\textsuperscript{th} July 2012 Lavington.
\textsuperscript{78} Peter Tor interviewed by research, July 8, 2012 at Nairobi University Cafeteria, Nairobi
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
assisted her in her earlier schooling. In Kakuma, she was able to learn the local Turkana language through her interactions with the local community. Most southern Sudanese refugees who came as children (below sixteen years) have learnt Swahili and English easily as it is the medium of learning in the Kenya Education system as attested by Tor’s daughters language proficiency.

When I came to Kenyan, I only spoke Arabic and my native language Dinka; I can now speak Swahili, Turkana and English. I stayed in Kakuma camp where I got my elementary school. Later I moved to Eldoret town to stay with my relatives before settling in Nairobi, explains Rebecca Athul.

The knowledge of Swahili gave Rebecca Athul an edge as newly arrived Southern Sudanese refugees depended on her for crucial language interpretation and cultural mediation to facilitate integration in the society.

Inability to speak established local host languages is an obstacle in accessing services as well as lack of cultural awareness affects social relationships negatively making it harder for Southern Sudanese refugees to participate in host community. This is demonstrated by the experience of one of the interviewees, who narrated how he was almost beaten up in a local market due to local language handicap,

In the market I accidently stepped on a bundle of tomatoes, I did not realize I had disarranged the tomato display. A woman was shouting asking me to return back and arrange the bundle. I did not understand and I walked on, they must have thought I was being rude and arrogant. It is only later that my friend who was ahead of me who speaks Swahili realized the problem and offered to pay for the tomatoes, says Deng.

Deng indicates his lack of the host language could have caused conflict in the market, as his actions of indifference could have been misinterpreted as rudeness and insensitive. The market women did not understand his language handicap, it was his friend who calmed the situation by explaining Deng’s inability to speak Swahili and offering to pay for the damage. Deng’s experience is unlike that of Rebecca Athul, whose proficiency in the local languages has boosted her self-esteem and sense of belonging. She affirms that she feels integrated,

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81 Rebecca Athul, interview by research, Nairobi, July 2012 at Saint Luke’s Parish Church Ngumo.
82 Deng Dau, interview by research, Nairobi, 8th July 2012.
she is able to relate, make friends and communicate in her day-to-day work giving her a level of satisfaction. In addition, her proficiency has enabled her to access services more easily though she stills feels some distinction. Despite her language abilities, her confidence to speak Turkana and Swahili was not always encouraged, as there was intolerance of mispronunciation of local words, rebuffs on language misuse and some feelings of envy from indigenous Kenyans who referred to her as ‘Garang’83, a derogatory term meaning foreigner. This made her feel singled out and not blend with the rest which she hope her local language acquisition would facilitate.

Rebecca Athul’s narration indicates that one can assume to be integrated based on one’s acquisition of language whereas the host thinks otherwise. With the acquisition of local language, the host community does not understand why refugees cannot integrate quickly. The host could also feel vulnerable and consequently create boundaries by ‘othering’ the Southern Sudanese refugees. This ‘othering’ is mainly due to perceived territorial encroachment of refugees by their hosts, resulting in the creation of boundaries as indigenous Kenyans at times view the Southern Sudanese refugees as an economic and social threat. The probability of displacing the indigenous community is dreaded. As the fear of Southern Sudanese, encroachment in their territory becomes real, the host country becomes arbitrators on whether a foreigner is integrated or not due mainly due to resources, based on whether the refugees are deemed liabilities or assets in term of investing capacity. The perceived barriers may be a possibility that motivated the Southern Sudanese refugees to establish their community schools. In this community schools the Southern Sudanese refugees controlled the educational curriculum illustrated in this research in acquisition of education in Kenya by Southern Sudanese refugees in chapter three.

Participating in communal life and negotiating for their rights are key influencers for Southern Sudanese refugees to learn the host language, which enables them to become autonomous in everyday life. This subsequently leads the Southern Sudanese refugees to acquire Kenyan languages to access services, participate in community service, football matches, purchase of provisions or in the market or religious participation in churches. The refugees are also active in residential activities such as, security and welfare meetings as well as community cleans up, which accords them opportunities to engage and interact with the

83 This is in reference to the late leader of Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) and vice president of Sudan, John Garang.
local host community. The exchange of information and interactions between the Southern Sudanese refugees and host, promotes language acquisition from both ends.

I participate in security and sanitation meeting in my estate in Jamhuri. I get to demand services and negotiate amount of monetary contribution by the residents, says Deng.  

Some Southern Sudanese refugees seem to prefer conversing in Swahili as a strategy for countering discrimination, as when they are able to converse in Swahili it is difficult to determine their citizenship, thus speaking Swahili makes it easier for them to blend in and enhances their sense of belonging. The acquisition of Swahili signifies a long stay in the country particularly for those refugees who have faced violence and are traumatized.

My knowledge of Kiswahili has assisted me wriggle out of difficult position. It is in Eastland’s Embaskasi is where I honed my Kiswahili… Bol credited his knowledge of Kiswahili talk his way out of situations.

However, some Southern Sudanese refugees have resisted learning the local languages due to personal experiences. This was mainly so during the Moi regime, a period during which, Southern Sudanese refugees unwarranted experienced police harassment. Failure by the government to take responsibility to determine refugee status resulted into abuse by law enforcement. The police often harassed refugees even when they had the protection letter issued by UNHCR and refugees could not seek legal redress.

I refused to learn Swahili because of police harassment. I hate Swahili language,” says, Mr Tor.

Fortunately, for Mr Tor, knowledge of English language reinforced a sense of being a ‘Kenyan’ because most Kenyans speak English even at market places. He further reinforced.

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84 Deng Dau, interview by research, Nairobi, July 8, 2012.
85 Joseph Bol interview by research in Nairobi August 2012 at I&M building
86 Peter Tor, interview by research, Nairobi, July 8, 2012 University of Nairobi cafeteria, Nairobi.
It made it possible for him to access services and he did not experience discrimination because of not speaking Swahili. The police often addressed refugees in Swahili to reinforce a sense of not belonging to the refugees and intimidate them.

Given that, Southern Sudanese refugees arrive in Kenya with myriad problems, they often have differing attitudes on their identity and the need for cultural retention. In the face of perceived hostility some refugees choose to down play their identity. Like Bul whose mastery of Kiswahili due to stay in Eastland’s residential area in Nairobi. While others choose to assert their ethnic identity by retaining their cultural practices including language and dressing styles. While acknowledging the significance of acquisition of the local languages to foster integration, some of those interviewed like the women group in Nairobi Saint Luke’s parish church in Ngumo. Felt they did not need to erase their own ethnic and cultural identity, but rather endeavour to uphold their own languages and cultural practices as well as those of their host communities.

This is demonstrated by Rebecca Athul, who strongly identifies with her Dinka ethnic group while relating with the host society and was considered among the Sudanese as having an integrated identity. Ethnic distinctiveness is observed in several ways, upholding of unique characteristics, relating with association with shared standards. Anxiety caused with relation with different cultures exposes helplessness among Southern Sudanese refugees who may require language interpretation, trust and coping services. Rebecca Athul’s commitment to her ethnic group was evident in language interpretation and assistance she extended to Southern Sudanese refugees settle easily in Kenya. Another pertinent example is the provision of Dinka-language Christian service at the St. Luke’s Anglican Church in Nairobi. The tolerance and freedom of worship in Dinka language gave the Southern Sudanese refugees a sense of security and acceptance.

The use of the native languages in church services not only demonstrates the Southern Sudanese refugees’ strong ethnic identity and preservation and provides them an opportunity to bond and tighten their social network but also characterizes cultural co-existence, between the host and Southern Sudanese. It revealed language pluralism of a large number of people who appreciate the language and have deficit in national language. This revealed a high level

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of acceptance of the Southern Sudanese among the Kenyan community. Some Southern Sudanese considered themselves integrated, as they were able to use their language and preserve their own culture. Participation at the Anglican Church was a contribution of a new culture. The positive attitude and respect for their diversity is welcomed by the refugees and accelerated their adaptation., a congregant of the church concurs, and expressed her contentment with the service and liked the idea of being spiritually guided by one of her own,

I come to church every Sunday to be spiritual nourished as I get to meet my community members, and we speak our native language and feel at home. The service is conducted in our dialect by Pastor David.” Rebecca Athul 88

Aside from acquisition of English and Swahili, the younger generation have also made efforts to fit in by learning ‘Sheng’, an urban slang derived from English and Swahili and popular among Kenyan youth. The acquisition of the slang has made younger South Sudanese refugees more at home and enhanced their ability to gel with the young generation of host communities. The uptake of Sheng among young refugees can be attributed to the music sector, especially Kenya’s hip-hop culture that employs the slang. Based on the research it was apparent that South Sudanese refugee youth have not been left out in the hip-hop culture and identify with contemporary rap music in Kenya. Their exposure to contemporary Kenyan music has influenced their acquisition of ‘sheng’ as demonstrated by one of the respondents, “…I enjoy listening and singing to Nonini and Jua Kali music,” Michael Deng 89, a university student. Consequently, the role of music in integration of refugees is significant as it indicates a deep level of interaction between the South Sudanese refugees and the host communities. In addition, Kenyan youth have also found affinity and have embraced, Kuonck Deng 90, a South Sudanese refugee hip-hop musician, raps in indigenous Sudanese languages as well as Swahili and Sheng, as such Kenyan youth are able relate to his music. 91 Kuonk now commands a large fan base. The interactions between the refugees and the hosts facilitated by

88 Rebecca Athul, interview by research, Nairobi, 15th July 2012 at Saint Luke’s Parish Church Ngumo.
89 Michael Deng interview by research ; Nairobi, 6th August 2012 University of Nairobi
90 Kuonck Deng was the first Southern Sudanese to participate in Tusker Project Fame, a talent seeking television show.
91 eafricanview.blogspot.com/2013/11/tusker-project-fame.html
music, demonstrates that music has not only influenced the acquisition of language among the refugees but has also promoted cohesion and a sense of affinity between the two groups.\textsuperscript{92}

While the acquisition of English and Swahili as well as other local languages is deemed by the majority of the refugees as an accomplishment and critical in facilitating their integration as well as a sense of belonging, these sentiments are not fully shared by local hosts. It would seem that there is no deep affinity with the refugees as one respondent expressed, “When I compare the Ugandan Refugees in the 1980’s and the Southern Sudanese, I guess I was warmer to the Ugandan because they were like us, as they were East Africans they spoke English and even taught in our local schools. The Southern Sudanese have a lot of money hence they do not want to work. They are mysterious lot,” says Bernard Juma\textsuperscript{93} The knowledge of English language by the Ugandan refugees in the 1980s was perceived as an economic benefit to Kenyan community and were us search welcomed, which facilitated their integration. This is in contrast to refugees from South Sudan most of whom have limited English language skills and minimal or no competencies in Swahili. Their limited language skills have perhaps been an impediment in ensuring their transition in Nairobi. It may also hamper their free movement across the country in addition to hindering their participation in employment activities as well as pursuit of academic excellence.

The research revealed that most Southern Sudanese make great efforts on their own to learn the local languages for ease of settlement and to feel at home in Kenya. The Southern Sudanese refugees interviewed reiterated that they interacted with the local community to learn the language so as to be autonomous in everyday life. However, though the acquisition of local languages gives a level, sense of membership or being in the right place .This enhances the sense of ‘Kenyaness’ among the refugees, the attitude of local hosts towards the Southern Sudanese is not always welcoming as illustrated by the experience of Rebecca Athul one of the interviewees. Matthew Riek \textsuperscript{94} an interviewee says his experience in a clothing market reinforced what ordinary Kenyans think of Southern Sudanese refugees. He said that while bargaining for second hand clothing in a famous Kawangare market, he

\textsuperscript{93} Bernard Juma a Kenyan citizen, who works as a security guard at Saint Luke’s Parish Ngumo interview with research 15\textsuperscript{th} July 2012
\textsuperscript{94} Riek Matthew, interview by research, Nairobi 6\textsuperscript{th} August 2012
argued with the trader as he felt the price demanded by the trader for the piece of clothing was not justified and the Kenyan trader retorted,

Kwenda huko wewe mkimbizi!\(^{95}\)

2.4 Language and Education

Fieldwork indicated that the children of Southern Sudanese refugees’ children settled in seamlessly in private schools despite some being less proficient in either English or Swahili language. The cosmopolitan nature of the school population facilitates settlement of the students, which is supported by the sentiments of Peter Tor, a Southern Sudanese who was privileged to attend the high cost school in Nairobi. Peter Tor says, “…

at Hillcrest in Karen, nobody cared or treated me differently because of my background.\(^{96}\)

For those who are unable to afford private schools, the public educational system offers a good educational system, which enables children to acquire language skills including English and Swahili. According to the Office of Refugees, English and Swahili language acquisition has been facilitated by the Kenya government to Southern Sudanese refugees through the provision of free primary education. The office of immigration in Kenya is mandated to issue letters that allow Southern Sudanese refugees to register their children to access education in public schools, which has provided children refugees’ opportunities to interact with a diverse group, thus breaking social barriers and enabling them to pursue academic qualifications.

The social integration that schools provide enables Southern Sudanese refugees to socialise and interact with the host communities. With the acquisition of English and Swahili language, most Southern Sudanese Refugees understand the cultural diversity of the Kenyan community. They have the historical knowledge of the country’s political path and the laws, laws by which they abide. Some Southern Sudanese have named their children after Kenyan political leaders they admire. “These children were born in Kenya and they know no other home than Kenya. Young Raila knows who he is named after and he follows his speeches on T.V.” Tabitha Riak further stated that as a Dinka, she feels ethnically affiliated to local Luo ethnic group and can melt among the Luo people easily without a problem. She claims she understands the language when slowly spoken.

\(^{95}\) English translation of the Swahili statement “Away with you, you refugee!”

\(^{96}\) Peter Tor, interview by research, Nairobi 6\(^{7}\) July 2012 University of Nairobi Cafeteria, Nairobi.
2.5 Conclusions

Southern Sudanese acquisition of Kenyan languages fits the parameter of social capital as proposed by Ager and Strang. Language proficiency was accumulated through frequency of contact between individuals and groups and knowledge of the host language offered social link, bond, identity and bridge to Southern Sudanese refugees with the host community. The acquisition of English language and Kenyan education by Southern Sudanese seems to be mainly motivated by the probability for better prospects in life. The Southern Sudanese refugees were willing to acquire life skills and language skills as a strategy for becoming homogenous and co-existing amicably with the host community. Language is traditionally seen as something that anchors people in a local context, it is described as something that belongs to a particular environment, and it is locked into local meanings and interactional dynamics.\textsuperscript{97} Language is cannot be controlled, it interweaves with people, as it is transmitted and spread with the movement of people over time.

The study reveals that in terms of language acquisition, Southern Sudanese refugees actively endeavour to acquire key languages in order to interact, socially and economically, with Kenyan hosts. Rebecca Athul, Peter Tor and Joseph Bol are some of Southern Sudanese refugees who learnt local languages, acquired Kenyan education, and participated in community activities, including religious services. Acquisition of English language was not meant as a strategy to gain employment in the Kenya labour market but in order to access to education and also to facilitate their participation in the global community. Most Southern Sudanese refugees who were forced to study Arabic endeavoured to learn English language as a symbol of protest against the Arab North, illustrated by Rebecca Athul who only spoke Dinka and Arabic when she first came to Kenya.

My field work revealed that acquisition of language by the Southern Sudanese refugee is a deliberate choice. Either due to bad experience in Kenya as narrated by Tor who experienced police harassment and or as in the case of Rebecca whose decision to learn English language because she could only speak Arabic when she settled in Kenya. However, it emerged that knowledge of English, Swahili and indigenous Kenyan languages did not necessarily enhance the sense of belonging among the refugees but facilitated their transition and ability to negotiate for their rights while in Kenya. On the other hand, some of the refugees perceived

the acquisition of English language as an investment, which would not only enable them to co-exist and communicate with their hosts during their stay here, but would also facilitate their transition into developed countries as they deemed their time in Kenya as an interim stay. Consequently, they deem their acquisition of English as vital in preparation for reunification with their family members in Europe, UK, Australia or North America. Southern Sudanese refugees had their own agenda in acquisition of languages either as strategy to fight of discrimination, sign of defiance or liberation or for future global participation.
CHAPTER THREE
EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN REFUGEE INTEGRATION

3.1 Education as an Indicator of Refugee Integration

Integration is a process that starts with arrival of refugees in a host country and ends when the refugee is in equal position with the majority. Thus, the active participation of refugees in the public arena, especially in terms of employment and education, are strong indicators of successful integration. Consequently, where host countries have established programs that facilitate refugee access to education and employment, refugees are likely to be assimilated and integrated faster than in countries where no such systems and mechanisms exist. In the conceptual analysis, Ager and Strang postulate that refugee integration can be measured by their access to education in comparison to the dominant majority, an idea that is supported by Mestheneos and Ioannidi, who posit that integration can be measured using objective and verifiable indicators that compare the position of refugees to those of the host communities.

Access to education or vocational training fast tracks and facilitates integration of refugee in their host societies, by empowering individuals with social skills and building human capital, which are enablers for social bonding and economic productivity. Moreover, education is usually considered as a key aspect of integration, as it indicates individual refugee level of education aspiration or self-improvement and commitment in the host country. Consequently, as the educational objective of any government is to prepare its citizens or individuals to completely play a part and contribute in the culturally, commercial and political spheres of organization. Host countries are required to put in place measures that foster participation of refugees in these spheres.

Given that, education is a catalyst for and a marker of integration, restricting refugee access to education hampers their integration as it undermines their ability to maintain, acquire or improve their skills as well acquire the host language, which deters and limits participation and social connection. Successful refugee settlement depends on the availability of programs,

98 Ager and Strang, "Understanding Integration: 184
which allow them to position themselves in the adopting community such as by exchanging their expertise or services to improve the second settlement.

Education provides environment for refugees, which boost self-esteem, facilitates a sense to fit in any environment enabling individual to form social network and interaction. This promotes inter-cultural understanding, commitments to justice and equality. Schools reduce vulnerability and build resilience. While education has been positively recognized as essential to development there is evident that it can be an obstacle in integration. Education can be a problem not a solution as it aids in causing rift and alienate individuals either intentionally or unintentionally when access is limited.

Age of refugee arrival is a major factor in education access. Refugees below the age of sixteen easily access education as most host countries facilitate education acquisition of young refugees. Refugee parents of younger children found it attractive to invest in their children’s education. It did not take a toll on them since the country offered compulsory education to children below sixteen years. Older refugees face challenges in adapting in the new education system and many eventually drop out and settle for casual employment.

Education provides skills and competences in support of subsequent employment enabling people to become constructive and active members of society. However, for refugee children and in many cases refugee parents, schools are seen as the most important place of contact with members of local host communities, playing an important role in establishing relationships supportive of integration, and in turn, these social networks facilitated integration and job placement as they got leads on employment prospects.

Nevertheless, despite the importance of education in facilitating integration, education is susceptible to manipulation and has been used to suppress minority, or suppress language, art form, religious practices and cultural values hindering refugee integration. Inadequate knowledge among teachers and students on the historical and cultural background of refugees is of concern and often results in prejudices, which affects the cognitive and social development of young refugees. In the twenty first century, broader global knowledge is necessary in order to address wholly the education and social needs of refugees, which would

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101 Stevenson and Willott. "The aspiration and access to higher education: 671-687.
and accelerate their educational acquisition and integration. Knowledge of refugee background enables assistance in their transition and facilitates education acquisition and personal developments. It is not ‘refugeesness’ or ‘Africanness’ that determines educational success but the ways that particular and pre-and post-settlement issues are identified and addressed.\(^\text{103}\)

This study highlights the significance of educations as an indicator of integration in other parts the world. It uses refugees’ experiences to determine the relevance of education in integration. The experiences of refugees in these countries offer a foundation to understand the applicability of education as indicator and its applicability in the Kenyan context with the case of Southern Sudanese. Refugee’s experience in accessing quality education equivalent to the host demonstrates the rationality of education is an indicator of integration.

3.1.1 **Refugee Access to Education in Australia**

Australia has a benevolent migration policy and all newly arrived settlers and refugees are expected to append their commitment to Australia’s Values Statement.\(^\text{104}\) The country’s values are not interrogated and are envisioned to promote equality for all. However, notwithstanding the determination to ensure parity, or champion country’s vision refugee education is fragmented. English language education is ranked highly and is attained by registering in Adult Migrant English Programs (AMEP),\(^\text{105}\) wherever English language is learnt. Emphasis regularly is on practical usage, intended to facilitate refugee access employment or complete the country citizenship test. Hardly does the program prepare refugee to master the language.

The program incapacity to prepare the refugees with English language knowledge is a stake reminder of pre-colonial conditions of exclusion. Education for the populace was geared for immediate needs and not to gain specific knowledge or skills and as such, does not empower the populace.


\(^{105}\) Ibid
Refugees in Australia view education strategically as an investment of their imminent resettlement and the inclusion of their families into the new society. Children are encouraged to acquire education, as anticipation for optimistic future unlike their own experiences in their native countries. Even with minimal knowledge of the Australian education system and with little external support, parents seem determined that their children should not miss any stage of the education system. Refugee students aged sixteen and twenty four years get admission in government ran schools with an extra four hundred hours for survivors of tragic background.106

In spite of parents inspiring their children to acquire education in Australia, young refuges face high of drop out of school, in order to support relatives and household financially. Others lack educational support, which would facilitate their settlement in mainstream schools and this hinders their future prospects in high income employment. Due to poor educational background, they are unable to compete in the labour market settling instead for available employment, which more often than not are low paying.

Refugees experience low enrolment in tertiary education and training since they are required by the Federal Government to pay international student fees. Despite this hindrance, those who can afford are committed to complete their education programme. The deep commitment demonstrated by the refugees in pursuing tertiary education reflects a high level of attachment to the host country as well as a deep-seated drive to improve their competitive edge in the labour market and thus their socio-economic status, the requirement to pay international fees marginalises the refugees especially those who are not financially well off. This preclusion counters Australia’s drive for equality as espoused in its values statement and though the consensus is that education is a means of facilitating integration, the structural inequality apparent in Australia’s educational system with regard to refugee access to education impedes the full integration of refugees.

3.1.2 Refugee Access to Education in the Netherlands

The Dutch government education policy for migrants and minorities gives prominence on facilitating integration. State intervention, are accorded to support refugees to obtain

106 Matthews, “Schooling and Settlement: Refugee Education in Australia,” 31-45
education, while progressively expediting their crucial integration. Commencing age five to sixteen junior school attendance is mandatory. When refugee reaches the ages of between thirteen to sixteen years they are sequestered for pre-vocational and broad-spectrum training. Upon acknowledgement of refugee position accompanied with a proficiency in Dutch. Refugees can progress to tertiary and higher learning.

Access to higher education gives refugees an advantage in inclusion in the labour market and for most refugees the attainment of academic qualifications from Dutch institutions is of great importance. It aids their entry and gives them a competitive edge in the labour market. A higher education suggests high efficiency. Employers seek likely productivity of an employee, which is provided with their level of education and training. Formal education, previous employment experience, on job training are regarded as investments that surges human capital.

However, those refugees who enter the Netherlands with academic qualifications from their home countries often find it difficult to gain recognition of their qualifications and as such are unable to enter the labour market. Lack of recognition of their foreign credentials or validation of credentials hinders their absorption into the labour market as well as access to higher education. The host country considers their educational qualifications out dated because of the long waiting period they are subjected to before they attain refugee status. While in other instances, their qualifications are considered of low quality based on the country of origin, as the Netherlands considers the educational and training systems of some countries as being below their standards and incapable of developing the quality of human capital required by the Netherlands.

To redress this issue and in order to increase the refugee chances in the labour market the Dutch government initiated a project in conjunction with IRC and Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs to consider issues of validation of refugee qualifications and special education for immigrants with foreign academic qualifications. Aside from rationalise the evaluation and validation of foreign qualifications, the initiative is meant to enhance refugee chances of obtaining employment.

107 Maja Korac, "Integration and how we facilitate it A Comparative Study of the Settlement Experiences of Refugees in Italy and the Netherlands," *Sociology* 37, no. 1 (2003): 51-68.
It is evident that the younger age of refugee arrival in the Netherlands makes it easier for refugees to obtain education, which increases their chances of integration. For those who are post-educational age, they have to rely on internationally transferable components of their education and/or training, which is not always easy.

3.2 Southern Sudanese Access to Education in Kenya

While the Universal declaration on human rights dictates that,

Everyone has the right to education. Higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit,¹⁰⁸

UN member countries do not always observe this obligation, particularly countries wasted by conflicts or wars, as was the case of Sudan. Access to education for Southern Sudanese has always been an issue dating back to the colonial period and even after independence. The rule of seclusion and Arabization proliferated by the North¹⁰⁹ undermined access to education for the Southern Sudanese and this was further compounded by the instability caused by various civil wars that erupted in the country from 1955 – 2013.

Similarly, Southern Sudanese refugees value the idea of equal opportunities, autonomy and recognition of cultural diversity without seclusion. These dreams can only be realized with acquisition of education, where individual Southern Sudanese refugees are actively involved. According to one respondent Benny Thon, education was of personal interest, as the acquisition of a range of knowledge, skills and competencies would enable him realize his full potential.

I tried to go to Australia but I was unsuccessful, since my parents were in Nairobi I decided to pursue my university studies here, Benny Thon ¹¹⁰ responded to my question why he opted to study in Kenya.

Consequently, one of the major reasons for selecting and continuing their stay in Nairobi – Kenya. As a place of settlement for some, Southern Sudanese refugees was essentially to

¹¹⁰ Benny Thon, interview by research Nairobi 15th July 2012
pursue education. Kenya’s developed educational system was attractive and met their educational needs and quest for academic qualifications.

While Kenya has made tremendous strides in educational development providing free elementary education to all citizens including refugee children, insufficient resources due to harsh economic conditions, high population growth and shortage of teachers have hampered the provision of Universal free primary education has, unfortunately. Kenya government policy for eligibility for universal free primary school is production of birth certificates and valid documentation for refugee parents. This policy locks out many of Southern Sudanese refugee’s access to education. Elementary education is compulsory in Kenya and is provided free in public schools. Public primary school still require parents to support the maintenance cost as the government allocated funding to the schools does not sufficient to cover the operation expenditures. According to Karanja, exploration on the obstacles of Southern Sudanese integration in Kenya, indicate lack of education as a principal cause. She hypothesises that educational is a right precursor in freeing refugees from socio-economic and administrative subjugation, an assertion that is supported by Deng, who stated, “In South Sudan the medium of communication in school was Arabic in which I am fluent in, enrolling in Kenyan college and learning English was exhilarating.” For Deng, education is a choice and something, which gives him an edge, but is also a show of resistance to Arabization.

While refugee children can access free primary schooling, most refugee children lack birth certificates notwithstanding of them being born in Kenya and some have no valid refugee documentations, which lock them out of public schools. As these are prerequisites for registration and admission. Aside from lack of documentation, the high enrolment rates and limited vacancies as well as discrimination and extortion have hindered the admission and enrolment of children refugees in public schools. For those Southern Sudanese parents and guardians fortunate to access free public schools, they still had to incur extra expenses in the provision of school related materials such, uniforms, textbooks, etc. as well as pay for extra tuition for their children to catch up with the school curriculum and transportation costs, which are costly. One respondent interviewed, indicated that they had to bribe school officials to have their children enrolled in the city council school,

112 Deng Dua, interview by research at Saint Luke’s Parish Church Ngumo Nairobi, July 15 2012.
113 Karanja, “The Educational Pursuits and Obstacles for Urban Refugee Students in Kenya” 1-9.
There is no free or compulsory education in Kenya that I have experienced. To have my child enrolled in public primary school in Kibera I had to give facilitation fee

Beatrice Okot

This reinforced the idea that everything is up for sale in Kenya if you can afford it. The extortionist behaviour of the local hosts has frustrated many refugees, especially in terms of accessing education. Their frustration was aptly captured by one of the interviewees, Tabitha, an elderly woman, who stated, “The problem we face in Kenya is that everyone thinks we have lots of money and they want a piece, prices of services are higher for us and even if something was free, because we are Sudanese we will be charged.”

In response to the challenges they faced accessing public education as well as enhance access of education for their children, Tabitha Riak, an interviewee indicated that the Sudanese community established a school in Nairobi. The Sudanese community hoped their school would provide a sense of belonging for their children and as well as an opportunity to assert their South Sudanese identity. The Southern Sudanese refugee community school uses the Kenyan curriculum and does not get funding from the government or UNHCR. Southern Sudanese refugees deemed it necessary to have autonomy in accessing education and the school provided them an opportunity to determine their own educational needs and take charge of their own educational development. According to the Southern Sudanese, education is a tool to develop the self and since they could not rely on the elusive assistance from the Kenya government, they had to come up with viable solutions for enhancing access to education within their community. The ultimate goal of their vision is to impart skills and knowledge as well as develop technical capacities of the Southern Sudanese with ultimate goal of returning home to rebuild their country.

Aside from accessing education through public schools and the refugee school, other refugees accessed education by joining private schools, though this group is a minority. Based on the interviews, it would seem that children of Southern Sudanese refugees settled in seamlessly in private schools despite lack of proficiency in either English or Swahili language. Private school provided an opportunity to interact with a diverse nationalities making adjustment to

114 Beatrice Okot interviewed by research in Ngumo Nairobi 6th August 2012
116 Ibid
school easy. “In Laiser Hill School, I felt at home as most students were foreigners, their parents were diplomats. No way cared what type of car dropped me at school or who my parents were. This was refreshing, as I had to build my self-esteem and learn English language,” Tor recalls.\textsuperscript{117} Agnes Amon a respondent who has resided in Kenya since the 80s, whose children attended private schools, echoes Tor’s sentiments and states,

My husband was a member of SPLM and they were housed in Kenya in Kileleshwa Nairobi with different identities. He posed as an Acholi from Uganda. He was able to relocate us in Nairobi as he had made contacts locally and easily enrolled the children in private schools in Kenya. Some have moved to further their education in Australia. For a long time we were Acholi and it was ok we were at home.\textsuperscript{118}

In addition to those who are well off, some other refugees are able to attend private schools and universities with the support of their relatives abroad, which has made it easier for them to access educational opportunities, as was the case of Malit. Malit who was pursuing his university education in Kenya Methodist University said,

I have lost loved ones in the war am determined to get an education so that I can assist in rebuilding our lives. I cannot afford to let down my sponsors who send me money for college from Australia. They have made me realize there is still light at the end of the tunnel, as they deny themselves luxurious to share their hard earned money with me.\textsuperscript{119}

In terms of gender parity, there seems to be a drive among the community, especially the women, to ensure girls attain educational opportunities. This can be attributed to the marginalisation faced by women in acquiring education in South Sudan. As a patriarch society, like most African countries, men and boys have been historically privileged over women. Even though children in Africa are highly valued by adults and parents, among the Dinka and Nuer communities of South Sudan, male children are given preference over the female. The patriarchal discrimination experienced in South Sudan, facilitated general preference of boys over girls, making girls face unequal access to education. Consequently, upon resettling in Kenya, the drive for girls’ acquisition of education has become paramount as most families were headed by women.

\textsuperscript{117} Peter Tor, interview by research, 8th July 2012 University of Nairobi Cafeteria, Nairobi.
\textsuperscript{118} Agnes Amon, participant of South Sudanese Women’s Group discussion, interview by research at Saint Luke’s Parish Church Nairobi, 24 March 2012
\textsuperscript{119} Malit, Lul interview by research, Nairobi July 8 2012. Ngumo Nairobi
According to Deng, the low historic female school enrolment in the South Sudan is as a result of the colonial Britain and the Arab North’s deliberate policy of isolation, which propagated socio-economic disparity due to poor progress and shortage of schools in the South. This marginalization widened the gap between the north and south. The disparity is most evident in terms of education levels, as the south had minimal educational infrastructure and the available infrastructure was destroyed during the conflict with the north. Consequently, access to education by Southerners was minimal and continues to be low especially among girls. Based on statistics from 2002, less than 8 per cent of children were attending primary school and out of this 8%, only 20 per cent were girls.  

According to the Tabitha Riak women group’s church elder interviewed, education among the Southern Sudanese women refugees is perceived as beneficial to not only oneself but also the family and the community. They averred that education is a tool for empowerment and an investment in future life prospects and as heads of their households, most of the women were determined to make use of Kenyan’s political stability and educational opportunities to improve the welfare of their families. In order to gain representation and instil independence among the young women they were determined to have their girls acquire education. One of the women interviewed supported this view by stating, “We have experienced double edge sword with the war, during my time in South Sudan few girls were able to access education in South as compared to North Sudan, we were under represented in SPLM and in the governance of Sudan. We are taking girls to school to rewrite our history.”  

A respondent Akot asserted that, ‘I chose to reside in Nairobi so that my children can go to school. I have now moved houses closer to my children’s school so that they have easier access of school and save time to do their homework. I need to support the children to do well in school.”  

Malit an interviewee the echoed sentiments and emphasised education as the key for future generations, especially the girls who had been marginalised for too long.

Aside from empowerment, acquisition of education by Southern Sudanese refugee women was viewed as a political tool to develop liberal ideas for nation building. They conceptualized acquisition of education as a strategy that can facilitate the reduction of

122 Akot Lulu, interview by research Ngumo, Nairobi, July 15 2012.
marginalization of Southern Sudanese women. Though they did not verbalize their quest for education as an act of rebellion against a patriarch society, it is apparent that by sending girls to school, the women are demonstrating their ‘right’ to equal education, something that was historical denied to them by the northern administration.

Benny Thon who I interviewed indicated that he was pursuing education to enhance this knowledge as well as gain technical capacities in order contribute to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of their country and to enable them compete in the global labour market. This demonstrates that Kenya is a place for self-development as opportunities to relocate to the Western world or return home are left open. Relying on remittance from relatives abroad for their upkeep and education, the Southern Sudanese refugees, were committed to complete their academic courses in Kenya, “My relatives in Australia and UK send me money for upkeep and fees “Benny Thon” replied when I asked him how he met the expenses of his education in Kenya.

Another major challenge the refugees’ face, especially in terms of accessing higher education, is the non-recognition of the previous academic qualifications. Some of the refugees interviewed said that some institutions refused to recognise their academic certification and as such could not enrol for some courses. This hampered their desire to further their education, as they had to sit for additional courses to meet the college requirements. In addition, some felt a sense of not belonging, as they were required to pay international fee rates to enrol in the universities and colleges. As a Southern Sudanese student recalls, “In school, Southern Sudanese refugees’ students pay 25% extra to the administration. We would like to be treated equally, like the rest we are aware they pay less and it hurts to be isolated for higher fee”

Despite the challenges they face, access to education in Kenya seems to have given the refugees a sense of freedom, as they are able to choose which college or school to attend and choose what courses to pursue. Their experience has nurtured hope and generated the desire to promote democratic participation in their home country. Being able to pursue academic qualification and being part of a vibrant educational sector has instilled a sense of belonging among the refugees, as they feel they are a part of the community. According to the some

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women refugees, their children found a home in Kenya and they were determined to invest in their education. One of them averred, “I have enrolled my children a boy and girl in a private university, the Catholic University of East Africa in Karen. I tell them to work hard! If your children acquire education, you too, get educated,” Tabitha an elderly Southern Sudanese women’s group church elder says.\textsuperscript{125} They perceived education as a primary means for life improvement, an investment of life skills.

The experience of South Sudanese refugees in Kenya indicates that unlike other countries, especially Western countries, access to education is not identity driven but based on ones capacity to pay for the services. Accordingly, one can access education and training services without needing to prove their legal status, as long as one can show proof that they can afford the services. It seems that educational and training institutions are not keen on determining whether one is legally in Kenya and as such, often ignore the legal status of foreigners if they are able to pay their tuition. This is perhaps due to the high tuition fees these institutions charge foreigners, as such, they deem foreigners as cash cows as is evident in the high number of students from neighbouring countries pursuing education in various institutions in Kenya, especially the private institutions. The unique perceptions of education were highlighted in the study of Southern Sudanese refugees different to the propositions of Ager and Strand and other scholars. Access to education was not driven by immediate need for income but for self-improvement. Acquisition of education of education was a tremendous effort with minimal government support, Acquisition of education in Kenya did not herald integration but was considered as up skilling of their capabilities. In Kenya the Southern Sudanese were able to design their education and that of their children through community schools.

\textsuperscript{125} Tabitha Riak, women’s group leader interview by research at Kenyatta Market Saint Luke’s Parish Church Ngumo, July 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2012.
3.3 Refugee Access to the Labour Market

Refugee access to the labour market, however, must be critically analysed, labour market integration should be defined as securing a job appropriate to one’s qualification, skills and experience. Ager and Strang suggest that comparing refugee employment to that of the host population can be used to gauge the level of integration as employment is considered a mechanism of economic advancement and serves as an indicator of social roles. In general, refugees consider having a job as an important factor as it makes them feel responsible and active participants in the society and scholars of refugee studies concur that employment is the single most important aspect of migrant integration.

Refugees across the globe emanate from divergent socio-economic, cultural and political backgrounds, with some coming from backgrounds, while others were political elites but often the majority are drawn from middle and lower classes. Upon entry to host countries, these varied groups, react differently to the loss of their social class, with the elite and privileged having a much more difficulty adjustment to the loss of their social class. This affects their transition as and integration as they have to re-train, re-qualify or learn new skills as a way to achieve or regain some social status and compete on equal footing with their hosts. They struggle to keep their pride or prove their equality with the locals of the same social class. Given most host countries, especially those in the West, do not recognise past job experiences and skills of refugees impacts negatively on their integration. Majority of refugees feel they are treated as if they are have no skills or education whatsoever and this denies them the opportunity to compete for jobs as their hosts, which in turn depicts them as ‘victims’ to be managed, in contrast to assets to be recruited for vast awareness and global connections they bring.126

3.3.1 Netherlands

The Netherlands refugee program, “wet Inburgering Niewkomers”, which rules that all immigrants with residence permits are required to take and pass course that includes education in Dutch, knowledge of Dutch society and career orientation plays a critical role in preparing refugees to transition into Dutch society including competing for employment. The integration courses offered under the program are intended to have beneficial effect on refugees’ economic integration with an emphasis in proficiency in the Dutch language. The

126 Colic-Peisker, “Visibility, Settlement Success: 188.
Dutch government pays particular attention to the process of economic integration including labour market orientation, societal guidance, which is practical support for newcomers, which has served to streamline refugee integration.127

After completion of the orientation course refugees use conventional methods such as, social networks, employment agencies and advertisements to search for employment just like the native Dutch people. Given the competitiveness of the labour market, these methods are often not effective and refugees find it difficult to be recruited when competing with the host population. The majority of refugees are rejected due to their poor grasp of Dutch language, an issue that has been cited as a major impediment. While this is not discrimination per se, refugees feel that they are discriminated as was articulated by one female refugee, based on her own job search experience. She recalls her frustration while seeking employment,

I am watchful in evoking the word differentiation in failing to get a job. An aspiring employee must be right in an employer’s ‘qualification language is key. Native Dutch speakers have higher probability for employment due to language however one ought to be given an opportunity to show their (other) qualities.128

Due to the competitiveness nature in the labour market, social networks and capital are progressively becoming essential for refugees in Netherlands to get employments. Creating social relations and friendships with Dutch natives is considered vital. Social interactions with host are fundamental due to their vast knowledge, impact, of country-specific information that is relevant of refugee upkeep in Netherland.129 Native friends are important sources of information and advice for refugees in terms of seeking employment, negotiating for salaries, employee rights or relevant courses needed to qualify for employment. Consequently, they facilitate positive economic outcomes for immigrants. In addition, membership in associations or other social or economic forums have also enhanced chances of refugees gaining employment.

Agency-assisted refugees in the Netherlands access employment easier, due to the person advice issued to them unlike for self-sponsored refugees. They are equipped with the process of searching for employment recruitment, appropriate remuneration and qualification. Most employers in the Netherlands preference on recruitment are refugees assisted by the University Assistance Fund (UAF) due to, the agency’s comprehensive knowledge informed with their occupation with refugees. A refugee in the Netherlands reinforced this validation, “When I apply for a job through UAF, then it is something. There are people who know and trust you and this certainly influences employers, and they find it easier to trust you.”

Though education does affect migrant participation in the labour market it does not necessarily translate to equal opportunities as the host communities, as demonstrated by the experiences of some skilled refuges in the Netherlands, who are often rejected because they are considered over-qualified. This has resulted in refugees working on voluntary basis or seeking internship opportunities in order to gain experience and improve their language skills as well as gain a footing in the labour market. Aside from competing for employment opportunities, refugees have to also contend with the constant pressure of proving their worth and capabilities once they gain employment, “As a foreigner you always have to be better and that is tiresome. You have to prove yourself over and over again and fight for your rights.” Moreover, even when refugees have proven their capability they still face challenges in terms of career progression and as such, have to limit their ambitions and content themselves with entry-level positions, as they perceive that they cannot progress based on merit given the prevalent prejudices.

### 3.3.2 Australia

Refugee selection for settlement in Australia is essentially a valuation one individual’s capacity to integrate and is based on Australia’s needs. Since Australia has an ageing population, selection of skilled migrants as well as young families is prioritised to provide needed human capital for the county’s labour market. The government programme has ensured that the intake of skilled migrants continues and Australia has moved absorbing unqualified labour force to improve their economy.

Though the Australian government provides assistance to facilitate refugee settlement and refugees are encouraged to seek employment after being in the country for six months. Some skilled and professional refugees are often unable to find suitable jobs and eventually settle for low skilled jobs. This is demonstrated by the experience of one Bosnian refugee, being driven in a taxi by an extremely accomplished immigrant is currently normal in Australian.\textsuperscript{132}

Refugees are directed to low skilled employment in regional areas where labour shortages are identified. The areas are mostly in the countryside were low skilled employment are unattractive to native Australians. The jobs are mainly in the agricultural sector and entail fruit picking and meat processing. Refugees have little choice on employment and have to settle on what is available. Demands to support families or relatives back in their home countries in precarious situation overrides being selective on employment. This contributes to refugees’ employment in labour market below their potential. Large numbers of African refugees are to be found working low paying security jobs as well as food processing industries. Africans in Australian lamented that they employed for unskilled jobs.

Most potential employers demonstrate little or no interest in a refugees past skills or experiences in Australia, causing skilled migrants to settle for jobs below their qualification consequently, refugees are likely to be in low skilled employment for several years. Therefore they become vulnerable, to skills deterioration and decrease their probabilities of professional progression. In addition, absorption of refugees as low skilled labour, hinders their upward social progression, with minimal pay and low opportunities for networking with peers. This hinders vocation growth, a necessity vital for keeping professional current or priding opportunities for learning, dwindling employment prospects.

Despite Australia’s legislation and enactment of the Australian Racial Discrimination Act, which entitles Australian residents to equality of access to facilities housing, provision of goods and services as well as access to employment,\textsuperscript{133} refugees have to contend with discrimination when seeking employment. A Sudanese refugee in Australia felt that his experience of hundreds of unsuccessful job applications could only be indicative of discrimination. He claimed he was made uncomfortable in very subtle ways and shunned by


potential employers, “Regrettably discrimination is 99 per cent reason unemployment, as, and the response continuously is the vacancy has been filled.”134 The segmentation of Australia’s labour market relegates refugees to the lowest paying jobs irrespective of their qualifications and skills, aggravating refugee seclusion.

3.4 Southern Sudanese Economic Integration in Kenya

The economic rights of refugees to pursue livelihood are clearly stipulated in the United Nations Convention of the status of refugees of 1951. According to articles 17 and 18, states refugees be rendered with, “utmost constructive management bestowed to citizens of the host country, equivalent conditions with regard to the right to participate in income-generation occupation.”135 However, despite the Convention clearly outlining refugees’ freedom to income earning and accountability on duty bearers, implementation of the same has been left to the goodwill of host governments, who often do not adhere to the letter and spirit of the treaty.

In Kenya, the rights of refugees to be economically active are often overlooked and at best practiced irregularly, as there is no specific policy addressing refugee economic activity. Southern Sudanese refugees like other refugees in Kenya who found their way to urban areas and the capital city, Nairobi, after escaping the refugee camps find it difficult to become economically productive. It is extremely difficult to infiltrate the labour market in Kenya irrespective of an individual educational background, length of stay in the country, language proficiency or expertise. However, some refugees have become economically integrated despite numerous challenges.

While the majority of urban refugees have attained self-sufficiency without the support of the Kenya government or UNHCR, they still struggle to fit in and compete on an equal footing as their hosts. Unlike the Somalia or Eritrean refugees, Southern Sudanese refugee’s visibility in the economic arena is not noticeable or easily discerned. In my fieldwork, I sounded out the interviewees as to why Southern Sudanese do not seek employment like the Somali, Congolese or Eritrean refugees in Kenya. Tor, one of the respondents, explained the visible absence of employed Southern Sudanese refugees, “Kenya’s population is large, Kenyan

134 Ibid., 18.
people are well educated and skilled. It is only those with specialization who can get employed.”

Benny Thon one of the respondents interviewed indicated that they relied on remittances from abroad to sustain their livelihood in Kenya. Majority of the Southern Sudanese refugee households in Kenya are headed by women whose spouses or relatives are abroad and are dependent on remittances for their upkeep, while others have set up income generating activities. Those involved in businesses are generally keen on ensuring economic self-reliance pending return home and will often go into business partnership with indigenous Kenyans. The Sudanese understood the difficult business environment and settled for silent partnerships with the locals. They trusted their Kenyan counterparts to run the business on their behalf and share proceeds. This promoted their self-reliance and gave them a sense of participation in the economic activity in Kenya.

The good will contracts facilitated dependency between the refugees and the locals, as each needed the other. The Southern Sudanese provided the much-needed monetary resources to give the businesses a lifeline and for the Southern Sudanese, the natives provided expertise and legitimized the business. The refugees are involved in almost all business sectors, including the aviation industry. My Field interview with Bol revealed the economic participation of Southern Sudanese refugees in the aviation sector at Wilson airport in Nairobi. Due to sensitivity of their activities, respondents sought anonymity so as not to get into trouble with the immigration officials as well as internal security agencies. Bol appreciated shadow partnering with indigenous Kenyans in business by rationalizing, “It is easier to do business with the locals; they understand the country well, know what to do, where to get licenses, what is required and who to recruit. Besides Kenyans, trust their own when it comes to service. Hence, they can market the company.”

In some cases, community development agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have offered employment to South Sudanese refugees in Kenya. Aid agencies in their attempt to offer humanitarian assistance in the troubled South Sudan country have understood the importance of recruiting Southern Sudanese refugees as the Southern Sudanese understand the geo-politics of the country and act as interpreters when the need

136 Peter Tor interview by research, 6th July 2012 University of Nairobi Cafeteria, Nairobi
137 Bol, Joseph interview by research, Ngumo Saint Luke’s Parish Church Nairobi, 22nd July 2012.
arises. Organisations such as Family Health International (FHI), UNICEF and International Republican Institute (IRI) in Kenya have recruited Southern Sudanese refugees based on their background and expertise. These institutions offer employment to the Southern Sudanese refugees on the same basis as Kenyans and consequently, the refugees are paid on the same scale as their counterparts. Karina, a Southern Sudanese employed by IRI, shared her work experience, “I work in IRI as an accountant and I have been lucky to get employment that allows me use my skills. I stay in Nairobi as I have people to take care of. My employer and colleagues treat me professionally and there is a lot of comradeship.”

The Southern Sudanese refugees seem to exclude themselves from competing for employment and business with indigenous Kenyans as they think they might not fare well and would be unsuccessful in integrating in the labour market. One major reason cited by those interviewed as to why Southern Sudanese refugees were not actively searching for employment was lack of work permits as well as low levels of qualifications when compared to the host community. In terms of business, the interviewees indicated that they had not ventured into business, as they were afraid of police harassment and wanted to avoid extortion. Bol, a Southern Sudanese, explained the absence of Southern Sudanese refugee’s presence in the transport and hospitality sectors, “Southern Sudanese are a proud people there are certain jobs, like matatu business or waitressing that we cannot settle for. Years in war have made us militant and apprehensive; we want to keep peace while in Kenya.”

Though some studies deem that refugeehood can aggravate illicit activities due to unemployment or lack of remittances, in the case of Southern Sudanese refugees, strong family values and a close-knit society were cited as major factors for minimal delinquent behaviour, drug proliferation or street prostitution some refugee groups seem to indulge in as a strategy for generating income. However, the study did not fully explore this issue and as such, cannot determine whether certain groups of Southern Sudanese refugees’ are engaged in these activities.

Aside from competing for jobs while manoeuvring the system in Kenya, some Southern Sudanese refugees utilised there social connections to participate in employment are very calculative and assertive in gaining entry in the labour market in Kenya. There is a small

138 Karina Iban, interview by research, Nairobi, 25th July 2012 Lavington.
percentage of refugees who get employment through the assistance from government officials, especially for those who are connected to Kenya’s political elite. Refugees who relocated to Kenya in the 70s and 80s often disguised themselves as Ugandans refugees and easily integrated in the teaching and medical professions in Kenya as far back as in as the background skills and expertise of Ugandans was recognized in Kenya and as such, they were able to fulfil a gap in the Kenyan labour market. The low capacity of Southern Sudanese refugees to compete in Kenyan employment arena may be due to their low educational levels, a disadvantage that was validated in an open literary critic by the late Professor William Ochieng, when discussing Professor Taban Lo Liyong’s background. Professor William Ochieng who was a lecturer at the University of Nairobi, then commented on Lo Liyong’s tenure at the university in a rather derogatory manner, stating,

Taban unlike Okot p’ Bitek, is not engaging he claimed he was a Ugandan. Later it was established he was Sudanese. 

Taban Lo Liyong claimed that Kenya academicicians are not accommodative of others. According to Lo Liyong, even when refugees have been absorbed into the labour market and have achieved acceptable level of skill, they are often excluded. While the foreigner might have some level of attachment to the host country and were committed to improving for example the art and literature standards, they never got moral or academic support from their peers. Taban Lo Liyong’s narration on the experiences of professional South African and Ugandan refugees, as well as his own experience in Kenya, paints a picture of a hostile reception. A picture that is further reinforced by William Ochieng, a contemporary of Lo Liyong, Lo Liyong gives his hostile experience in Kenya and lack of appreciation of his labour participation. Professor Taban Lo Liyong did not dispute Professor William Ochieng’s assertion that he, Lo Liyong, was a Southern Sudanese refugee disguised as a Ugandan and his silence was telling.

While employment acquisition acts as an indicator of refugee attachment to the host country, access to employment is not always easy for refugees especially when they come from

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140 Taban Lo Liyong, “I'm Among the Top Five Essay Writers in the World, Yet I am Modest About It.” Retrieved from Nation Online: http://mobile.nation.co.ke/lifestyle/One-of-Africa-s-more--modest--writers/-/1950774/2127186/-/format/xhtml/item/0/-/15vdk3z/-/index.html
141 Moyaka Gekera Emeka and Julius Sigei, “Ngugi is a tribalist, Taban a con and Mazuru overrated,” Retrieved from Nation Online: http://www.nation.co.ke/lifestyle/weekend/Ngugi-is-a-tribalist-Taban-a-con-and-Mazrui-overrated/-/1220/2084944/-/kt2betz/-/index.html
disadvantaged backgrounds and have to compete in a more advanced host society. The Southern Sudanese refugees interviewed indicated lack of work permits as a major hindrance for their absorption into the labour market. In addition, perceptions that Southern Sudanese refugees would settle for low skilled jobs for example, domestic workers were invalidated, with most preferring to resort to self-employment as a strategy for generating income. For example, Alou, a Southern Sudanese who came to Kenya as a refugee and later married a Kenyan hence regularizing her status was able to establish a restaurant along Ngong road. She indicated that, “Given the difficulties refugees face in seeking employment I decided to start a restaurant get some income and manage myself.”

3.5 Conclusion
My field work study revealed that Southern Sudanese refugees participated in the labour market in Kenya. Aid and Humanitarian agencies sought their services and employed them. Southern Sudanese refugees with political connection also got employment with aid of government officials. Their participation in formal employment could be observed and measured giving relevance to Ager and strang employment indicator.

In comparison to the host Southern Sudanese refugee participation appeared minimal. This however is not the true representation. A new dimension emerged from the Southern Sudanese refugees’ employment research. Not all integration indicators can be observed some, some have to be explored. Southern Sudanese refugees indeed participated in the Kenya labour market. They however were invisibly. They veiled their identity through shadow partnership with the Kenyan citizens who acted as fronts in their joint business. Their economic participation was incognito, hidden from plain sight which gives a misleading indicator. Southern Sudanese refugee’s access to employment in Kenya was a seismic shift from Ager and Strang as it is veneer of ingenuity and has to be explored to serve as an indicator.

With this new insight it is difficult to understand the true representation of Southern Sudanese refugee who access employment to compare with the host. Understanding refugee integration with employment indicator is difficult in the Kenya context.

142 Alou Kuur restaurant proprietor, interview by research, Ngong road, Nairobi, July 28th 2012
CHAPTER FOUR
INTEGRATION THROUGH HOUSING AND HEALTHCARE

4.1 Significance of Housing and Health Care in Refugee Integration

Access to housing by refugees has been indicated as the most significant indicator of refugee integration. Most refugees indicate that finding secure housing is one of the most important needs they encounter as subsequently they can then pursue the other needs including employment, education and health care. However, given that refugees have limited financial resources and social capital upon arrival in host countries. Their search to housing are faced with a myriad of challenges as they are under constant scrutiny and are perceived as potential security to the host countries by some. Refugees can only be active members of society in the host country when they have means and opportunities to access housing and health care like the indigenous, among other material resources. According to Wayland, housing affords an individual status which greatly influences, social affiliations, localities promote a framework for day-to-day accomplishments. This shapes an individual’s disposition extensively in advance, before settlement. Phillimore and Goodson also hold the view that, shortage of secure accommodation impedes refugee involvement in academic fields, income earning activities. It affects general wellness and socialization.

Access to housing has been revealed as the dominant factor to refuges in studies carried out in the new migrants seeking to construct new lives in the UK in Birmingham area. Refugee integration does take a structural dimension, which involves participation of major institution of a society, such as employment in the labour market, access to education, healthcare and housing. This is facilitated if they have a roof over their head, for safety and general welfare. Ager and Strang have also suggested potential indicators of refugee integrations, as the proportional of refugee’s settlement in safe location, refugee leasing and residential occupancy size in comparison to the majority.

143 Ager and Strang, "Understanding Integration: 171.
146 Ibid.
According to Ager and Strang, refugees and local residents both value the continuity of relationships associated with being ‘settled’ in an area overtime. When refugees resettle in a host country, they move into a community with an existing set of institutions practice and procedures. Settlement is a two way process, both sides, the people arriving and the people receiving need to make adjustments. There is a great deal of learning to be achieved by both parties. In this sense, “Integration is a mutual dynamic multifaceted and on-going process. From a refugee perspective integration requires a preparedness to adapt to the lifestyle of the host society without having to lose one’s own cultural identity. From the point of view of the host society, it requires willingness for communities to be welcoming and responsive to refugees and for public institutions to meet the needs of a diverse population.”

Refugee access to housing is indeed of great significance, as it marks a new beginning and it connotes settlement. Housing and residential plans are pointers of integration and contribute in the progression of social integration as they have a direct effect on associations, locality strength and welfare of marginal community. Neighbours and neighbourhoods provide opportunities for refugee learning from established members of the community. Housing is also crucial in facilitating refugee integration process and social inclusion. Maslow explains that in the human hierarchy needs theory that an individual will seek to satisfy basic level needs before modifying behaviour to satisfy higher needs. According to Maslow’s model, the basic physiological needs to sustain life are food, clothing and shelter. Other needs provide little motivation unless the basic needs are met. Stability and security are essential to refugee in their resettlement quest.

In addition Health care access is a fundamental human right that transcends an individual’s political status or citizenship. The basic health needs of asylum seekers and refugees are broadly similar to those of the host population. The preamble of Human rights indicates that all people are “born free and equal in dignity and rights.” According to universal human rights, health services are a right to be accessed by everybody in a country. States are under

149 UN General Assembly, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” UN General Assembly (1948).
the obligation to respect the right to health by inter alia, providing equivalent privileges all.\textsuperscript{150}

Health care is a special security, which governments are, obligated to provide for the citizens and those it hosts. However, many refugees experience challenges in expressing their health needs or accessing health care as indicated in this study, in Europe and North America. Lack of finances resources and social exclusion from the mainstream has a great impact on their health care access. Refugee’s well-being and their right to health care, combined with, housing, employment and education are significant measures of “integration in host societies.”\textsuperscript{151}

Overall, neglected housing conditions are usually interrelated with prevalent range of health conditions, for example respiratory infections, asthma, injuries and mental health. Public health is always associated with housing and sanitation. Governments approach to the social integration, of refugees and provision of services of their health care, reflect social rights of minority ethnic groups and their involvements of citizenship in terms of a sense of belonging and national identity. Do governments view their ‘new citizens’ the refugees in equal rights and responsibility? Does it serve to reinforce their experiences of inclusion or exclusion?

The chapter provides other examples of refugee experiences based on these indicators of integration to demonstrate the different encounters by refugees on housing access. It shows the issue of access to housing and health care is problematic as an indicator of integration in Kenya as well as other parts of the world. These countries appear to facilitate access to housing for refugees based on laws of their country. An overview on how Canada and the United Kingdom have handled this issue, offers as an illustration to understand how Southern Sudanese refugees access healthcare and housing differs in Kenya. Refugees’ great effort in accessing housing and the locality of the housing provides explanation of their isolation and frustration. Refugees in UK experience were of great significant in this study, as it provided the base of Ager and Strang framework theory of integration. Other host countries have indicated the importance of refugee access to housing, in designating their integration. This


study challenges the relevance in its application in the circumstance of Southern Sudanese refugees housing experience?

4.1.1 Access to Housing by Refugees in Canada

Prior to 2002, Canada’s approach to refugee protection was based on specific and stringent vigilant principles. Refugees who got offers to resettle in Canada were deemed the ‘best and the brightest’ refugees demonstrating competitiveness and swift adjustment were preferred. Refugees were cross-examined, to determine perfect candidates to be resettled in Canada. Those who portrayed a higher potential of difficulty in adopting were considered poor candidates for Canadian assistance. Canadian policies, however, have since improved with the implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) in 2002. The focus on refugee selection is now based on refugee protection. Refugees are relieved from certain medical checks, though legislation demands them to express “ability to establish in Canada” Refugees singled for settlement are supported in their integration process.

Government assisted refugees, are provided with stay in reception houses or lodges, which are funded by the federal government, stay are regularized in reception houses, from a period of days up to a maximum of six weeks. These accommodations expedite refugee resettlement in Canada. The refugees are also eligible to medical and social assistance. Unlike refugee claimants, who are often on their own.

Sponsored refugees have access to housing assistance, in the search for residential premise. The housing assistance advocates on their behalf, provides recommendation and credibility. The system in Canada supports refugee adaption in the country. Not all refugees connect with the system other have to rely on social network for information on housing. With limited information on accessing housing, some refugees experience exploitation. In Canada, refugee determines their settlement and housing experiences.

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153 Ibid.
154 Ibid.
They experience low affordable housing in cities like Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. The shortage of affordable housing for refugees in Canada is similar to the Kenyan scenario where refugees and the citizens compete for residential housing. The government have not set a side housing for refugees. The demand for rental housing has led increase of overpriced rents charge by the landlords as they have full control on who they can lease their houses to.

It is evident that refugees face challenges in accessing housing in Canada, which is supported by Murdie’s research. Refugee face monetary challenge in housing access in Canada. One of Murdie’s interviewees avers, “The housing was available but the problem was how to meet the requirements of the house owner. That was a real problem, rent in advance, and any document to prove that you have a job.”\textsuperscript{155} The other problem was source of income and level of income, which were barriers that refugees face in their housing trajectory. Housing agents and landlord required credit history and documentation of employment from refugees to qualify for housing. Declining relative income of newcomer’s, impacts on housing choices and leads to concentration of low income to certain neighbourhood: “income and source of income were strong indicators of perceived personal and that denied access to housing market.”\textsuperscript{156} Refugees have to sacrifice other household’s requirements to pay rent lowering their quality of lives due to the high rental costs. Refugees arriving in the host country are gradually integrated into the class structure and struggle in social formation.\textsuperscript{157}

Other than the inherent problems associated with individual refugee’s inability to access housing, there are structural issues related to the host country that inhibit refugee access to housing. Refugees experience low-income security and high housing affordability problems. In Toronto, opportunities for housing vary widely. The lower revenue earners are denied prospects to lease, owing to the high rates and reservation period. Affordable accommodation alternative is in the deprived areas or depilated structures\textsuperscript{158} overcrowding or near homelessness is an aspect many refugees face. Sharing of housing is a strategy used to secure housing, which is not always comfortable as a refugee respondent gives insight: “Here it is very hard to get a house as your own, because we cannot get a job right away when we

\textsuperscript{155} Murdie, "The Housing Careers of Polish and Somali Newcomers in Toronto's Rental Market," 423-443.
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid.
moved here. Under the income, social assistance, we cannot get a good house. I cannot afford to pay the rent so then we have to share. It is very difficult to share with people in one place.”

Despite these different pathways to housing, both groups experience difficulties in finding permanent housing. A key requirement for housing access is employment, a criterion that many newcomers cannot fulfil. In the absence of employment, refugees are required to source for a guarantor to rent apartments on their behalf.

4.1.2 Access to Housing in the United Kingdom (UK)

Since the mid 1990’s, policies and legislation for refugee and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom have become restrictive, with refugees being accommodated in restricted centres, which excludes them from mainstream society making them more visible and vulnerable to discrimination and racism. The Asylum and Immigration (Appeals) Act 1993 removed the right of asylum seekers to secure housing tenancies, which means refugees are not entitled to housing and welfare benefits. Since 2000, National Asylum Support Service (NASS), are delegated to manage refugees a central body within the Home Office.

UK receives two categories of refugees, quota refugees who get allocated or dedicated support worker in liaison with UNHCR and spontaneous refugees who arrive without a structured process. Under the quota system, the UK government envisages that about 500 persons will relocate to the UK every year as part of the refugee gateway programme and the program is structured in a way that includes voluntary participation of local authorities in offering housing and other forms of support. Refugees who arrive in the UK under government sponsorship are provided with shared accommodation in London organized by the Home Office for two to three days before relocation to Sheffield that is planned before their arrival where they get temporary accommodation.

The UK refugee protection policy entails a dispersal policy that determines the geographical distribution of refugees across the country. The main aim of dispersal policy was to relive housing and social pressures in South East England where the majority of newly arrived

159 Ibid.
161 Hek, "The Experiences and Needs of Refugee and Asylum Seeking Children in the UK” 76.
immigrants spontaneously congregate. However, the dispersal policy restricts refugee freedom until their stay in the country is determined and thereafter they have rights to Council housing in designated areas. The dispersal policy restricts an asylum seekers freedom to choose where to settle. Temporary accommodation centres for refugees are located in Greater London and South East England. Upon arrival in the UK, refugees have limited rights, lack information and are financially constrained to negotiate for better housing. Consequently, they settle for the accommodation availed to them though over time, their rights change as they accumulate resources.

Once they receive notification that they have been granted leave to remain in the UK refugees, are permitted twenty eight days stay in NASS housing. They are encouraged to get City Councils housing, their accredited position provides them with prospects, delivered by the welfare state, such as social housing and related benefits. The new immigrant status makes most refugees homeless as it takes time to navigate their way around the system before being able to settle. Robinson’s, Keeves & Casey’s research demonstrate the challenges faced by refugee in accessing housing in the UK, with one Rwandan woman recalling the hardship she endured to get housing. With limited financial resources it is challenging for refugees to settle.

The UK’s dispersal policy has made the majority of refugees in the UK to feel excluded from the mainstream society, as they are often segregated and set up in socially deprived and remote areas, which exposes them to discrimination. This is supported by the sentiments of one of a refugee in Islington, who said, “You can feel you are settled in. But in a …you feel, they isolate you… They say, “You foreigners…Go home, again…they don’t say “hello”…not warm, not friendly.” Aside from promoting internal segregation with the dispersal policy, some refugees feel that the UK marginalizes refugees often perceiving them as an economic burden. This has resulted in enclaves of refugee groups assertively seeking to determine their own resettlement and taking a pragmatic response to establish their own in access to housing and support system. In addition, some refugees chose to move to areas where they have either

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family or establish a network support with other refugees to access education or health care but under the radar as it is against the UK’s refugee policy.

4.2 Access to Housing by Southern Sudanese Refugees in Kenya

Kenya shares borders with five nations, all of whom with the exception of Tanzania have experienced internal conflict, which has resulted in a constant flow of asylum seekers to Kenya. The porous borders compounds the issue of refugee control. Kenya is unable to implement stringent control movement across its borders, unlike Canada, Britain, Australia, etc., Kenya has no legislation that determines the number of refugees that the country can receive and host nor does she have a selection process on how can be received in the country or a criterion for selecting specific refugees as most European countries do.

While Kenya had an open and accommodating refugee policy until 1990, perceived internal insecurity and proliferation of arms related to refugee presence resulted in the policy being revised. In a bid to control refugee flow and insecurity, the government of the time issued a directive restricting refugees to reside in designated refugee camps, specifically Kakuma and Dadaab camps in Northern Kenya, a directive that is active to date. Based on the directive the majority of refugees who arrive in the country are hosted in the camps with the support of international humanitarian agencies. In instances where refugees choose to reside outside the camps the government and participating humanitarian agencies are required to endorse that the awareness of lack entitlement and no provision of material assistance from the UNHCR is acknowledged by the refugee and must as such be economically self-sufficient.165 Though UNHCR has the overall responsibility of determining refugee status, a role assigned to them by the Kenya government, a colossal number of refugees pursue refuge in Kenya, creating a considerable assignment on the agency, leading to delay of refugee crucial services. Consequently, refugees are often forced to wait between 6 and 24 months, for pronouncement reports on their position.166

There are several reasons indicated why the majority of Southern Sudanese refugees choose to reside in Kenya. The common reasons cited by the refugees include the need to acquire

education, access to health care, better security and housing. According to some of those interviewed, they preferred to reside in Nairobi despite the overcrowded accommodation they might have to live in. They claimed it was much better than the accommodation in the camps. Rebecca Aleu Macha stayed in Kakuma in Kenya before coming to Nairobi where she stayed with relatives in Zimmerman, a residential area in Nairobi. She was able to access a house and pay rent, “I settled in Zimmerman in Nairobi so that I could get access to education for my children. I get financial assistance from relatives abroad.”167

The majority of those residing in Nairobi came from Kakuma Refugee Camp, while others moved from Lokichogio to reside in Nairobi to seek for safety away from conflicts with the local Turkana hosts.168 Once in Nairobi, Southern Sudanese refugees often prefer to reside in areas where their kinsmen have settled. Interviews carried out for this study indicated that settling among relatives and fellow citizens gave them a sense of familiarity and alleviated feelings of insecurity among newly arrived refugees.169

Their social cohesion and solidarity was very evident in religious gatherings as was evident visibly in the Anglican Church of Saint Luke in Kenyatta market in Nairobi where I conducted interviews. The kinsmen who had resided in Kenya for long were a source of information for the newly arrived refugees, in terms of housing, accessing education and provided moral support to the newly arrived refugees. The network made it easier to transition and adapt to the challenges in urban life in Nairobi.

For example, Jok I one of the interviewees, stated that his motivation to reside in Nairobi was because his parents had come to Kenya through Uganda and settled in Nairobi as early in 1984. It was therefore easier for people like Jok to reside with their relatives who are legally residing in urban areas. “My parents had settled in Nairobi as earlier as 1984, hence it was easier to choose to reside in Nairobi as I had access to a house and close knit family and friends”170 Aside from kinsmen and family, other’s used their social networks including family friends to access housing as was the case of Peter Tor. Peter Tor said, “I lived with Dr

167 Rebecca Aleu Macha, interview by research, Nairobi, 15th July 2012.
168 K. Perry, “Helping our People”: The Role of Literacies in Mediating Community among Sudanese Refugees.” In V. Purcell-Gates (Chair), Cultural practices of literacy: Case studies of language, literacy, social practice, and power. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada. 2005.
169 South Sudanese Focused Group Discussion, interview by research, Kenyatta Market Nairobi, 24 July 2012.
170 David Jok, interview by research, Kenyatta Market Nairobi, 22nd July 2012.
Sally, my diplomat guardian, and it was easier once I completed my academic studies to get a rental house through Sally’s contact. I got a rental house in Alfa court in Jamhuri estate where my brothers from Kakuma reunited with me later. The present landlord has requested us to buy the house we are renting. 171

While others found it easy to live with kinsmen and family friends, others like Alier expressed their frustration staying with relatives in Nairobi. He indicated that the community had the financial resources they were reluctant for one to improve and become better than them. “I am attending school in Nairobi and I stay with my relatives, we are seven of us in a three bedroom house in Langata. It is overcrowded but at least I have a roof over my head and some food. It may be what I do not like, but for now, this is what I have. There is a saying among us the Dinka ethnic group; we support each other to be the same. We do not want someone to be behind or someone to be ahead. We want to be one. I do not expect more but thank my host for the assistance.”172

In other instances, some refugees especially for those who relocated to Kenya during the Moi regime, were able to access housing easily in Nairobi because of their political association with the political leadership. Amon, one of those interviewed, supports this point and confirms that,

Many Southern Sudanese settled in Kenya during the war. SPLM had a base in Kenya and there was a house in Kileleshwa from where we operated. The landlord was able to provide housing for most of SPLM families in Nairobi, it was easier for us as no documentation was needed all we had to do is pay yearly rent in advance. We were received well and the Kenyan government supported and welcome us in Kenya. 173

In terms of choosing a location, some of those interviewed stated that they selected housing location due to convenience. They chose to reside in areas near the schools where their children attended to cut transportation cost. Their children could return home for lunch or have their lunch delivered to them in school. Okot Mony noted,

I first stayed in Githurai and Kawangware and finally moved to Kibera Olympics. I choose to reside in Olympics estate as my two children attend Olympic primary

171 Peter Tor, interview by research, 6th July 2012 University of Nairobi Cafeteria, Nairobi.
172 Alier Akech, interview by research, Nairobi 22nd July 2012.
173 Amon Garang, interview by research, Nairobi, July 29th 2012 Lavington.
school. I get to walk them to school and sometimes wait for them at home when other children who leave in the same neighbour return with them. It is cheaper to live near their school as I save on transport cost.174

Aside from convenience, others were drawn to reside in the residential areas of South C, South B and Hurlingham areas of Nairobi based on security and safety reasons. The high number of refugee population in these areas has resulted in an upsurge in rental costs, which has seen the out flux of indigenous Kenyans to cheaper residential locations. Currently, the majority of tenants in these residential areas are foreigners or refugees from Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Congolese and Sudanese who afford the rent. Akot Mony a Southern Sudanese refugee narrates why he chose to settle in South C despite the high rent, “I was attacked in Uthiru where I was renting a house which was affordable. I lost property and I was forced to leave, as I felt insecure. I got a house in South B through house an agent, I paid three months’ rent and when it was time to move in, I could not get into the house as the keys I was given could not unlock the doors. I called the agent whose phone was switched off. I reported the matter to the police. They did not make an effort to arrest the agent who had conned me. My Southern Sudanese friends finally got me a house in South C where I reside.”175

For others, their choice of location is based on the opportunities for ownership and as such, they choose to reside in areas where they can own their own homes instead of renting. This is the case for the majority of Southern Sudanese refugees residing in Komarock area in Nairobi. Most of those interviewed said it was very easy to transition from renting to home ownership for some Southern Sudanese refugees. Many owned the homes they were residing in and ownership was not through mortgages but through diaspora remittances. Home ownership gave those interviewed a sense of belonging, permanency and some level of stability. For example, Tabitha one of those interviewed had lived in Kenya for over twenty years, “My husband thought it was better to invest in buying our own home here in Nairobi, so that the children can have a place to stay. It was easier for him as well as he had a place to

174 Akot Mony, interview by research, at I&M Building Nairobi, August 30th 2012.
175 Ibid.
as a base while visiting South Sudan from the UK. I am also not worried when I visit him in the UK while I leave my children in Nairobi; I know they are in a safe home.”

Though those interviewed had taken different pathways in accessing housing, frustration was expressed and a sense of exploitation by property owners when accessing housing in Nairobi by a respondent. She claimed that there was perception of Southern Sudanese’s refugees as rich or as having rich relatives who sent them huge remittances from abroad. In Komarock, one of Nairobi’s residential areas, house rents are high because of huge presence of Southern Sudanese refugees, which fuelled the frustration of the refugees. One of those interviewed said he felt a sense of exploitation, “when you go to the market and they look at you, the prices of commodities suddenly go high, while I was negotiating rent with my landlord I thought I had a fair rent charge till I learnt I was charged twice than my door next neighbour who is a Kenyan. They say because I am from South Sudan I have a lot of money.”

The upside in terms of housing according to those interviewed was that some property owners viewed them as better tenants than the Kenyans as they had a tendency to pay rent yearly or quarterly unlike Kenyan citizens who preferred to pay monthly rent. Consequently, based on one’s financial resources, a refugee could get preferential access to housing in comparison to Kenyans. This is the case in Eastleigh Estate, where many property owners in are happy to rent out their properties without a regular contract, as long as three months’ rent is paid in advance. Refugees who do not have legal documents often ask other refugees to sign the tenancy agreement on their behalf.

As Kenya has no resettlement policy for refugees, Southern Sudanese refugees have to look for their own housing and this has influenced their housing experiences. Inadequate information on housing access influences Southern Sudanese refugees initial housing experiences. Though housing is demand driven and rental prices are dependent on the location of the property as well as the characteristics of the property and the cleanliness of the neighbourhood, refugees are often charged exorbitant prices regardless of the location or state of the property. This exploitation is mainly due to the reluctance of refugees to come forward for support or redress due to fear of stigmatization, security or deportation back to

177 Akot Lulu, during Southern Sudanese refugee focused Group Discussion, interview by research, Kenyatta Market Nairobi, 22nd July 2012.
179 Ibid.
refugee camps. Despite their significant need for protection and other support mechanisms, the lack of social and legal support mechanisms makes refugees in Kenya a largely ‘invisible’ population and prone to exploitation especially in terms of housing. 180

4.3 Refugee Access to Health Care
As observed in the introduction access to health care is of great importance to refugees as it facilitates integration particularly when a household welfare is in good health, civic participation is easier and individuals are more productive. His section provides a brief background of refugee experiences with access to health care in Canada, the Netherlands, the UK and Australia to illustrate how elusive this indicator of integration is even in developed countries and analyses the experiences of Southern Sudanese refugees to determine whether access to health care is a determinant of integration in Kenya. The health status of migrants and their access to health care are key indicators alongside, housing, employment and education of ‘integration’ within receiving societies. 181

4.3.1 Refugee Access to Health Care in Canada
Health Care services in Canada, varies, for instance in Ontario, migrants contend with a three month period for health cover programme. 182 The legal restrictions in access to health care has resulted in the accumulation of health problems for refugees and refugees and immigrants are left to secure health insurance to cater for their health needs. Some refugees find alternative access to health care such as in clinic or emergency units. Despite the legal restrictions, Canada has designed essential health care plan for refugees. Essential and critical health services are covered by the Interim Federal Health (IFH) program for emergency and essential coverage during waiting check period. 183 IFH originated in 1957 to medical cover refugees with financial constraint for indispensable and unpredictable healthcare. Which the public or private health insurance plans do not cover. While the strategy has improved refugee access to health care in emergency cases, refugees do encounter obstacles in getting basic health care. Medical practitioner do not accept the IFH program given the intensive reconciliation and have hence not appreciated the program. 184 This is supported by Baukie et

180 Ibid.
181 Jayaweera, “Health and Access to Health Care of Migrants in the UK.” 1
184 Ibid.
al, who draws attention to lack of preferences of attendance by refugees, who often are ignored and not attended to past working hours.”

Most family general practitioners are reluctant to receive IFH coverage therefore the refugee’s alternative is to seek treatment from emergency rooms for non-urgent conditions. In other circumstances medical doctors ask refugee patients for payments as IFH program is slow in compensation. Refugees’ access to health care in Canada is hindered by the stringent policies of IFH program, which creates obstacles for payments of services to medical specialists. Some clinicians provide care to these families discreetly at the margins of their institutions, in order to protect their patients.

The three-month delay for health insurance coverage increases health risks for refugees as they wait to seek Health Care, which increases their risks. Worse still some health institutions posted signs in their waiting rooms and emergencies, advising people that uninsured clients will have to pay for services received, thus actively discouraging health-seeking behaviour among vulnerable populations, especially the refugees. Overall, refugees and undocumented immigrants have problems accessing health care in Canada and feel alienated, as they do not get equal access like the Canadian citizens.

### 4.3.2 Refugee Access to Health Care in Australia

In Australia, health policy for humanitarian entrants is taken into account before the arrival of asylum seekers. Refugee applicants selected under the offshore resettlement program must satisfy the community health requirements specified in the Australian Migration Regulations. The Health requirement is set by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) with recommendation from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing intended to reduce communal threat to the Australian community, control community spending on healthcare open amenities, and preserve admission to health and other services for Australian residents. Refugees undergo a medical assessment, which involves a medical examination, a radiological examination to test for Tuberculosis (though children under 11 are exempt), and HIV/AIDS testing (for all applicants aged 15 and above).

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185 Miedema, Hamilton, and Easley, "Climbing the Walls” 335-336.
For some applicants screening for Hepatitis B is mandatory, while The Medical Office of the Commonwealth (MOC) may request additional tests.\textsuperscript{187}

The medical office of the Commonwealth ultimately validates the outcome of refugee medical examination. MOC report determine whether a refugee qualifies on their visa application. The stringent regulations and medical assessments have been deemed by refugees as dehumanising, an issue that one refugee doctor agrees with based on his experience in an Australian detention centre. The doctor states the experience of a refugee is of confinement that result is in accumulation of anxiety and apprehensions due environment situation which is not healthy mentally.\textsuperscript{188}

Australian government embark on detailed medical test on refugees and asylum seekers as a strategy to deter the number of asylum seekers and prevent its citizens from contacting diseases from the refugees.

\subsection{4.3.3 Refugee Access to Health Care in the United Kingdom}

The United Kingdom Health care service is predominantly state financed under the National Health Services. The Health care focus in Britain is intended to shield the populace from transmissible diseases and not refugees.\textsuperscript{189} In principle, the refugees in UK are obligatory to be law abiding.\textsuperscript{190} Refugees are screened for TB which marks then out, as it suggest that refugees have contagious disease and are likely to spread infection.\textsuperscript{191}

The UK government selectively prohibits access to health care service to refugees who have not submitted appeals to stay. Persons without appeal for asylum or those whose request have been rejected are disqualified for NHS treatment or services, concession however is allowed on emergency situation, management of sexually contracted infections (with omission of HIV) and any disorders that may impend communal well-being.\textsuperscript{192} Once status is confirmed

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{187}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{188}\textit{Ibid}
\textsuperscript{191}\textit{Ibid.}
\end{flushleft}
refugees have p to a range of medical benefits. The UK government successfully appealed against a high court ruling that granted equal access to NHS services, based on need, for all residents in the UK. The political leaders argued that Medical care should primarily be accessible to the citizens.

Refugee settlement in the UK is clustered in location where the system orders. Location set up for refugees are deprived, housing are abundant due to real estate failure, in addition the areas have minimal income opportunities. The concentration of refugees in underserved areas means most refugees and asylum seekers are unable to use their skills, which fosters a culture of dependence and entrenches poverty. Consequently, as the refugees experience low incomes due to poor access to jobs, which affects their ability to access health care and this, contributes further to their impoverishment. In some instances, refugees are unable to fully utilize the available health services either due to lack of income or knowledge. For example, there are refugees in the UK who are were not aware of the availability of emergency appointments health services due to language, cultural or financial barriers, while some have been turned away from the surgeries of general practitioners due to language difficulties. With their limited incomes, most refugees cannot afford private health care and often choose to avoid seeking medical care to avoid disappointment.

The challenges faced by refugees when accessing health care in the UK has aggravated their health problems and increases poor health outcomes among refugees and this initiates a vicious circle of poverty and ill health. The limited access to health care negatively affects refugee livelihood opportunities and increases the possibility of income loss making refugees vulnerable to catastrophic illness. The negative experiences most refugees undergo when trying to access health care has made refugees in the UK to feel disconnected from the host society.

193 Jones and Gill, "Refugees and Primary Care," 1444-1446.
194 Ibid.
4.4 Southern Sudanese Access to Health Care in Kenya

Since independence, Kenya health sector has been predominantly a tax funded health care system, though there have been a series of health financing policy changes. Currently, the government, non-government organization, religious organization and private care institutions provide health care to different social groups in Kenya depending on the financial capacity. Health care insurance financing in Kenya is through two categories, private health insurance offered by private insurance companies and public, which is offered under the National Hospital Insurance Fund, a public insurance initiative that targets individuals who are in formal employment with a monthly premium to cover inpatient health care costs in select hospitals.

While both schemes are supposed to lighten the burden of the high health costs for members and their dependants, this is not often the case as health insurance is often out of reach for most citizens unless they are employed or have the financial to cater for the premiums. The high premiums charged by private health insurance companies as well as the strict criteria employed by the public National Health Insurance Fund is a major impediment to acquire valuable and above reasonable health services. Kenyan citizens as well as refugees though some refugees are able to purchase health insurance for their family members.

Consequently, access to health care in Kenya is dependent on income, there exists a robust relationship between health services utilization and income. This interdependence affects household health outcomes as most households have to rely on their incomes to finance their health care needs and where households have minimal income their health outcomes are negatively affected and vice versa.

Access to health care for Southern Sudanese refugees is dependent on their financial capabilities. Though most urban refugees have indicated to the UNHCR that they are economically self–sufficient are as such do not require humanitarian assistance including

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health care, the prohibitive high cost of health services in urban areas, especially Nairobi, results in most refugees not seeking health care or using alternative health care options. Their choice of health care is based on affordability, which refugees have an issue explained by one refugee interviewed for this research, “Like other foreigners most refugees pay double what Kenya citizens are charged for medical treatment in hospitals.” In addition to affordability, refugees weighted health care based on the availability of resources, which means seeking medical care is often the last option depending on the severity of the ailment. Southern Sudanese refugee’s students in an institution with a medical facility indicated they sought health care from the medical centre at the institution. One student opined, “I am able to get medical services at my colleague clinic at Nairobi University. So far, I am fortunate, as I have not been unwell to seek any medical need.”

Communication was a hindrance in accessing health care by Southern Sudanese refugees in Nairobi. They are unable to express their condition to the health personnel due to inadequate interpretation exposing them to misdiagnosis, poor treatment or total abandonment of medical services. Akol, a Southern Sudanese refugee, narrates his experience, “I went to seek health care services at a health facility in Westlands. The doctor was impatient with me as he took a long time to make him understand what was ailing me.”

Southern Sudanese refugees also expressed apprehension of administration, ill-disposed medical personal as well as inferior medic-care facilities, as elucidations of avoiding government medical services. Their choice to visit health facilities was informed by recommendations of their kin and friends. Most Southern Sudanese refugees chose to get medical services at private clinics or mission hospitals because of the close attention they received there. Rebecca Macha observed that: “When my children fell sick, I sought medical services at Kijabe mission hospital as advised by my friends. They get treatment there and say they are received warmly.”

The challenges experienced by Southern Sudanese refugees when seeking medical from private or government health care facilities has forced most refugees to seek alternatives.

201 David Bor, interview by research Ngumo Nairobi, 15th July 2012
202 Benny Thon, university student, interview by research, Nairobi, 15th July 2012.
203 Akol Machar, interview by research, Nairobi, 15th July 2012.
204 Rebecca Aleu Macha, interview by research, Ngumo, Nairobi, 15th July 2012.
Some chose to seek treatment and medications from pharmacies, which seems to be an easier alternative as over the counter medication is not tightly regulated in Kenya. This was supported by Rebecca, who narrated how she accessed health care for herself and family, “I go to the pharmacy to get my family planning tablets and cough medication whenever my children get sick. It is cheaper than the clinics and one gets prompt service.”

In other instances, Southern Sudanese refugees like a good percentage of Kenyans access medical care from free medical camps, these could either be mobile health clinics or health centres managed by humanitarian and development agencies, such as Medicin Sans Frontiers and Care International, etc. Athul one of the respondents indicated that she frequents these mobile clinics, “I have been able to seek medical service by attending the medical camps at Kawangare and I was able to get reading glasses to correct my poor eye sight.”

Another alternative for the refugees is traditional medical care, which a number of refugees have chosen given the acceptance of this type of health care by a high percentage of Kenya’s population including urban dwellers and the educated elite. In addition, most of the refugees were used to traditional medicine in their home country and as such, felt comfortable using traditional healers. In Nairobi as in most other urban areas in Kenya, the quest to provide health care for all has overburdened the government health system and resulted in the emergence of traditional health clinics, which Kenyans citizens adopted alongside with conventional medical care. The use of traditional medicine is popular due to its accessibility and affordability. Traditional medicine is sometimes also the one affordable source of health care especially for the poor. Some South Sudanese refugees who are familiar with herbal medicine seek out traditional medicine services. Rebecca, a Southern Sudanese refugee indicates she gets herbal medication for her family. She narrated during this study, “I usually get my children skin remedy medicine at the traditional herbal clinic in Kibera as it is effective and affordable.”

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205 Ibid.
206 Ibid.
208 Rebecca Aleu Macha, interview by research, Ngumo Nairobi 15 July 2012.
4.5 Conclusion
Access to housing and health care in Kenya is dependent on an individual’s financial resources. Those with disposal incomes, whether refugees or indigenous, Kenyans, can access accommodation or health care on condition of their financial resource. The Southern Sudanese refugees with inadequate funds like the majority of the Kenyan population experience challenge in getting quality health care and housing. Housing and Health Care access as indicators of integration somewhat finds relevance in Kenya, though with a fragmented percentage, those with disposable income. In addition, it is evident that Kenya’s lack of refugee selection criteria and control of refugees, has given rise to overstretching, an already overwhelmed health sector. It becomes difficult to compare an organized refugee handling system for example Canada and UK with Kenya. Kenya is disadvantage as the burden of handling refugees is disproportionate. The government does not participate in ensuring that Southern Sudanese refugees access housing.

In terms of housing, some Southern Sudanese refugees have experienced exploitation by property owners due to poor regulation of tenancy in Kenya. The misconception that Southern Sudanese refugees’ have extensive financial resources has further exacerbated their exploitation as well as the inflation of housing rents.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusion
This research project determined whether the indicators of integration proposed by Ager and Strang are applicable in determining the integration of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya. The motivation of Southern Sudanese refugees to reside in Kenya was also taken into consideration as it affects and influences the integration process. Results of the research indicate that some Southern Sudanese refugees select to settle and remain in Kenya due to its proximity to South Sudan, while some settled in Kenya by chance, as they did not deliberately set out to reside in Kenya but found themselves in the country after fleeing from violence in South Sudan. In addition, others established their stay in Kenya after being rejected as asylum seekers by various Western countries.

The integration of these diverse groups varies, with some Southern Sudanese refugees resigning to reside and pursue their livelihood in Kenya after attempts to resettle in Europe. While some who were denied entry in to Western countries continue to harbour hope of leaving Africa for the developed world. The latter are using their time and stay in Kenya to improve their skills through the acquisition of education to better their chances of settling in Europe and North America. This group is of the opinion that the acquisition of education will improve their chances of being accepted as asylum seekers in Europe and North America. Additionally, the study found that access to Kenyan education is in its own a great motivator for some of the refugees, while the large presence of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya also encouraged and influenced the settlement of more Southern Sudanese refugees.

In addition to accessing education, for some refugees the motivation to reside in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi was because of the cosmopolitan environment. This was based on the possibilities that such an environment provided refugees, investment opportunities as well as access to specialised health care. For example, one refugee with special health needs interviewed during the research stated,

You can see I am on a wheel chair, a person with special needs like me cannot be accepted as a refugee in Europe. I will be a burden to their country. Here in Nairobi I
am able to access health care, though expensive, I feel very much at home and no one makes me feel that I am unwanted.209

Most of those interviewed, felt that Southern Sudanese refugees with special needs might not be easily be accepted in the West, as they would be considered a liability to their host country. Consequently, Kenya would be a better country for such people to settle as they can access health care without discrimination

While Ager and Strang assert that access to education, health and housing by refugees are determinants of integration, the acquisition of education, and language as well as access to employment, housing or health care did not indicate integration of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya. These aspects only motivated the settlement of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya. For example, the acquisition of English language and education in Kenya did not necessary indicate integration of the refugees into the Kenyan community. Some Southern Sudanese refugees’ acquisition of English language and education was a symbol of defiance to years of marginalization and more so imposition of the Arab language in the education system as well as across public and social spaces by the North after the departure of British colonial administration in 1955.

The essence, of English and Swahili language acquisition, were seen as necessary for engaging with host communities in terms of economic participation and social cohesion, though the majority of refugees did not deem acquisition of indigenous languages as a priority nor necessary for civic participation in Kenya. Those who made efforts to learn indigenous languages did so in order to build a rapport with local host communities and enhance their sense of belonging. In addition, most of those who did so chose to learn languages that had close affinity to their own indigenous languages, such as Luo, Turkana or Kalenjin.

In the housing sphere, both the host community and the Southern Sudanese refugees themselves did not perceive acquisition of housing by Southern Sudanese refugees as an indication of permanence or integration in Kenya. For the majority of the refugees the acquisition of housing in Nairobi, Kenya was for social and economic reasons. Economically,

209 David Bor, interview by research, Nairobi, 15th July 2012.
those with the capacity acquired houses as an investment for their future by purchasing homes or apartments, while the majority chose to live in rental houses. These insights demonstrate that the refugee integration indicators proposed by Ager and Strang are not universal and that while an indicator is imperative in demonstrating integration in the United Kingdom or Australia it is not necessarily an indicator of integration in the Kenyan context.

In terms of economic integration, Southern Sudanese refugees seem to not actively participate in economic activities unlike Somali and Ethiopian refugees in Kenya who visibly participate in the Kenyan labour market, for example in the ‘matatu’ and goods retail industry. While they might not be visibly seen to participate in the economy, the research revealed that Southern Sudanese refugees’ participation in the Kenyan labour market and economy is low key, with the refugees often veiling their participation by having Kenyan citizens front for them in businesses or disguising their identity by either posing as Ugandans or Kenyans. The veiling of their identity hinders quantification of Southern Sudanese refugee’s participation in the labour market. On the surface one can easily rule out the participation of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya’s economic development, however, it is clear they are engaged in economic activities through business investments as well as property acquisition and some are gainfully employed.

Due to the difference in flow of refugees and the numbers of refugees hosted in the country, the indicators of integration as proposed by Ager and Strang do not fully apply to the situation of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya. The framework proposed by Ager and Strang is most viable in countries where policies on refugees and migrant absorption are well articulated, as is the case in Europe. Entry of refugees to Europe is controlled by strict visa rules as well as border controls and carrier regulations where airlines must ensure clearance of passengers before landing consequently excluding access to their territories by non-vetted visitors including refugees. It can be accurately assumed that qualified refugees are encouraged in Europe as they meet the set requirements established by these states, meaning they can ‘integrate quickly’, that is they can easily transition and adjust to life in these countries without being a burden to the taxpayers.

This is in contrast to Kenya’s situation as Kenya has minimal control on refugee influx given its porous borders and geographic proximity to a number of countries that have experienced or are experiencing conflict. This state of affairs has resulted in Kenya receiving large
numbers of undocumented refugees. The absence of established regulations on refugee support and the continuous stream of refugees from neighbouring countries have contributed to Kenya’s inability to prioritize and facilitate the integration of refugees. In addition, Kenya has never calculated the costs related with hosting refugees (health care, education, housing, etc.) nor does the government set aside a budget for refugee resettlement. The core costs for hosting refugees are mainly borne by external aid agencies, with the Kenya government providing space for refugee camps. It is apparent that Kenya’s support and treatment of refugees is mainly influenced by traditional African values of compassion towards visitors.

Given the difference in the numbers of refugees hosted in Kenya in comparison to the number of refugees hosted by developed nations, it is challenging to utilize the integration indicators proposed by Ager and Strang to determine integration of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya, as the indicators are mainly dependent on individual states laws. For example, the dispersal policy in the United Kingdom relegates refugees to northern England in areas where there is available housing, which can easily be construed to mean that refugees in the United Kingdom have access to housing. The reality, however, reveals that this shared accommodation in marginal areas, which visibly exposes refugees in the communities singling them, appears discriminative. The control of refugees provides the Western countries an opportunity to manage, receive refugees and put structural policies for refugee integration ranging from the highly centralized state-sponsored programmes in Canada to minimal social assistance in Australia.

Based on the integration criteria advocated by Ager and Strang, it is evident from the research that Southern Sudanese refugees in are relatively integrated and enjoy to a certain level the same rights as their hosts. The majority have access to education, housing, health care and have acquired the major languages necessary for their engagement with host communities as well as participate in economic and social spaces. However according to the Southern Sudanese refugee’s perspective, access to education, housing and health care does not demonstrate integration, is an investment. Those who are well off economically tend to find it much easier to access housing and health care as well as quality education and can easily establish businesses or partner with locals as investment partners.

Overall, the study found the integration of refugees from Southern Sudan in Kenya is voluntary and self-driven. Based on the research, it was evident that Southern Sudanese
refugees strive to be like their Kenyan counterparts, by learning the local languages, acquiring education and aspiring for self-improvement with the hope for returning to Sudan to participate in rebuilding their economy or alternatively relocating to Western countries. While it is commendable that Southern Sudanese refugees chose to self-integrate. My finding in this research indicate refugee integration in the Kenyan context, is co-existence with acceptance of diversity. The refugees feel recognized when their differences are recognized and tolerated. The respect of their independence make they feel belonging hence integration is achieved.

5.2 Recommendation
Kenya government needs to prioritize the development of procedures and regulations that will facilitate the seamless settlement and integration of refugees as what most Western countries have done. This is critical in ensuring the country is able to cater for refugees. One case in point that Kenya can learn from is the European Union. The EU regards integration as top strategic priority member countries have developed integration frameworks based on the Hague Programme. Kenya like the rest of the world needs to develop practices and procedures that facilitate refugees to settle easily and integrate within their perspective. More local studies on refugees needs to be done to give fresh insights and further illuminate the concept of integration.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello, I am Lilian Atieno Abongo a student at the University of Nairobi, pursuing a master’s degree in the Department of History. In fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Master’s degree, I am required to undertake a research project on a topic of my choice. I have chosen to explore the integration of Southern Sudanese refugees in Kenya.

To enable me determine whether Southern Sudanese refugees are integrating into the society and document a report that will be informative for both policy makers and academics, I would appreciate it if you could take time to answer a number of questions. Please note that any information provided will be held confidentially and will only be used for the purpose of this research project.

Thank you

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1. Name of respondent

2. **GENDER**
   - MALE
   - FEMALE

3. **AGE**

4. Place/area of residence:

5. **LEVEL OF EDUCATION**
   - No Formal Schooling
   - Primary (Completed Primary Education)
   - Secondary (Completed Secondary Education)
   - Tertiary (Certificate Level)
   - Tertiary (Diploma Level)
   - University Degree
6. Which religion do you practice?

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<td>Christian</td>
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<td>Muslim</td>
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<td>Animist</td>
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7. Which national and local languages do you speak?

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<tr>
<td>English</td>
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<td>Kalenjin</td>
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<td>Other (specify)</td>
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8. Has the knowledge of English and Swahili facilitated your transition in Kenya? Please explain.

9. If you speak indigenous languages, has the knowledge of these indigenous languages enhanced your interaction with local communities?

10. Has knowledge of English, Swahili or local indigenous languages given you a sense of belonging to Kenya?

11. Are you treated differently because of your knowledge of English, Swahili and/or local indigenous languages?
12. Are you a member of any social group?

13. How has membership in social groups or networks affected your transition in Kenya?

14. How long have you resided in Nairobi?

15. What motivated you to reside in Nairobi?

16. How did you access housing/accommodation?

17. Was it easy to access housing?

18. Do you have access to health care services?

19. Is it easy to access health care services?

20. Are you currently pursuing education?

21. If you are a parent, are your children currently pursuing education?

22. Is it easy accessing education? Please explain.

23. What hinders you from integrating fully in Kenya?
24. In your opinion, are the Kenyan people welcoming?

25. Do they make you feel part of the community?

26. What should be done to assist aliens/refugees to settle in Kenya?

27. What has been your experience in settling in Kenya?

28. How do you gain your livelihood?

29. Are you currently gainfully employed? If so, what was your experience when looking for employment?

30. If you are not employed, are you engaged in formal/informal business?

24. Does this make you feel a sense of belonging?

25. Would you like to take up Kenyan Citizenship?

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