

# **Survival Strategies among Urban Refugees in Nairobi**

**By**

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REG. No.

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## Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university

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This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors

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11/07/2006

APRIL 2006

## **Dedication**

This study is dedicated to my dear wife, Christine, my daughter Salome and my son Mureithi for their patience and time they allowed me to conduct this study.

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## Abstract

The primary focus of this study was to investigate the survival strategies among urban refugees in Nairobi focusing on health, shelter and food. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The researcher administered 124 questionnaire-interviews, conducted key-informant interviews with UNHCR, GTZ, JRS, RCK and the Ministry of Immigration. Review of documents was also done. Data were analysed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results were presented in tables of frequency distribution, percentages, pie-charts and graphs. The study found that there has been a meteoric rise in the population of urban refugees since 1990.

Access and affordability of basic needs (food, health and shelter) are a survival for the fittest issue. This comes into the front when about half of the urban refugees (47.5%) have no income at all, yet like any other individuals they are expected to pay rent, buy food and pay for medical expenses.

By investigating the problems urban refugees face in shelter, the study found that 75.8% lives in one-roomed houses and 33.8% share the one-roomed houses with more than three people. Urban refugees pay much higher rent and are often required to put many months deposit compared to local people, yet 47.5% have no monthly income at all. Their survival strategies include begging, prostitution, dependants of transnational relatives and friends, hawking among many others. Many of these strategies are morally not acceptable by many societies; they are actually illegal and city authorities keep on harassing them as 34.6% reported as having been harassed by authorities. Housing is the most challenging basic need in relation to health and food.

An interesting observation is that majority of urban refugees (37.4% of male and 29.8% of female) have never been to refugee camps, while government policy is clear that refugees are only allowed out of the camps for special purposes with special permission. It means UNHCR and the government has not been able to implement this directive. Access and affordability of food is not a big challenge to urban refugees. This could be so because the local community and privileged refugees could be sharing the little they have. They could also be skipping meals, although this was not captured as a survival strategy. However most of them indicated

that they depend on begging, transactional friends, casual labour among others as sources of their income.

## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1: Questionnaire-Interview Guide for Urban Refugees**

**Appendix 2: Key-Informant Interview Guide**

**Appendix 3: Refugee Camps traced on the Kenya Map**

## List of Abbreviation and Acronyms

<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>AMREF</b>	African Medical Research Foundation
<b>AREP</b>	African Refugee Education Program
<b>ARP</b>	African Refugee Program
<b>ARTES</b>	African Refugee Training and Employment Services
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization for United Nations
<b>GTZ</b>	German Technical Cooperation
<b>ID</b>	Identity Document
<b>JRS</b>	Jesuit Refugee Services
<b>NARAP</b>	Nairobi Archdiocese Refugee Assistance Programme
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NHIF</b>	National Hospital Insurance Fund
<b>NSSF</b>	National Social Security Fund
<b>PIN</b>	Personal Identification Number
<b>RCK</b>	Refugee Consortium of Kenya
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Program for Social Sciences
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Problem

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), resettlement handbook defines a refugee as any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion (UNHCR, 1997).

Based on this definition, a refugee is forced to flee his habitual place of residence and seek refuge elsewhere. This may be caused by natural disasters such as drought; flood, earthquake or man-made disasters such as civil wars, religious persecution/sacrifices, cultural or racial antagonism and armed conflict among others. Since 1990, Kenya has seen a large number of persons cross her borders as refugees. It is estimated there are about 60,000 to 100,000 urban refugees countrywide (Ndege and Kagwanja 2002). This has been largely because of instability in countries across her borders and within her neighbours – Somali lost her government to warlords in 1990s, Ethiopia has been in border wars with Eritrea for over a decade, Sudan signed a peace deal in Kenya recently after a protracted war between the north and south of the country. Further, Congo, Rwanda, Burundi had their wars. All this has seen Kenya hosting people as defined above by UNHCR. Refugees come to Kenya hoping to find a place of safety.

While a country like South Africa has a policy that allows refugees to live in the urban and rural areas, the government of Kenya has a policy requiring refugees to live in refugee designated camps usually in the northern border. All refugees are supposed to be in this camp and can only travel out of the camp with special

permission. Today, the presence of large number of refugees in Nairobi is causing a great concern since they can't all be in Nairobi with this "special permission". No agency can claim to have figures on the number of refugees living in Nairobi today. City planners must incorporate them in their socio-economic plans. At the same time, security and welfare of local communities have to be protected and must come ahead of refugee's interests. But at the same time, the government has a responsibility to provide basic facilities such as shelter, food and health to all Kenyans and refugees.

Kenya's involvement in the refugees' issues goes back to 1969, when Kenya received about 1000 Sudanese fleeing civil war in their country. Kenya asked international and local agencies to intervene leading to opening of UNHCR branch office in Kenya. Since then Kenya has seen an influx of refugees mainly due to her relative politico-economic stability and the geo-political position of the country. New phenomenon of increment of urban refugees has been noted particularly in Nairobi. Pertinent questions can be asked as to how they earn their living and how the government is supposed to deal with this emerging problem. Provision of basic needs such as health, food and shelter not only to the local communities, but also to an enlarging community of refugees in Nairobi and other urban areas is indeed a major challenge to the government.

It is highly questionable how refugees can survive in a cosmopolitan city like Nairobi without any legitimate sources of income. The income of whatever informal activities they engage in goes into purchase of food, payment of rents and medical services as a priority. But is this income able to meet their total basic needs? This is a concern because most urban refugees are illegally in the urban areas where the government does not recognise their existence and the activities they are involved in. Their increase and existence in urban areas pose a major security concern and the government in collaboration with UNHCR and her implementing agencies need to take adequate mitigation measures to ensure safety and protection of both the locals and the urban refugees.



The issue of urban refugees can be looked into as a disaster. It can be classified into three distinct cycles just like natural disasters: pre-flight (prevention), during flight (protection) and post flight (solution). Like natural disasters there is need for mitigation, prevention, protection, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Kenya has a policy requiring all the refugees to be based in Kakuma and Daadab camps in the Northern Province. Refugees in urban areas are thus viewed as “illegal” having fled the camps or having been rejected by UNHCR by not meeting the set mandate criteria. Only refugees with special permission for specific purposes like medical or scholarship/sponsorship for education are supposed to be in <sup>the</sup> urban area. Therefore many of the urban refugees lack proper or valid identification documents necessary to verify their status. In urban areas they are in dire need of food, medical and accommodation (Refugee Insight, 2002).

It is a reality that refugees have exploited the loopholes within government policy and laxity in administration within designated camps to seek residence in Nairobi and other urban areas. Many Nairobi estates today host refugee families who co-exist with non-refugees with or without conflicts over basic needs such as food, housing and health amenities. Of critical concern is the continuous influx of non-Kenyans into estates like Eastleigh, Komarock, South C/B, Uthiru, Kilimani and into the Central Business District like along Mama Ngina and Standard streets.

While Kenyans have legal rights such as engaging in businesses or employment in their struggle to meet basic needs like food, health and shelter, urban refugees have no legal channels available for them as they are supposed to be in the camps. This means their existence in the cities is compounded by survival for the fittest strategies. With no support system, they are left to find their way in new environments and are soon caught up in the intricacies of survival. An angry host community may target refugees for any social disorder. The presence of urban refugees has created legitimate problems for the country and especially in the communities where they

come to live. This is especially in the sharing of resources. On May 30, 2002 one thousand foreigners were arrested following a major swoop on illegal immigrants at Nairobi Eastleigh estate (Refugee Insight, 2002).

Access to proper housing has been a major challenge to many Kenyans not to mention urban refugees. Many live in squalid housing conditions, in appalling, overcrowded conditions, in conflict with their Kenyan landlords. Unlike non-refugees, who can sign lease agreements, urban refugees obviously cannot sign lease agreement and cannot take landlords to housing tribunals. Only a small portion of recognized refugees awaiting resettlement are accorded shelter, food and medical services by UNHCR through her implementing agencies such as GTZ. This is for a short period before repatriation or relocation exercise is completed (Human Right Watch, 2004). It would be interesting to understand what strategies thousands of urban refugees use to access housing because affording rent has always been a big problem to many Kenyans who have businesses or in employment. How do urban refugees afford rent? What are the coping strategies in living in appalling, squalid and overcrowding conditions with no law to safeguard for any conflict?

In urban areas, medical care may play a particularly critical role in survival. Good health ensures individuals optimal contribution to productive activities. Refugees and immigrants arrive in urban centers in all forms. There are unaccompanied minors, the aged, the disabled, and women. Many refugees in urban areas may be vulnerable to health risks because of where they live and what they eat. Given the cramped conditions under which urban refugees often live, frequently without clear water or proper sewerage, and coupled by poor nutrition, access to health care is a critical health issue to thousands of refugees in Nairobi. It is obvious that they are vulnerable to preventable ailments like cholera, typhoid, and malaria. For legal reasons, they have no access to public health-care facilities, yet they have no income to access private hospitals and clinics. There are also issues of trauma or the psychological stresses associated with new environment and long distances the refugees have come from. For rural Kenyan immigrants into the urban centres, they seek help from

relatives and have already had established social networks to oversee these obstacles. How do urban refugees manage to maintain healthy lifestyles?

In urban areas, employment is one major source of livelihood for most people. It is against government policy to employ or even issue work permits to foreigners in positions where a Kenyan can work. What do urban refugees feed on when they don't have an income? Sometimes they engage in casual labour, but the pay for casual labour is very low. To survive on income from casual labour means contending with violence, poor transportation, infrastructure and living in crowded slums. In cases where individual urban refugees are qualified and interested in engaging in temporary employment, many employers may not recognize refugee's identity documents as legitimate or accept them as providing the holder with the right to work. The law does not even allow. It would be interesting to investigate how thousands of refugees in Nairobi survive in regard to provision of food and their nutritional value.

Urban refugees are likely to contend with daily conflicts between themselves and local communities. Because basic needs (food, health shelter) are limited and shared among refugees who have no legal rights and Kenyans who have legal rights but limited opportunities. Co-existence therefore is likely to be characterized by conflicts. To Kenyans, there are established channels such as police, provincial administration, and also the judiciary. At the very local levels, there are local leaders respected in conflict resolution. There are likely to be informal conflict resolution systems and structures among refugees and local communities. To investigate the daily life of an urban refugee would help this study understand the conflict resolution mechanisms among refugee communities and also between them and local communities, especially in search of basic needs.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The major research questions of this study are:

- a). First to find out how and why refugees drift to the city or refuse to live in designated camps;
- b). Second to investigate the daily lifestyle of an urban refugee in search of food, health and shelter taking into consideration the coping mechanisms of the elderly, minors, women and disabled;
- c). Lastly, to investigate the conflict resolution mechanisms among the refugee community and also between them and the local communities around them.

### **1.4 Objectives of this Study**

The primary focus of this study is to investigate the survival strategies among urban refugees in Nairobi focusing on health, shelter and food. Accordingly, the objectives of this investigation are:

- 1). To investigate the problems urban refugees face in search of shelter;
- 2). To examine the special coping mechanisms urban refugees employ in search of food;
- 3). To investigate pertinent medicare issues urban refugees face;
- 4). To examine the disputes/conflicts urban refugees encounter involving shelter, health and food among themselves and with local communities.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Available literature from the non-governmental organizations like GTZ with projects on urban refugees in Nairobi has very scanty information covering baseline surveys

of urban refugees. Urban refugee studies are new phenomena and issues on their lifestyles have not been exhaustively and systematically covered.

This study aims to organize this information together in a way to add knowledge into this area. The need to understand the pull-push factors of refugees into urban areas and their survival strategies is quite important. The study will be a reference point for non-governmental organizations, individuals, private and public sector interested in understanding this new phenomenon.

This research aims at providing data that could inform the government on policy for the urban areas. Refugees were not initially entailed in the city planning. Essential services like water, security, housing, transport, among others, was planned for fewer residents than the real situation today. There has been an influx of refugees in urban centres and especially in Nairobi, yet these facilities have remained unchanged. This research will give city planners a chance to review the policy on facilities. By knowing how many refugees are living in urban centres and specifically Nairobi, city planners will be in a better position to strengthen security, improve on housing, improve on transport, and improve on water and sewages systems among others.

Although Kenya has a policy that requires all refugees to live in designated camps, many refugees have found their way into the city. Nobody has ever conducted a research to investigate why refugees have exploited the loopholes within this policy and laxity in administration within these camps to seek residence in Nairobi and other urban areas or why refugees do not want to live in the camps at all.

Security apparatus had been in contact with many refugees in the urban areas. The situation has been moving from bad to worse as many more refugees flock the city. This research will be able to answer the question why the city and why security system have been unable to deal with the growing influx of refugees to the city. What is UNHCR and her implementing agencies been planning on the influx of refugees in urban centres, yet there is a policy on where refugees should be located.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The scope and objectives of this research are limited to survival strategies of urban refugees in Nairobi. Although the problem being investigated has implications particularly in many Kenyan towns and other African cities and by extension world over, it would require much longer time and considerable resources to move beyond Nairobi.

The study also focuses only on housing, health and food, as basic human needs for survival. This is particularly so because different cities and individual may conceptualize basic needs differently based on availability of resources and socialization of individuals. Housing, health and food are the most universal basic human needs to my opinion.

The choice of Nairobi is quite relevant today especially when other countries neighbouring it and those in the Great lake region are experiencing political instability making refugees to seek refuge into Kenya and Nairobi particular. This makes Nairobi particularly suitable for the research. As it is not possible to conduct research on all refugees in Nairobi, the research targets those visiting NGOs and other institutions for services such as legal aid, medical, counselling to mention a few. This is treated in details in the methodology section of this study.

## **1.7 Assumptions of the Study**

This study is based on two assumptions;

- a). The longer individual refugees stay in urban areas, the more they adapt to the search of food, health and housing.
- b). The more urban refugees engage in search of livelihood strategies in housing, health and food, the more they experience disputes and conflicts with the local communities.

## **1.8 Definition of Concepts**

**1.8.1 Urban Refugees:** Any person who is living outside her country or in the case of a person having nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. In Kenya, such a person is living in urban centers and not in designated camps as per the government requirement.

**1.8.2 Basic needs (Housing, Health and Food):** Basic needs may vary from one's background to another. For this research, only three basic needs are being considered. Housing is a place of dwelling, accommodation or residence. It is home where individuals reside. It can be permanent, semi-permanent or temporary structures. Health is the well-being of individuals, physical condition or fitness of individuals. It will be considered as that condition when individuals do not need to seek for medication from health-care providers because they are physically, emotionally and psychologically fit to go about their daily activities. For the purpose of this research, food will be considered as foodstuff – the provision such as water and those other edibles which human beings consume as essentials to keep them “going” and healthy.

**1.8.3 Survival Strategies:** These are actions or activities individuals engage in to minimize reduce or eliminate unfavourable conditions or situations in order to enable the individual to continue with normal life. The strategies allow the individual move from a position of disadvantage to a normal operating situation or condition. Examples of survival strategies include: taking one meal in a day to save money for housing and health, treating oneself with a brother/sister's medication when suffering from same symptoms to cut cost of doctor's consultation and cost of buying medicine, using candles for lighting a house to avoid electricity costs, walking long distances to and from work to save for food, health and housing.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This section is a review of existing works on urban refugees in relation to survival strategies on housing, health and search of livelihood. The review is intended to demonstrate the inadequacy with which these issues have been discussed and to state the gaps that need to be addressed in this study.

Because urban refugees are a new phenomenon, there is very little literature covering issues of survival strategies particularly in relation to housing, health and food. Many public libraries have no literature in this area. For this research, a lot of literature is obtained from African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF), World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) libraries. The researcher also conducted literature review from UNHCR's urban refugees implementing agencies. The main one is GTZ urban refugee assistance programme. Other agencies where literature review was conducted are, Nairobi Archdiocese Refugee Assistance Programme (NARAP), Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK), Goal Ireland, Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) and Windle trust of Kenya. Goal Ireland and JRS are the immediate implementing partner of UNHCR until January 2004. The other source of information has been the Internet. Literature review for this research is divided into the three core areas: Housing urban refugees, health for urban refugees and livelihood for urban refugees.

#### 2.1 Housing Urban Refugees

Urban refugees are largely unacknowledged by the Kenyan government and assisted by UNHCR. They live in squalid housing conditions, often with minimum access to food, clean water, medical care, jobs or education. Only a handful of refugees receive housing from faith-based organizations. Majority of them live in the outskirts of the city since these are the only areas they could afford for housing. Many have



difficulty finding money to pay rent and cope by relying on the generosity of strangers. There are also security concerns for asylum seekers who have fled their countries because of political reasons hence making fear of their lives a real threat (Human Right Watch 2004).

There are many challenges refugees encounter on their arrival to the city: First, poverty and inability to obtain the resources such as skills, qualifications, capital contracts etc to meet basic human needs, second, barrier to social services, education and paid employment, third, lack of social assistance, fourth, laws that sometimes prohibit employment of refugees and lastly the employed refugees encounter exploitative working conditions like violation of signed contracts, long working hours among others. All these bring consequences that further undermine individual and family identity and survival (Moussa, 1996).

At the time refugees arrive in the city, is unlikely for them to have knowledge of family members settled in the city. And if they are there, it would be difficult to trace them due to breakdown in communication. Many Kenyans in urban areas tend to find or secure shelter from people they feel are close associates, come from the same geographical locations or even share the same interests in terms of social, economic or political ways of life. Newly employed and masses arriving from rural setups settle with relatives, former school mates or where they feel their interests are secure until such a time that they establish their own social networks. These could be their survival strategies such that in time of difficulties, emergencies or disasters they seek socio-economic assistance from them. Identity and family cohesion are therefore important in socio-economic growth of an individual. However, what is missing and would be interesting is to investigate how refugees moving into urban centres settle down.

It has been acknowledged that the problem of housing is acute amongst urban refugees. Of concern is how they manage to get the first shelter on their arrival to the city. This is because when they arrive, they will have lost many resources that helped them to generate wealth. Even the money that they carry with them may not be convertible into local currency. They will also have lost the network of family and

community support systems that underlay the previous patterns of social, political and economic activities (Simmonds, 1988).

GTZ refugees' caseload baseline survey 2005 has grouped urban refugees according to their nationalities. But as much as the geographical locations of different tribal or regional grouping among urban refugees is known, it's unclear how the new arrivals identify these areas and the problems they face in settling down. How they enter into rental contracts if any and how they pay their rents if they do. This is pertinent especially because many refugees take with them only what they wear and are totally dependent on others for survival. They flee as a matter of emergency leaving little time to organize their journeys across many borders. Therefore, how refugees find social networks is very important as the longer a refugee community exists together, the more active the economic life within it may increase. It is known that a refugee's home community is often internally structured by kinship systems. But family, clan or neighbourhood groups may have been broken up in migration. Social structures may therefore need to be recreated or new ones promoted. It would be significant to understand how these structures are identified and recreated.

While GTZ, Urban Refugees Assistant Programme (URAP) baseline survey 2005 was able to identify where refugees of certain backgrounds are settled today, the survey did not go further to inform on the social structures in place. Urban refugees in any part of Nairobi have their own opinion leaders who direct the same refugee community in terms of their housing needs and other social and economic welfare. This is why sometime there are confrontations and fights between members of different refugee communities. These leaders may have been identified as the refugee community travelling across borders, or even during the short time the community made the decision to flee across borders. The criteria and how opinion leaders are identified are an interesting angle to study. Like other organized social groups, does leadership within the urban refugee community particularly within a specific group change with time?

Somali refugees and asylum seekers are predominant in Eastleigh where the colonial government had allocated for Asians, Kenyan Somalia were part of this

categorization. Rwandese according to Institute of Francaise de Recherche en Afrique (IFRA) report shows a case of disintegration. This is a vulnerable group, who had no kin in Kenya before the 1994 Rwanda genocide. Most of them are improvised (GTZ, 2005).

Urban refugees may choose their residence based on practicability and low rent. They are today settled in areas such as Komarock, Kayole, Kawangware and Riruta Satellite. Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers also find their residence based on price of the rent and practicability of the place. By 1983, there were already a number of Sudanese refugees in Nairobi. Today, they are living in Kibera, South B/C, Mathare, Umoja, Komarock, Kabete, Woodley and Nairobi west. Ethiopian and Eriterans are dominant in Eastleigh and Pangani. There is also a large number of them in Hurlingham area. The issue of low rent may be a secondary factor; other contributing factors may be security issues, proximity to social amenities such as transport, access to food and health. But it cannot be by chance. The intelligent organ of government is aware of presence of many people of Somali origin living in Eastleigh “illegally” yet no concrete action has been taken to ensure they don’t arrive as refugees and acquire Kenyan passports within a few months.

Every residential area has its own standards in terms of the kind of houses to be found there. For instance, it is known that the kind of housing structures found in South B/C and Hurlingham are world apart with those to be found in Kibera and Mathare. Interesting enough, the GTZ baseline survey shows that an urban refugee cuts across the social and economic spectrum. It is expected that those living in Kibera and Mathare are at the lowest of social class ladder while those living in South B/C and Hurlingham are at almost the upper social class ladder, which many ordinary Kenyans cannot even enjoy. Finding out whether there is a gradual rise in social class ladder would be important because it has been noted that refugees are totally dependant on other people when they move into exile (Simmonds, 1988).

This being known, it would also be interesting to find out the type of houses the urban refugees occupy in these estates. This is particularly so because the city authorities for the past twenty or so years have not been keen on standards of

buildings. Urban refugees could be subletting rooms, could be sleeping on corridors or even garages within main houses. As a survival strategy, they could be living in two or three families in one house. This could eventually be a health hazard especially where sharing facilities such as bathrooms and toilets.

It is important to recognize that refugees (uprooted people) are ordinary human beings. They have hopes and dreams, faults and weaknesses, gifts and strengths. When they arrive, they have their own expectation on accommodation. They have their own shortcomings and strengths. Their survival strategies could be a notable illustration of their ability to resist political, economic, social and cultural structures that demean them. While many may suffer immense loss and trauma on arrival, others may also eventually find opportunities for growth and gain some benefits from their experience. Many may learn new languages and expand cultural and social perspectives (Moussa, 1996).

Within the refugee community, there are some relatives and close friends living in USA, Canada and other Western countries who support those living in poorer statuses by sending money to them. Law does not recognize urban refugees in Kenya, yet they have social networks across borders who send remittances to them. How the money is remitted and claimed especially where the urban refugees do not have identification documents to claim the money in any bank or in any micro-finance organizations? For the relatives and close friends who send money, do they have legal rights where they live? It would be interesting to find out how much money is remitted per month, quarterly or annually and if it can be enough to pay rents among other basic needs.

## **2.2 Health for Urban Refugees**

The influx of refugees in urban areas has brought up with it chaotic, unbalanced and uncontrolled growth of human settlement. This should be a source of major concern among politicians, city planners and administrators. But in Nairobi little attention is being paid hence continued deterioration of amenities such as water and sanitation. Water rationing, power cuts/rationing and roads in the city are a major concern

especially to the business community. The direct result of urban population explosion has tremendously increased in the number of squatter settlements and of urban poor. For many countries and cities, the problem is of such magnitude and urgency that the term “urban crisis” is no exaggeration (WHO 1989).

Most urban refugees are believed to be poor. WHO in her 1989 report noted that the pattern of mortality and morbidity among the urban poor are shaped by the socio-economic and environmental conditions prevailing in the marginal areas to which the poor are confined. They are caught up in a web of insecurity, low-income environmental hazards and unsatisfied human needs. Poor health is one result. The impact of child health is a far complicated issue. Child mortality is higher in migrants than non-mobile populations. Children of female migrants have poorer survival chances than similar populations of lifelong urban residents.

Children are not only physically vulnerable but are often discriminated against in times of scarcity, when the principle of “survival for the fittest” is applied. Children have special needs and may face additional risks that should be identified as early as possible. Unaccompanied minors are particularly more vulnerable (Médécin San Frontiers, 1997).

Poor social and economic circumstances affect health throughout life of any individual. People down the social ladder usually run at least twice the risk of serious illnesses and premature death than those near the top of the ladder (WHO, 1998).

Many preventable ailments such as cholera, typhoid are common in informal settlements. This is where there is overcrowding, water and sanitation is poor, housing structures are an eyesore. Public facilities are also very limited. Food is handled in a very unhygienic manner. There are no statistics of the number of urban refugees living in this condition but it is a fact many of them are settled in such conditions. Of course many other non-refugees are also settled in these areas. But it would be interesting to find out how refugees cope with such environments, especially when those who are able to flee out of their country because of

emergencies or disasters are comparably very well-off to those who are not able to do so.

The Human Rights (2005) report notes that majority of refugees struggle to survive. But according to WHO 1989, a good diet and adequate food supply are central to promoting health and wellbeing. The shortage of food and lack of variety causes malnutrition and deficiency diseases. Does this therefore mean many refugees are of poor health? Are they in poor health because it is easy to co-relate poor health to poor housing and to poor diet? It would be difficult to tell because just like many other non-refugees, many people look physically healthy. It is only the medical history of an individual that can reveal their health. Maybe this can be measured by the number of times individuals seek medical treatment. This scenario prompted the study.

Urban refugees are faced with a lot of challenges in accessing medical care. Kenyan laws do not recognize them, they have problems of communicating their illnesses to medical caregivers due to their own cultures. But of most concern is how they afford to pay for medical services. Available literature highlights their struggle to access health based on bureaucracy although literature on quality of health and costs is missing. For instance, Human Right Watch (2004) reports that both refugees and asylum seekers are eligible to receive medical treatment from UNHCR and its implementing agencies. But in practice, most never obtain treatment for either of the following reasons: they cannot afford expenses to travel to UNHCR offices; many are misinformed that they are not allowed to seek medical treatment at UNHCR until they are recognized refugees, or procedures at UNHCR have a lot of bureaucracy.

The pressures and strains of urban areas can exacerbate underlying mental illnesses and promote development of diseases in previously healthy environment. Mental health of urban migrants is poorer than that of non-migrants. Therefore, there is great need to study health characteristics and needs of urban migrants, particularly during the time span following their arrival. By the fact that refugees arrive from hostile environments to settle in equally poor, hostile areas within the city is a point of concern on their health needs. Majority may be living on the edge of survivability in

the poorest parts of the city. They are also at risk of social exclusion hence becoming more vulnerable to health problems. There are obvious links to good health or survival such as good accommodation and good diet, which urban refugees could be limited.

But of importance here is how children, elderly, disabled and other vulnerable groups among the urban refugees manage to access good accommodation and quality diet to stay healthy. In studies of post-traumatic stress disorders, it is known that trauma and stress are components in good mental health or otherwise. Being in the new environment is such a stress for the weak children, women and the elderly. The trauma of leaving their property in their countries, the emergencies and disasters which made them flee threatens their health status.

The need for crisis counselling is real in this case, the need for debriefing is crucial for them to move on with life. But in the places they live do they care for good mental health as a the major concern? And if they care, how these services are offered would be important to understand, because if you have no access to GTZ's urban refugee assistance programme who are currently offering counselling services where else do you go? The programme cannot handle the estimated 100,000 urban refugees in Kenya today. The issue of transport to program offices is big issue. According to the programme's information sheet (2005), counselling is conducted at its Westland offices.

NGOs are almost totally responsible for the implementation of health care (Simmonds, 1988). Of concern would be to find out whether there are other NGOs who have medical programmes except GTZ in Nairobi. Why NGOs would want to concentrate on the urban refugees ignoring the urban poor, when the government ruled out free medical scheme in the near future may raise political or even policy issues. It has been noted that many refugees do not bother to seek these NGO's for medical needs; the missing link is what the NGO's are doing to ensure all the refugees with health needs have access to them.

Traditionally, women are the primary providers of healthcare to other family members. But whether this role can be extended even when the family is surviving as urban refugees is interesting to understand. This is particularly because of the change of lifestyle in the new country. If the role of women is carried across borders during the flight and thereafter, then role of other family members in search of medical care need to be explored. There must be some coping mechanisms to ensure the family stays healthy most of the time, because the cost of illness could be prohibitive.

Women have special needs because of their childbearing roles. If there are women who arrive into the urban areas with prenatal and post-natal clinics needs would be an interesting dimension to look into because these needs may at times be very complicated even to non refugees. The health needs for infants would also be interesting to look into because simple issues such as weighing of babies and mandatory immunization against certain diseases such as measles, polio, and hepatitis are important WHO requirements for every child. If these immunizations were done it would be interesting to know and if not the expectations of the mothers on these issue is crucial.

### **2.3 Accessing Livelihood for Urban Refugees**

Refugees facing food shortage make strategic decision about how to bridge their consumption deficit. During 1980s, a number of case studies in Africa and South Asia suggested a common pattern in the nature and sequence of coping and survival strategies adopted by refugees. According to these studies, a pattern of three stages can be distinguished, each reflecting increasing desperation: insurance mechanism, disposal of productive assets and destitution behaviour. All these may be either positive or negative coping/adaptation mechanisms to the urban refugees. Strategies that have little long-run costs are adopted first (such as drawing-down savings and calling on remittances), while strategies with long-run costs that are difficult to reverse are adopted later. It has been noted that refugees use smaller portions and cheaper diets as an effective and relatively costless way of making limited resources



go further and routinely. To understand what these coping and mechanisms entail would be an important dimension for research.

Urban refugees engage in many livelihood strategies to access food and mobilize needed resources. Coping strategies are usually short-term responses to an unusual food stress. Adaptations are coping strategies, which have become permanently incorporated into the normal cycle of activities. Much has been written about the livelihood strategies the poor people generally adopt to diversify their income-generating activities in order to minimize their dependence on often-unreliable resource base. Over the past decade, income-generating programmes (IGP) have played an increasingly important role in the drive towards the economic self-reliance of refugees. There is need to examine the coping and adaptation strategy both negative and positive of urban refugees in order to fill this gap.

Income-generating programmes use two approaches for urban poor. Most common are grants-based, in which inputs such as cash, capital equipment and raw materials are provided free. A less widely used approach, sometimes combined with grants, and is based on micro-finance in which a line of credit or a loan is provided for beneficiaries to start small businesses. Advocates argue that loans are better forms of aid than grants because they break the “dependency cycle” associated with humanitarian aid by encouraging fiscally responsible use of resources and because, through loan repayments, it is possible to increase the number of future recipients. Because these facilities are available to the urban poor who at least can give security for the grants, it would be an interesting dimension to investigate how urban refugees operate when they do not have any security if they are not exempted from these benefits.

Many micro-finance-based IGPs have been curtailed in recent years, judged as failures. Their critics argue that the funds would be better used in grant form. But, as is recognized by the same critics, these arguments are often based on the financial success of the programme (e.g. repayment rates), rather than on how they affect the economic security of the community. The lack of a general evaluation of IGPs means

that a clear picture of their effects (positive or negative) on the economic security of refugees and their host communities is lacking. It is likely that the availability of capital equipment or loan capital for small businesses will improve the ability of refugees to pursue livelihoods and food security and that the benefits trickle out to the host community.

While there are positive coping and adaptation strategies, there are also negative coping and adaptation strategies among immigrants. Given the expense associated with urban living, most of those not receiving some form of assistance or subsidies still rely on other forms of income generation to make ends meet. To do this, the majority of the world's urban refugees — especially those in poor countries — support themselves through casual labour or participation in the informal economy (Lindstrom, 2003).

As such, the study of urban refugee livelihood strategies resonates strongly with inquires into other marginalized groups' economic and productive activities in the urban economy. For the poor in any urban environment, this means contending with violence, poor transportation and infrastructure, crowded living conditions. Such negative coping strategies for instance, carjacking, prostitution, illicit brews, and robberies have been in increase in recent times in Nairobi and could be a linkage between increase of refugees and these practices. There is need to investigate these relationships and correlations between urban refugees livelihoods and levels of social disorders.

In many places, there are severe restrictions on immigrants' and asylum seekers' rights to work and their entitlements to welfare or other forms of social support. While most countries allowing refugees to self-settle outside of camps also afford them the right to work, refugees face a number of disadvantages when competing with members of the local population. Although immigrants' willingness to work for lower wages than similarly qualified nationals may make them desirable to employers, employers may not recognize refugees' identity documents as legitimate or accept them as providing the holders with the right to work. They may also use the

lack of legitimate documentation as an excuse for lower wages or other forms of exploitation.

There may also be scepticism about an immigrant's commitment or qualifications for the position, or worry that an applicant may be too temporary or otherwise unreliable. Others will, quite legitimately, be concerned about problems of communication across a language barrier. Some employers may simply discriminate or believe that the presence of a foreigner will turn away xenophobic customers especially in South Africa. Although forced migrants in cities are often relatively educated and skilled, self-selection often brings the most entrepreneurial and educated to cities (Kuhlman, 1994).

Many may not be initially prepared to work in a new environment. This is not only so for people who were previously living in rural areas, but for professionals whose credentials are not valid without additional training or local certification. Those wishing to start their own businesses whatever the size, also face problems obtaining business licenses (when required) and accessing financial services like savings accounts and credit. As many urban migrants rely on self-owned enterprises, the lack of such services is of particular importance.

It would be interesting to understand whether local banks extend credit facilities to the urban refugees to start up small businesses. Today, commercial banks are competing for customers for soft loans and credits and even sometimes they beg for these services. For now urban refugees are getting soft loans and credit from NGOs. It should also be noted, that some refugees are supported by families or friends still in their country of origin (transnational friends). But even the smallest business owners without bank accounts are at an additional risk. Since they are effectively forced to work in a cash economy, both their goods and earnings are vulnerable to theft, which urban refugees may be contending with in Nairobi.

For people living in shared or insecure housing, the risks are particularly greater. One can also not ignore perennial harassment by police. While the police may periodically raid all informal businesses and try to prevent hawking and other forms of street trading, immigrants (especially those without proper documentation) are particularly likely to have their goods seized or be asked to pay bribes or other forms of protection money. As many work in informal jobs outside (e.g., hawking, construction, cleaning), they are also vulnerable to general theft and assault. This means refugees must contend with poor health, poor housing in such of food, regardless the relationship between them.

Faith based organisations like Catholic and Anglican churches are some of the organisations which have projects to cater for livelihood of urban refugees such as feeding programme, micro-credit finances and shelters. These food donations, micro-credits and shelters reach only a handful of urban refugees; sometimes they are not forthcoming at all. During such period, urban refugees may result into illegal forms of generation of livelihood.

One way urban refugees can use to access livelihood is by joining employment. But according to world refugee survey 2004, refugees are effectively forced to work in a cash economy and risk being robbed of their goods and earnings. Those living in shared or insecure housing, or who work outside - hawking, building, or cleaning, for example, are particularly vulnerable to theft, xenophobic violence, especially given their awkward legal status. How do they manage? With so many barriers, the success of many urban refugee entrepreneurs in urban centres begs explanation. How local population treats urban refugees competing with them in these informal small businesses would form a good study topic.

Food in urban areas is very expensive, as urban residents must depend on rural communities for agricultural produce. The rural communities are equally poor and depend on rain for farming. Hence during off seasons prices of agricultural produce are exorbitant. Without an income, urban refugees struggle to buy household goods. JR Lupien, Director of the FAO and Nutrition Division in his article on assessing

prospects for improving food security and nutrition, March 2004 noted that access to sufficient supplies of a variety of safe, good-quality food is a serious problem in many countries, even where food supplies are adequate at the national level. If progress in meeting the food needs and food demand of the world population continues at the current rate, more than 600 million people will still be undernourished and food insecure in the first quarter of this millennium.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

This study was based on the Structural Functionalism theory by Talcott Parson (1967). Social Action and systems theory are part of the structural functionalism. The main issue is that urban refugees exist in a society interrelated of systems. The social systems strive to meet survival needs, production, development, reproduction, socialization among many others. A society is a system of social structures incorporating economic, legal, educational and gender structures, which meet these needs. The structures are thus functional in the sense that they allow society to survive and develop. Interconnections exist within and among these structures; individuals and groups are constrained by these structures.

How do urban refugees fit into the urban social system? There are issues of social order and disorder due to variation of interests, values and norms. Parsons' primary concern was the problem of order in society (Adams & Sydnie, 2001). He questions how, if individuals were really separate entities pursuing their self-interest, there could be any order at all: How could there be anything but disorder? (Johnson, 1993). People act on the basis of their values; their actions are oriented and constrained by the values and norms of people around them; and these norms and values are the basis of social order (Knapp, 1994). The integration of refugees into urban communities with set health, housing and food provision structures brings into focus the issues of aliens fitting into a system in an orderly or disorderly manner.

## **2.5 Survival for Health, Shelter and Food**

The different parts of each society positively contribute to the operation or functioning of the system as a whole. This is the functional part of the structural functional approach. Urban society in Nairobi has structures. Housing, health, markets are all basic structures. They serve the needs for survival, production and development. There are also a number of activities that must be carried out for social life to survive and develop in urban areas. Goods and services must be produced and distributed in order for people to survive, there must be some administration of justice, a political system must exist, and family structure must operate so as to

provide a means to reproduce the population and maintain social life on a daily basis. In the structural functional model, individuals carry out each of these tasks in various institutions and roles that are consistent with the structures and norms of the society.

Urban refugees have their own norms and values carried beyond borders. When they arrive, they are supposed to be integrated with the local communities, who have different values and norms. There is discordance between the refugees' legal, political and family systems back at home and what they find in their new environment. These differences may create social order or disorder. Health provision systems are different, housing systems are different, and means of getting food are different from what they have already experienced in their countries. Then how, if individuals were really separate entities pursuing their self-interest, could there be any order at all? How could there be anything but disorder? But urban refugees in Nairobi are integrating into the local community.

In accessing basic needs, urban refugees are in need of health. The hospitals and clinics cannot operate without drugs, doctors, and nurses. There can never be order without this interconnectedness. In housing, there are subsystems such as access to water, electricity, roads and security, which ensure comfortable housing. In search of food, markets, farms, income etc must be available as subsystems.

## **2.6 Urban Refugees Conflicts and Disputes with Local Communities**

The functionalist approach attempts to explain the relationship of different parts of the system to each other, and to the whole. These parts tend to work together in an orderly manner, without serious conflict. The different parts of the social system are generally in equilibrium, or moving toward equilibrium, with consensus rather than conflict governing the inter-relationships of the various parts. Each part of the system and structure must be seen to pull and push in the same direction.

Urban refugees upon arrival in the city may cause chaos into the system and structures, because they bring with them their values and norms. To avoid these

chaos and disorder within the system, there is need for integration for the refugees to adapt to the system. Therefore, the longer they stay the more they learn and practise new norms, values, morals, rules and procedures in housing, health and food, livelihood systems and structures.

The local communities have their entrenched values and norms. They could be marriages, burials, and religious rites among others. There are also conflict and dispute resolution systems within the local community. Refugees come with their own value systems and norms. They have practised these for many years in their countries of origin. These social systems reach equilibrium in the new environment because this is the only way peace and harmony can co-exist between locals and the refugees. Parsons (1967), emphasized the issue that if individuals were really separate entities pursuing their self-interest, could there be any order at all? How could there be anything but disorder?

But as various social processes function, strains, tensions and conflicts may emerge. These are as a result of the way individuals relate to one another, as different units carry out their tasks and roles in the system. But within the system, there are means of managing tensions, diffusing, resolving conflicts and ensuring that orderly means of carrying on activities are in place. This enables the system to survive.

The urban society (local community and urban refugees) have various institutions that regulate conflicts and disputes. Religion, education, the media, the legal structures – police and courts – all play a role. Ritzer (1992) refers to these as societal community. Any institutions that help disseminate the shared culture, and reinforce that culture through ritual celebrations of its values (Cuff, 1984) help in this. Where strains are great, there may be a need for social control, formal and informal sanctions, or discipline to enforce order.

Parsons thought that systems develop automatic means of integration, and roles and organizations to help carry this out do develop. Within subsystems, there is a set of roles that do this, although these may not always be specialized. For example, in educational institutions, teachers carry out the roles of adaptation, goal attainment



and integration as part of their activities. How well is the refugee society integrated with the local communities where they live?

## **2.7 Urban Refugees and Social Change**

Change tends to be orderly and evolutionary, rather than revolutionary or with dramatic structural breaks. Conflicts or external factors stimulate adjustment of the parts to move toward a new equilibrium. As change occurs, the various parts of societies become more differentiated, with these parts adapting to new needs and problems. Societies become more complex, with new institutions and subsystems that perform the new functions required to make the society operate smoothly.

When refugees particularly of Somali origin arrived in the Eastleigh estate in Nairobi, they managed to change the lifestyle of the local community. They stimulated the adjustment of norms and values in this estate to be what it is today. The housing systems changed, health systems changed and means of attaining food also changed. Today, the transport sector on the route has been transformed. Market system changed as well as the security systems to reflecting the values and patterns of life of the refugees and other immigrants. This has been evolutionary change. New patterns of life can also be seen in other parts of Nairobi. For example, people of Ethiopian/Eritrean origin today own many food parlors and hotels in Kilimani area, many of ladies found along Argwings Kodhek road as commercial sex workers are also of Ethiopian/Eritrean origin. To the local community, this could be negative or positive changes brought about by urban refugees.

## **2.8 The Motivation to Move to the Urban Centres**

There are push and pull factors that make individual refugees move from the camp to the cities, move from their countries to Kenya and to the cities. The obvious reason would be to flee disasters - wars, droughts for those crossing the borders, but for those moving from the camps they must be running away from systems and structures in the camps which have negative effects and impacts on their lifestyles.

There are schools, houses, health facilities in the camps. Why move out from a structured system where you can fit to a disorderly chaotic system in the city?

The city may have institutions such as embassies and high commissions which can facilitate relocation to the third desired countries usually the Western countries. Individuals develop a culture and belief that the Western world must be good. Many would also come to the city hoping to engage income-generating activities, marriages, to look for relatives and friends among many other reasons. NGOs, churches, health and markets are some of the institutions urban refugees must interact with in many ways. They are formal organizations and can be regarded to furnish, maintain, and renew both the motivation of individuals and the cultural patterns that create and sustain this motivation (Ritzer, 1992). Parsons (1967) refers to these as fiduciary, founded on trust.

Within these social systems, leisure, affection, love, sex, and friendship, can all play an important function. People provide comfort, consolation and relief to each other, thus reducing tension or keeping it within manageable limits. In addition, socialization is a major function with respect to the raising of children, and also with respect to the ongoing socialization that occurs throughout the life-span. Within organizations, there may be little of the latent functions as an explicit part of the organization, but people within any organization develop these by themselves, or come to the organization with these functions developed. What does the urban refugee bring with them into the urban system as an organisation and what do they develop out of the urban system as they adapt to the urban lifestyle?

As urban societies have developed, latent functions tend to evolve, with different institutions developing different functions, and with different functions developing within each organisation. Specialized functions and roles develop, and specialized institutions to carry out these also evolve, and it is best to have specialized roles and specialized institutions to carry out the functions of a modern, complex society. These may develop in an evolutionary fashion, without any conscious consideration.

The revolution is bound to occur in housing, health and food systems and structures through out the urban centres as urban refugees continue to increase.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the main research design and methodology that was used so that the objectives of this study could be achieved. According to Kerlinger, (1964), research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance. This section focuses on research method used, research tools, units of analysis, sampling methods, sampling units, sampling frame and data analysis.

Collection of any data on urban refugees is very sensitive. UNHCR and Kenya government have put measures to ensure written permission is obtained before holding any interviews with the refugees. Refugees themselves fear of any strangers especially given the trauma the experiences that have driven them to the new environments. No agency can today claim to have statistics on urban refugees particularly those in Nairobi. But variously an estimated population of between 10,000 and 15,000 has been given by agencies working in this area. This made it even more difficult to structure the research design and methodology.

There are many non-governmental organizations currently working in the area of urban refugees. The most significant of them are Refugee consortium of Kenya (RCK), Nairobi Archdiocese and Refugee Programme (NARAP), Windle Charitable Trust of Kenya, GTZ, Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS), Africa Rehabilitation and Education Programme (AREP), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), Africa Refugees Programme (ARP), and African Refugees Training and Employment Services (ARTES). These programmes include: counseling, legal aid, feeding programs, income generation and medical.

### **3.1 Research Methods**

This research combined both quantitative and qualitative social research methods. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods ensured reliability and validity of the data collected, as facts were counter-checked and confirmed by either method.

### **3.2 Research Tools**

This study made use of questionnaire-interviews, Key Informant Interviews and Review of secondary data. By using these tools, there was cross-checking of primary data with secondary data and vice versa. Questionnaire-interview was used as the primary technique in data collection. Key informant interviews and review of secondary data from GTZ, JRS and RCK urban refugee programmes complemented the primary method.

### **3.3 Unit of Analysis**

According to Singleton, (1988), a unit of analysis is what or whom is to be described or analyzed. Unit of analysis can therefore be individuals, people, social roles, positions or even relationships. Survival strategies of urban refugees have been the unit of analysis of this study.

*Unit of elaboration?*

### **3.4 Sampling**

Sampling is a procedure used to select a representative part from a population of interest. There are social science conventional procedures or techniques used to select samples. This enhances representativeness of the sample. Some of the reasons why samples are used are to save time, cut on costs, the need to effectively and efficiently manage the subjects/elements of study.

Through purposive sampling technique, this study selected GTZ, RCK and JRS as the representatives of the other NGOs. The three have major programs making them to interact with the refugees more often than the rest. This research is however not a case study of the three NGOs. Their choice was purely on purpose.

### **3.4.1 Sampling Unit**

These are elements or set of elements considered for selection. The sampling unit for this study is urban refugees in Nairobi. Therefore, camp based refugees were excluded and also those in the rural areas. Urban refugees in Nairobi can be classified by nationalities. The most visible in Nairobi are Somalis, Rwandese, Congolese, Ethiopians, Eritrean, Sudanese, and Burundians. For efficient and effective data analysis, these groups were clustered into: Somalis, Ethiopians/Eritrean, Sudanese and Great Lakes (Congolese, Rwandese, and Burundians).

### **3.4.2 Sampling Frame**

This is the actual list of sampling unit from which the sample was selected. The sampling frame of the following nationalities was clustered into Somalis, Ethiopians/Eritrean, Sudanese and Great lakes (Rwandese, Burundians, and Congolese).

## **3.5 Questionnaire-Interviews Samples**

Questionnaires were taken through pre-testing before actual data collection started. At this stage, difficult questions were simplified and concepts, which needed clarity, were clarified. This study focused on respondents from the three NGOs both in pre-testing and in actual data collection.

On average RCK processes 40 cases daily. A sample of 20 was selected at random. The sample was divided into 10 men and 10 women to ensure heterogeneity of the respondents. Urban refugees visiting the organization for legal clinic were picked at random on the basis of their registration upon arrival. Therefore, the first male client was registered and interviewed followed by the first female client until the sample number of ten male and ten female individual interviews was achieved.

JRS feeds 500 families in one week. A sample of 72 was selected through random sampling. From each feeding unit, 10 respondents were selected. This ensured geographical distribution of the respondents is taken care of. The sample comprised 24 men, 24 women and 24 children. Current JRS feeding lists or registers were used to select the samples from each feeding unit in acceding order. From each feeding unit, 5 males and 5 females were selected. JRS feeding units are located at Riruta, Dagoretti corner and in Eastleigh. The research was carried out on the feeding days of each feeding centre.

GTZ on average processes about 100 urban refugees per month. This research selected a sample of 32 respondents divided into 10 men, 12 women and 10 children. Those selected were attending medical clinic administered by GTZ in their premises. The research selected respondents at random based on their arrival to the clinic. The first male on the waiting bench was interviewed followed by the first female on the bench until the sample size of thirty respondents was achieved.

In total, the study administered 124 individual questionnaire-interviews. To ensure heterogeneity of the sample, the respondents were selected on equal ratios from the four distinct nationalities (Sudanese, Ethiopians/Eriterians, Somalians and Great Lakes (Congolese/Rwandese/Burundians)). This was done by ensuring after every interview with a female or male from a distinct nationality, the next interview was to be from the next different distinct nationality.

### **3.5.1 Why use of Questionnaire-interviews**

Questionnaire-interviews are important in social sciences research. There were some key reasons why this research used questionnaire-interviews:

1. To ensure questions are asked in the same way across the sample population everyday and to different respondents.
2. The use of questionnaire-interview method ensured that language can be adjusted to suite the respondents. The level of literacy among the refugee

community varies widely, therefore those with little knowledge of English language were easily accommodated;

3. Where clarity of meaning of concepts, issues given by respondents needed to be confirmed, a repeat exercise was possible to be conducted with the affected respondents, because records of respondents were available;
4. It allowed the reading of non-verbal answers and body language to complement verbal responses as given by the respondents. This is because the exercise was carried out face to face with the respondents.

This method has its shortcomings in several ways:

1. Shy individuals would not be able to interact freely with the interviewer especially where rapport has not been effectively realized. This would lead to inadequate responses;
2. Personal bias of the researcher could lead to recording wrong answers. This can be influenced by culture, socialization among other factors;
3. It could be time consuming to conduct the exercise where physical location of respondents is wide;
4. It is difficult to divert far, or long from agenda without losing part of the information.

### **3.6 Key Informant Interview Samples**

Key persons who work in programmes, targeting urban refugees, were interviewed. Programme manager/ social worker from UNHCR, Programme manager from Ministry of Immigration and Registrations (Refugees). Although one leader from each of the four categorized nationalities (Somali, Sudanese, Ethiopians/Eriterians and Great Lakes (Congolese/Rwandese/Burundians) was to form the sample for key-informant interviews, they were not interviewed. This is after the researcher established that there were no formal leadership structures and systems among urban refugees. One social worker from each of the 3 NGOs (RCK, JRS and GTZ) was also interviewed.



In total 5 key-informant interviews were be conducted.

### **3.6.1 Why use Key-Informant Interviews**

This research considered Key-Informant Interviews important in scientific research.

This method was used because:

1. The method allowed for cross checking of important information or issues, which the questionnaire-interview may have left out. When interviewing the urban refugees, certain issues may emerge which were not within the questionnaires. Key-informant interviews were able to cover them because in most cases questionnaires tend to limit more information.
2. Key persons are knowledgeable on issues at hand. Having dealt with the urban refugees, they were able to connect government policy and survival strategies of urban refugees hence were able to offer important ideas.

This method has shortcomings on the following areas:

1. Key informant interviews may yield the same answers throughout. This may lead to boredom on the part of the researcher because he/she can predict answers to questions before the interviews.
2. Key persons may be very busy people. This may make it very difficult to get them for interviews. This could delay the report writing.

### **3.7 Review of Secondary Data**

Review of secondary data was used to analyze records from the 3 NGOs (RCK, JRS and GTZ). Important materials about the survival strategies among urban refugees being used by the programmes were analyzed. These materials could be feeding time tables, plans, health referral records and budgets among others. The use of secondary methods was to check on reliability and validity of data collected through the questionnaire-interviews.

Review of secondary data allowed for cross-checking the importance of such issues like housing, health and provision of food by the concerned projects. Analysis of project budgets showed what issues are ranked higher.

### **3.8 Data Processing**

When all the questionnaires-interviews were completed, key-informant interviews were held and available documents analyzed, organizing of data was done. Data were arranged according to order and coded. Data entry formats which were done earlier were used to key in raw data. The data were analysed by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The study also held key-informant interviews with Programme Officer (Community Affairs) UNHCR, Legal Officer GTZ, Under Secretary Ministry of Immigration, Information and Outreach Officer RCK, and Programme Co-ordinator JRS.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 Introduction to Data Presentation and Analysis

The presentation and analysis has been arranged into sections and sub-sections into which the information will achieve the objectives of this study. The presentation and analysis are in form of tables, pie-charts, graphs and prose format. The use of qualitative information and own observations are used to give as much insights as possible.

#### 4.1 Nationality of Respondents

The study targeted 124 respondents, which were all met and questionnaire-interviews administered. The table below shows the tabulations of nationalities, responses and percentages:

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents by nationalities/regional origin**

Nationality/Regions	No. of Respondents	Percentages
Great Lakes	61	49.2
Somalis	14	11.3
Ethiopians/Eritrean	34	27.4
Sudanese	15	12.1
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In reality, there are many refugees from the countries bordering Kenya. Refugees from Somalia and Ethiopia are more compared to those from Great Lakes. There is also a large presence of Sudanese and Eritrean. The large presence of Somalis and Ethiopians can be explained as the result of closeness to Kenya. Somali urban refugees are able to interact quickly with other Kenyan-Somalis especially in Eastleigh. The long presence of Somalis in Eastleigh makes it difficult to pick out

new arrivals. Prolonged drought in Ethiopia and border conflicts between Ethiopia and Eritrea have led to influx of Ethiopian/Eritrean to Nairobi, where they anticipate using transit bases for relocation.

It was observed that Eritreans and Ethiopians tend to keep to themselves, making their presence to be unnoticed. Languages have been their big problem in interaction with both the Kenyan communities and also with other refugees from other regions. But their complexion and body structures make it difficult to be identified as refugees as they resemble many Kenyan communities. This feature plays a significant positive role in search of basic needs, while their language barrier plays a negative role in search of survival.

Sudanese refugees are largely recognized by their body size and dark skin complexion, a fact that many of them tend to hide. When approached they claim to be Ethiopians. They fear for persecutions and it is difficult to interview them. They <sup>live</sup> leave as a Sudanese community and rarely interact with any other nationalities. —  
Refugees from Great Lakes and Somalis have been able to interact very well with the Kenyan communities; they understand Swahili and English languages well. This puts them in a better position for survival in Nairobi. The fact that Kenya has people of Somali origin makes it difficult for refugees of Somali origin to be recognized.

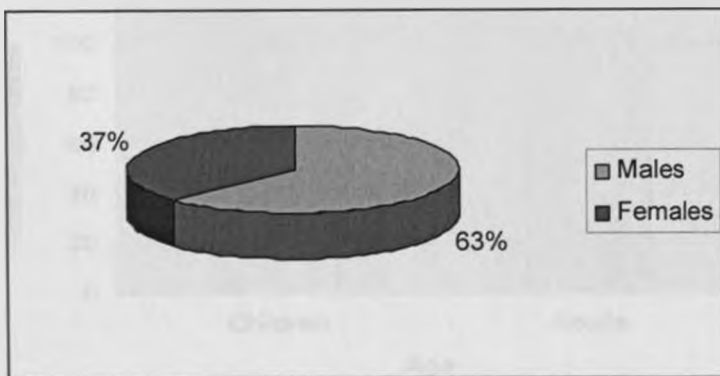
The root cause of refugees from these regions has been diverse. There has been lack of structural government in Somalia while social structures and systems have failed Ethiopia as a country. There have been wars for decades in Sudan between the North and the South, the result being many southern Sudanese fleeing to Kenya for fear of persecution from the Sudanese from the North who are particularly of Arabic complexion. Drought is the other major factor that has failed social systems and functions in this region. Urban refugees from countries in the Great Lakes experience psychological and trauma due to tribal massacres which continue even to date. All these are observations which make individual refugees to move out for survival needs.

## 4.2 Representation of Gender

Although sociologically women are more affected and vulnerable to the factors discussed above, men are likely to walk for long distances and are not necessarily compliant to procedures. They are likely to escape from refugee camps compared to women. Women are also likely to remain in their traditional roles and stay in the houses performing household chores therefore not easily visible for questionnaire – interviews. Men are likely to participate into survival for the fittest activities in search of food, health and shelter compared to women hence are more visible.

The questionnaire-interviews were conducted within institutions (GTZ, RCK and JRS). These institutions are located far from where most refugees live. To access these institutions for medical, food or legal issues refugees need to raise bus fare or walk many kilometers to these locations. This study found men are more resilient and cope with these factors as shown by the pie chart below:

**Pie-Chart 1: Representation of Gender**



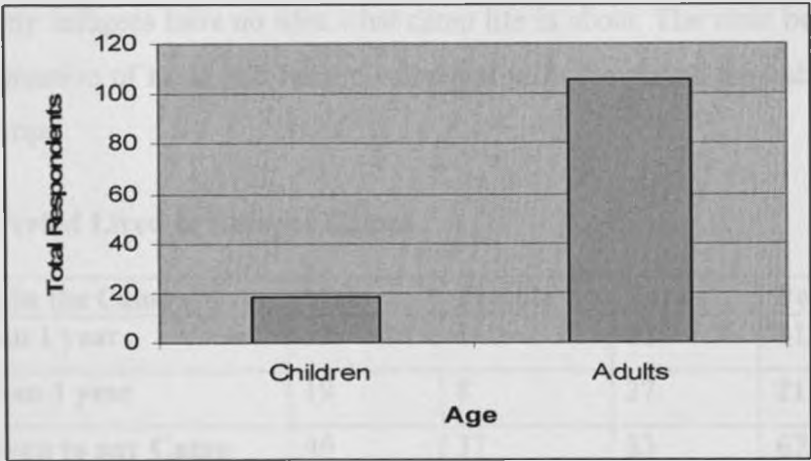
Out of 124 respondents, 63% were men compared to 37% who were women. Men are traditionally considered as providers in families. They are likely to be very visible in search of food, health and shelter. Urban refugees are living as individuals but not as families. Other than the location of service providers which require walking for long distances, it is not possible to tell why many urban refugee men are visible in these institutions compared to women. In a Kenyan community urban

setup, many women will be available in institutions such as clinics, markets and legal institutions compared to men.

### 4.3. Age of the Respondents

In an attempt to capture age differences, the study administered questionnaire interviews to respondents under age of 18 years and those over the age of 18 years. Children are always dependent on adults hence were not very visible in seeking of social services such as health, houses and food. However, a big number of urban refugees' children were accompanied by their parents or guardians. Most of those interviewed were teenagers; because they could understand the issues the researcher was interested in capturing. A big number of children aged below school-going age were present but were not interviewed. The graph below shows the representation on adult versus children as represented in this research.

**Graph 1: Comparison of Adults against Children Respondents**



More than 100 adults were interviewed compared to less than 20 children, out of the sample of 124 urban refugees. From the graph above, children make up a 14.6% compared to 85.4% of the adults interviewed. This shows we also have children as urban refugees in Nairobi. They compete with adults for health, food and shelter. The presence of children refugees could even be higher as they may be restricted in homes where they live and are not as mobile as adult refugees.

Adults are independent and are able to leave the camps for whatever reasons compared to children. In camps, children are under the care of adults and are easily noticed when they are absent. When they register with the UNHCR as unaccompanied children, they are put under supervision of adults and other institutions like schools. This makes it difficult for them to be in urban centres compared to adults. Adults have various reasons to come to the city centres without any direct notice from authorities.

#### **4.4. Comparison of Gender and Period of Stay in the Refugee Camps**

The Kenya government requires refugees to stay in the camp. One of the research questions for this study was to investigate why refugees drift out of the camps to the urban areas. This study found that majority of urban refugees have never been in any camp. Male urban refugees represent the biggest percentage of those who have never been to the camp. While UNHCR has set up registration and screening centres in the camps, many refugees have no idea what camp life is about. The table below shows the representation of male and female compared with the period they stayed in the refugee camps.

**Table 2: Period Lived in Refugee Camps**

<b>Months in the Camps</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Less than 1 year</b>	13	1	14	11.3
<b>More than 1 year</b>	19	8	27	21.7
<b>Never been to any Camp</b>	46	37	83	67.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The total number of male urban refugee respondents who have been to the camps for less than one year was 13 out of 124 total respondents. This represents 10.4% compared to only 1 female out of 124 total respondents which represents 0.8%.

Out of 124 respondents, the total number of respondents who have been to camps for more than one year was 27 respondents. This represented 21.7% of all the total

respondents. However, more male respondents have been to camp than female. They represent 70.4% of the total respondents who have been to camps for more than one year against female respondents who represent 29.6% of total respondents who have been to camps for more than one year.

Forty-six (37.04%) male respondents out of 124 total respondents have never been to any refugee camp and have been living in Nairobi. Thirty-seven (29.8%) of 124 total respondents, have never been to any camp. In gender comparison, of the 78 males the study administered the questionnaire-interviews 46 of them have never been to any camp. This represents 58.9% compared to 80.4% for female.

UNHCR offices are located in Nairobi. This is the first official institution refugees and asylum seekers are supposed to contact making refugee camp into the city awaiting to register with UNHCR. Upon registration and screening, individual refugees are supposed to transport themselves to the camps located in the northern Kenya. It is at this point where individuals decide to stay on. They adapt to the life in the city. They find new ways to survive in search of food, health and shelter and also integrate with both Kenyans and other urban refugees. They find new relationships in the urban setup.

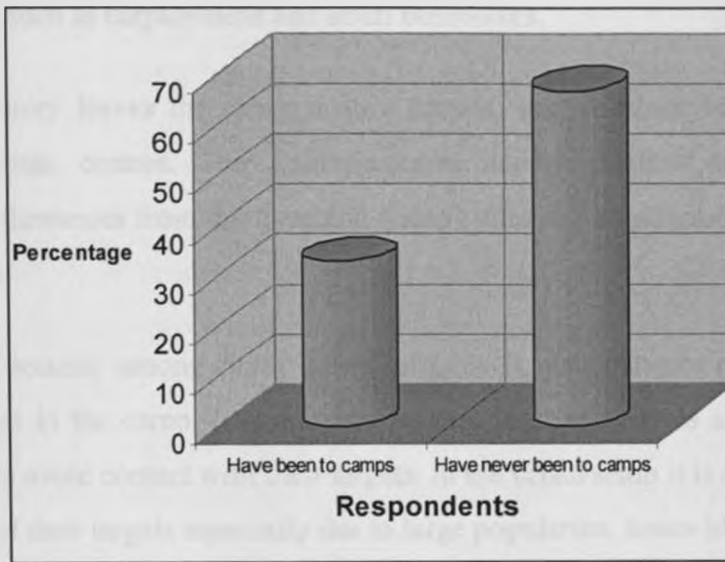
#### **4.4.1 Reasons for Refugees Coming to Nairobi**

The study found that 83 respondents have never been to any refugee camp. This is compared to 41 respondents who have been to a camp for any particular period of time. This represents a ratio of 83:41 which is about 2:1 meaning for every two urban refugees in Nairobi, one of them have never been to any refugee camp.

In percentages, 33.0% of urban refugees have been to a refugee camp compared to 66.9% urban refugees who have never been to any refugee camp. This can be represented by the graph below:



**Graph 2: Comparison of Refugees who have Lived in Camps against Refugees who have never been to Camps**



There are several reasons advanced as to the reason why refugees have never been to camps even though this has been the government directive. With the absence of Refugee Bill, implementation of this rule has been a big problem.

According to legal officer, GTZ Urban Refugee Programme, refugees are free to leave in the city as long as they can afford life in the city. But according RCK's Information and Outreach Programme Co-ordinator, UNCHR requires all refugees to be in refugee camps and should only be out of these camps with special permission, a fact the Under Secretary, Ministry of Immigrations concurs with. The major reasons given why refugees come to urban centres included the following:

Some refugees leave the camp to the city with special permission for medical attention, personal security problems, tertiially education in colleges and universities and closely monitored by UNHCR and her implementing agencies. But a big majority gave reasons such as weather problems, and that camps are located in very dry regions depending with the country of origin of individual refugees.

The other group leave the camp because they already have urban orientation from their countries of origin, they lived in urban setup hence are unable to cope with life

outside urban centres. Life in the camps is very boring as there are limited economic activities. This makes refugees to escape to the urban centres to look for opportunities such as employment and small businesses.

The last category leaves the camp to join friends, and relatives who are already settled in urban centres. They already have accommodation and may have subsistence allowances from relatives and friends who are already established in the urban centres.

The issue of security among Great Lakes refugees is also a source of great fear to those refugees in the camp. Individuals who feel their security is at risk move to urban setup to avoid contact with their targets. In the urban setup it is difficult for the enemies to net their targets especially due to large population, hence ideal.

#### 4.4.2 Comparison of Periods Refugees Arrived in Nairobi

The table below represents the years when the respondents arrived in Nairobi. The years have been grouped into five-year period beginning with the first year:

**Table 3: Representation of Years Refugees Arrived in Nairobi**

Year (5years Period)	Total No. of Urban Refugees		Gender			
		Percentages	Male	Percentages	Female	Percentages
1980-1984	3	2.4	3	3.8	0	0.0
1985-1989	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	2.1
1990-1994	4	3.2	2	2.5	2	4.3
1995-1999	15	12.0	9	11.5	6	13.0
2000-2004	78	62.9	47	60.2	31	67.3
2005 -	23	18.5	17	21.7	6	13.0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>99.8</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>99.7</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>99.7</b>

From 1980, there has been a tremendous increase of refugees coming to live in Nairobi. The year 2000-2004 recorded the highest number of refugees in Nairobi but from the trend, it is likely that the year 2005- 2009 would see higher influx of refugees to the city, unless the government takes measures to divert the trend.

It is in the period of the year 2000 and beyond when many countries bordering Kenya experienced increased civil strife, droughts and other disasters. This made many individuals from these countries to cross borders to Kenya. It is also at this period of information technology when institutions started being more differentiated. Information technology was very active, communication with other individual refugees across borders and in the camp was easy. Individual refugees could share information about opportunities and risks in urban centres. Human Right was a big issue during these years.

In production sector, there was need for more production in industries, cost sharing in health systems among others. The presence of refugees was felt at this point as they looked for jobs, opened small scale businesses, got registered as refugees in health centres and by landlords.

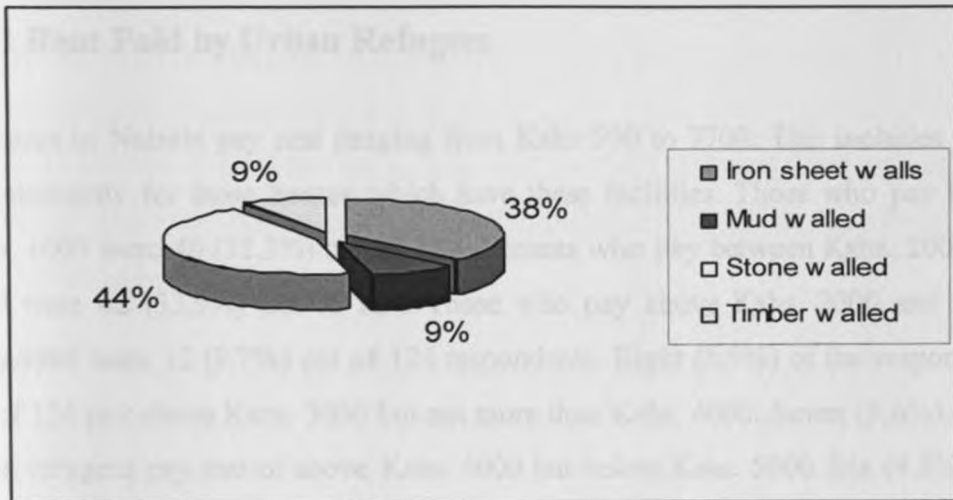
The number of urban refugees is likely to go up in each preceding year as road networks with neighbouring countries are improved, telecommunication becomes easily affordable, means of transferring information and financial transactions becomes more modernized from North to South and political instability continues in the neighbouring countries.

#### **4.5 Material Used to Construct Houses Among Urban Refugees**

The study provided options for the respondents to indicate what material is used to construct his/her house. The aim was to understand the kind of houses urban refugees lived in. The options given were: stones, iron sheets, mud or timber. Out of 124 respondents, 47 of them which represent 37.9% live in iron sheet structure houses, 11 of them which is 8.8% live in mud-walled houses while 55 out of 124 representing 44.3% live in stone-walled houses. Also 8.8%, which is 11 out of 124 respondents,

said they live in timber-walled houses. Below is a pie chart to show this representation.

**Pie-Chart 2: Material Used to Construct Refugees Houses**



More and more houses are today being built using stones. This ensures permanency. Other structures in semi-slums are built with use of iron sheets because they are semi-permanent. When refugees come to Nairobi, their first contacts are usually friendly refugees or relatives where they start off.

The costs of building materials have gone up steadily in Nairobi. Building with timber is much more expensive than building with stones. Therefore, many houses are today constructed using stones. But in comparison, iron sheet is cheaper hence in many informal settlements majority of houses are constructed using iron sheets. It is only in very poor slums and where the structures are very temporary when mud is used to construct houses. It is possible that majority of urban refugees are able to afford to live in either iron sheet houses or stone-walled houses as they are also the majority in the outskirts of the city.

There are few refugees living in slums because their first social networks are based in semi-slum environments. Many refugees who are living in Nairobi have city orientation from their countries of origin, they may have lived in better structured

houses in their country of origin. Usually even in the face of disasters, only those with ability in resources will flee across borders, the very poor will not make the final decision to flee across borders, they will live in apathy as refugees within their countries.

#### 4.5.1 Rent Paid by Urban Refugees

Refugees in Nairobi pay rent ranging from Kshs 500 to 7700. This includes water and electricity for those houses which have these facilities. Those who pay below Kshs. 1000 were 40 (32.3%) out of 124. Tenants who pay between Kshs. 2000 and 1000 were 42 (33.9%) out of 124. Those who pay above Kshs. 2000 and up to Kshs.3000 were 12 (9.7%) out of 124 respondents. Eight (6.5%) of the respondents out of 124 pay above Kshs. 3000 but not more than Kshs. 4000. Seven (5.6%) of the urban refugees pay rent of above Kshs. 4000 but below Kshs. 5000. Six (4.8%) pay above Kshs.5000. However out of 124 respondents, 9 respondents did not know how much rent they paid. This is equivalent to 7.2% of the total respondents. The table below illustrates the rent gaps:

**Table 4: Representation of Amount of Rents Paid Among Urban Refugees**

No.of Respondents	Rent Paid in Kshs.	Percentage of the Respondents
40	500 -1000	32.3
42	Above 1000 - 2000	33.9
12	Above 2000 - 3000	9.7
8	Above 3000 - 4000	6.5
7	Above 4000 - 5000	5.6
6	Above 5000	4.8
*9	<i>*Not applicable (did not Know)</i>	*7.2
<b>124</b>		<b>100.0</b>

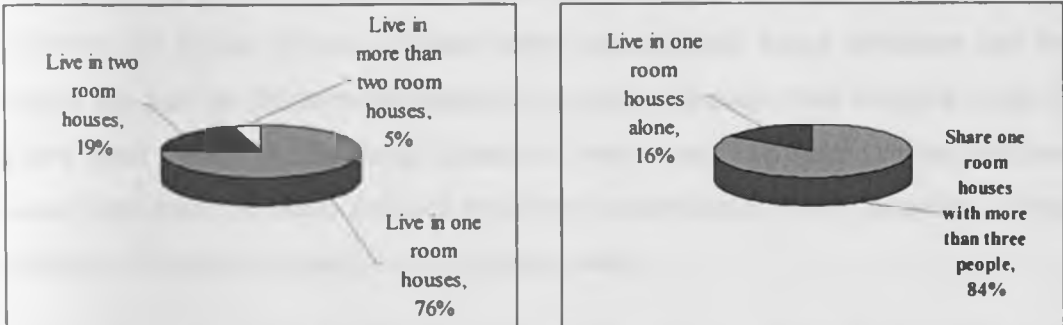
Majority of urban refugees afford to pay less than Kshs.1000. As the rent increases, the number of urban refugees able to pay reduces. It was also observed that 7.2% of

the respondents did not know how much rent they pay. This number could comprise children who are dependants or even adults who are fully dependant and are accommodated by other refugees. Rent is usually based on house facilities and space available, therefore the lower the rent, the smaller the house space and the fewer the house facilities. Bigger houses would have facilities like Kitchen, bathrooms and several bedrooms, but this can be manifested by the amount of rent paid in relation to the market value. Smaller houses may comprise only one room serving as kitchen, bedroom and may be toilet and bathroom located separately outside and for communal usage. This arrangement raises the question of hygiene and privacy being difficult to achieve.

Majority (75.8%) of the total respondents live in one-room houses. 19.3% live in two-room houses while 4.8% live in more than two-roomed houses. Of concern is 42 out of 124 respondents which represents 33.8% shares one-roomed houses with more than 3 people, compared to 8 respondents (6.4%) who live in one-roomed house alone.

The pie-charts below gives a comparison of house type among urban refugees and the living standards on sharing of house facilities.

**Pie Charts 3 & 4: Graphic Comparison of House Space and Occupancy Levels**



From the pie-charts, majority of urban refugees share one-roomed houses. This sharing is for between two to three people per room. This is done primarily to save on house rent. The other reason is to accommodate new refugees who arrive into the

country and their fellow refugees need to accommodate them until such a time they can rent their own houses.

This sharing stretches the house facilities to the limit. Electricity, water and sewages are over used. Therefore, urban refugees are currently living in congested houses with inadequate facilities. Over three-quarters of the urban refugees are accompanying single room houses. Kitchen, bedroom, toilet (if any) are all in one room. This is unhygienic especially where women, children and men are sharing the same room.

#### **4.5.2 Pertinent Problems Among Urban Refugees in Housing**

Urban refugees are facing special problems regarding shelter. The common problems among urban refugees are discussed below:

Majority are living in one-roomed houses. Most of these rooms have no water, electricity or inbuilt toilets. It is not possible to install these facilities in one-roomed houses. This raises the question of hygiene. They live in these structures with infants, the aged and also adolescents among other groups. There is no privacy which is expected as each of these groups has its specific needs. They use candles and other poorly made lamps to substitute electricity. These are paraffin lamps. The exposure of these lamps to small children is a disaster in waiting as the bigger the group living together, the higher the risk of these lamps burning their house structures and the higher the risk of children consuming the paraffin among other dangers. Lack of piped water means walking long distances to buy water. The water vendors get their water from many sources, some of which are contaminated during handling. Urban refugees also require money to buy adequate water.

To cut on costs and as a survival strategy, urban refugees share one-roomed house among themselves. They sacrifice privacy and hygiene. Urban refugees live in houses located in congested environments, slums or semi-slum environments. This is where they can afford to pay rent. In these environments, there are health risks due to open sewages. In the slums there are low power lines with powerful transformers

next to their house structures and huge fuel pipelines buried under their house structures. The land on which their structures stand is owned by the government near rivers, roads or factories or other government property. The government gives just a few days notice to demolish their structures if need arises. There is lack of permanency in the areas where urban refugees are settled. Electricity lines, open sewages, roads and highways are a major risk to their lives.

House owners capitalize on urban refugee situation. They require them to pay much higher rent, many months rent deposit compared to Kenyans living in the same house structures. Kenya landlord's believe urban refugees are desperate for shelter. Many other people believe urban refugees may have run away across borders with a lot of money or they have rich relatives and friends across the transnational borders leading to this exploitative situation. But also landlords have no guarantee that urban refugees will stay for long in their premises, that they will use the premises in an orderly manner.

Many landlords have in the past had bad experiences with Somali refugees who host all their friends and relatives in every room of their premises leaving toilets, kitchens and ceilings of their houses in unrepaired situation. These experiences and rumours have made owners of the houses to ask for higher rents and higher deposits in comparison. There are no conflicts and dispute resolution systems or structures for aggrieved parties.

Urban refugees and landlords/ladies do not have any formal tenant-landlord/lady agreements between the two parties, usually the landlords keep on changing the agreements making urban refugees to leave under their mercy. Urban refugees do not have any legal documents to be used for any contracts; they are also not keen on contracts because they are not stable in any environment at any one time. Therefore, they are not able to predict their stay in any particular premises. There are language barriers in understanding and signing of bidding contracts. There is also the question of money to draw contracts. Urban refugees are therefore not interested or keen in formal agreements based on the tedious procedures involved. They also do not want



to formalize their presence in the urban areas because they are supposed to be living in designated camps.

Urban refugees do not have regular sources of income; they are forced to negotiate with landlord/ladies to allow them carry over monthly rents as arrears. These arrears can sometime be a problem and a source of harassment by the house owners. Unlike in cases where Kenyans can call for assistance from next of kins, or sacrifice precious properties to settle rent arrears, urban refugees do not have any of these options. House owners may take this opportunity for un-called relationships with tenant ladies or even tenant men where house owners are landladies. They may misuse them for their errands with little complaints and with no pay. Urban refugees are also expected to reciprocate by being good otherwise they cannot determine relationship with Kenyan neighbours and house owners without negative effect on their stay.

#### 4.6 Monthly Income and sources of income

Almost half of the respondents (47.5%) had no monthly income. A small number (21.7%) earn an income of not more than Kshs. 2000. Those who earn more than Kshs. 2000 per month were 28.2% with the highest earning Kshs. 10000 per month. The table below shows summary of the respondents' monthly income and their sources of income.

**Table 5: Monthly Income and Sources of Income**

Monthly Income (Kshs)	Respondents	Percentage to the Total Respondents
No income at all	60	48.4
Btw 500 - 2000	27	21.8
More than 2000 but below 5000	25	20.2
Above 5000	12	9.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Majority of urban refugees have no defined sources of income. They depend on generosity of the environment. Institutions such as churches, NGO's are doing a commendable job in ensuring livelihood of the urban refugees. They have particularly played a key role in urban lifestyle adaptation, goal attainment and integration of urban refugees. They have secured shelter, fed and attended to the medical needs of urban refugees.

Kenyans living among urban refugees have also played a significant role in the welfare of individual refugees. To supplement their resources, they engage in illicit trade such as prostitution, begging, hawking among others. City authorities constantly harass them. Begging is a major source of income among urban refugees. They sit in the city streets near mosques alone or with small children and beg. Sometimes they walk around homes near where they live asking for assistance. Incomes from begging can never be enough; the question of harassment by city authorities compounds the urban refugee's income sources. Sometimes they pretend to be sick/unwell, they may act disabled among other strategies to call for sympathy while begging.

A small percentage of urban refugees are well-off relatively in comparison to the general population of urban refugees. They have skills and lucky to acquire formal or semi-formal employment. Some of these employments are in translation of languages especially among the French speaking urban refugees from the Great Lakes who translate to Kiswahili and English. Others are artists who are gifted in drawing. They have guaranteed monthly income while some also depend on transnational relatives and friends who remit money regularly. They have been able to open small businesses using their skills such as Ethiopian food parlors, translation classes, salons, dress-making shops, among others. Many other urban refugees are employed as house helps, gate keepers, casual labourers in construction sites.

Some NGOs and churches have programmes in helping urban refugees by giving them remittances to buy food, pay for shelter and also for medical purposes. As noticed, the higher the monthly income, the fewer the number of urban refugees and the lower the monthly income, the more the number of urban refugees.

## 4.7 Classification of Basic Needs

The study sought to know the most challenging needs from urban refugees by asking them to rank the housing, food and health in order of: most challenging, challenging and least challenging. The table below tabulates the results:

**Table 6: Ranking of Basic Needs (Food, Health and Shelter)**

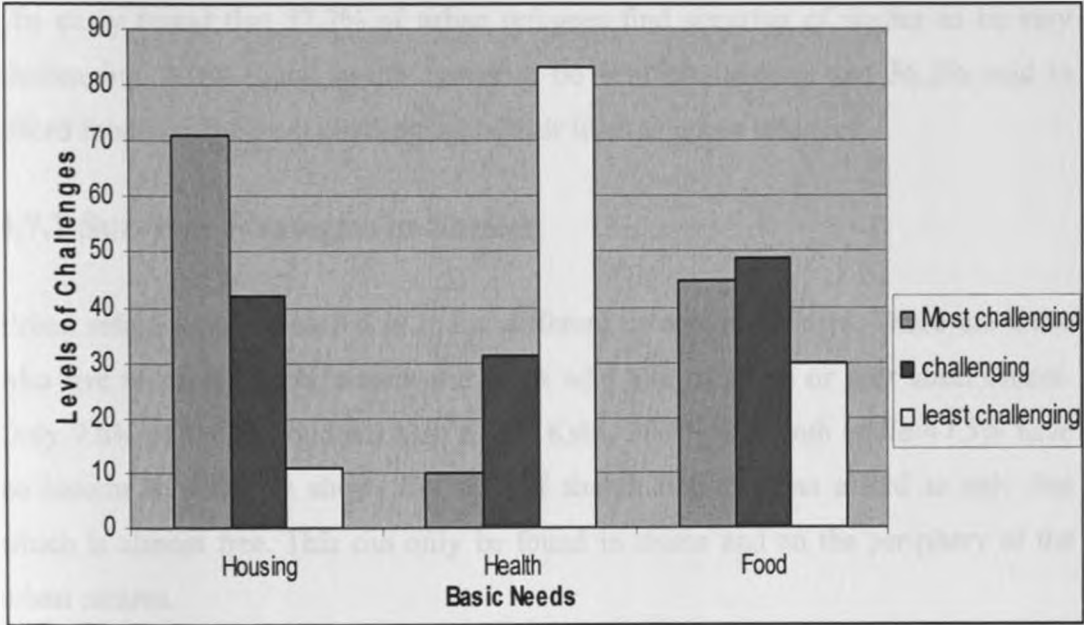
Levels of challenges	Housing		Health		Food	
	Respondents	percentage	Respondents	percentage	Respondents	percentage
<b>Most challenging</b>	71	57.2	10	8.1	45	36.3
<b>Challenging</b>	42	33.9	31	25.0	49	39.5
<b>Least challenging</b>	11	8.9	83	66.9	30	24.2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From these data, it means urban refugees are worried most by housing, followed by food and least of their worries is health. Health is not a priority because individuals have option for self-medication, can try and stay safe to reduce risks of getting ill. GTZ has a clinic, but open only for recognized urban refugees. Majority of urban refugees are not recognized hence depend on public health institutions where they are attended but pay as foreigners. Without sources of income majority forgo treatment.

There is no free shelter in Nairobi. To find affordable housing is the biggest problem because majority of urban refugees do not have any income. Relatives and friends may be already sharing accommodation with other refugees. Housing requires direct payment of rent, this is not the case with food or health. Landlords/ladies require deposits and many months rent before providing the house. To raise this money among urban refugees is most challenging because they have no legitimate sources of income.

Access to food was neither too challenging. Urban refugees forgo three meals a day or even alternate days for feeding. They depend on generosity of Kenyans, churches and NGOs who feed them.

**Graph 3: Ranking of Basic Needs**



The table above illustrates urban refugee opinion of basic needs. Although housing, health and food were the most immediate needs among urban refugees, educational opportunities, security and sources of income were mentioned as other basic needs for urban refugees. For young adults, they discontinued schooling their countries. The need to finalize their education still ranks high in their priorities. Most of them were in middle level colleges and universities in their countries of origin. In urban centres they are required to pay school/college fees at the rate of foreigners.

Security plays a significant role among urban refugees who fled their countries for political reasons. Ethiopians and Eritreans were the most affected by issues of security. They have been border hostilities in their countries and they have the fears that some agents have been following them across borders. This is one reason why they do not want to stay in the camps where they could easily be identified. Urban refugees from Great Lakes especially Rwandese and Burundi fear government agents

who may be sent to eliminate them across borders. For many years they have tribal massacres. Rwanda had the 1994 massacre which even today has psychological effects among those who witnessed these murders.

#### **4.7.1 Survival Strategies for Basic Needs (shelter, health and food)**

The study found that 57.2% of urban refugees find securing of shelter to be very challenging, 8.0% found health issues to be very challenging and 36.2% said to afford food was the most challenging in their lives as urban refugees.

#### **4.7.2 Survival Strategies in Shelter**

Urban refugees are scattered in many different estates in Nairobi. There are those who live in middle class estates and those who live in slums or near slum estates. Only 9.6% of the respondents earn above Kshs. 5000 per month while 47.5% have no income at all. This shows the kind of shelter majority can afford is only that which is almost free. This can only be found in slums and on the periphery of the urban centres.

Kenyan landlords and land ladies do not treat urban refugees differently from other tenants. They are required to abide by their rules and regulations. But to cash on the emergency, they are always charged a higher rent compared to the Kenyan tenants. They are also required to pay deposit for much more months compared to Kenyan tenants. They don't get any written agreements but operate with fluid informal arrangements with owners of the houses. Refugees from same country are found living in the same locality to ensure comradeship. They are able to share their own problems as a people with common interest.

To survive, majority live in one-roomed houses, they share these units with as many as three people. By sharing, they are able to cut on the rent as they divide according to their income in any one month. They are able to share on all the facilities required in the house. To ensure they do not pay very high rent, they secure housing on the

periphery of the city. Majority would be living in areas like Ruiru, Kayole, Uthiru while others live in slums like Korogocho, Kawagware and Kibera.

Sometime they have rent arrears and are forced to negotiate with the landlords/ladies a grace period to pay. This is tricky as they are not guaranteed any income at the end of the month. They beg from Kenyan neighbours for rent, who may take advantage to sexually exploit female urban refugees.

#### **4.7.3 Survival Strategies in Health Issues**

Many urban refugees are prone to cold ailments because of the places they live in. Other ailments that are common include typhoid and malaria. Unlike in housing, health sector does not discriminate urban refugees. It is the economic well –off of individual refugee that determines where to seek for medical treatment. However in private and public healthcare systems, they are required to pay the rates for foreigners. It is only in the city council clinics where they pay the same rates as Kenyans.

Majority therefore cannot afford private and public health systems without some external support. Many of them opt for self-treatment or medication as noted that only 8.0% felt that health is the most challenging basic need while 66.9% felt health is the least challenging of all the basic needs. The most affected by self-treatment are the vulnerable mothers, children and elderly because they require constant check-up by medical practioners.

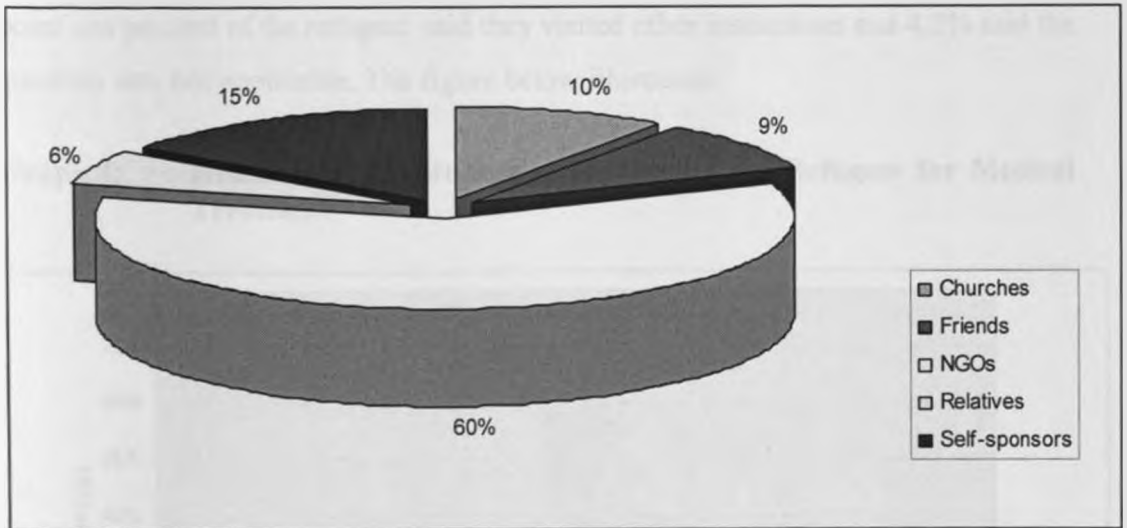
GTZ and several other churches provide for medical treatment for urban refugees. But the number is overwhelming and these institutions only cater for small illnesses with complicated cases being referred to bigger hospitals. These institutions are located far from where refugees live. For example, GTZ clinic is located in up-market, Westlands in Nairobi. Urban refugees walk as far as twenty kilometers from Ruiru and Kayole to this clinic because they don't have busfare. Unless it is critical, urban refugees treat themselves at home by buying simple medications at the nearest chemists and shops.

#### 4.7.4 Sponsors of Health Among Urban Refugees

Many urban refugees agreed that they have health problems. This was indicated by 90.3% of the respondents who said at least in the past one year they had consulted a doctor for treatment. Only 3.2% said they had not consulted a doctor for treatment. From the same question, 22.5% responded by indicating that the question was not applicable to them.

The research also sought to understand who sponsored the big number of refugees who required medical consultation. The pie chart below gives the analysis of institutions that offered medical attention to the urban refugees:

**Pie-Chart 5: Sponsors of Urban Refugees Medical Needs**



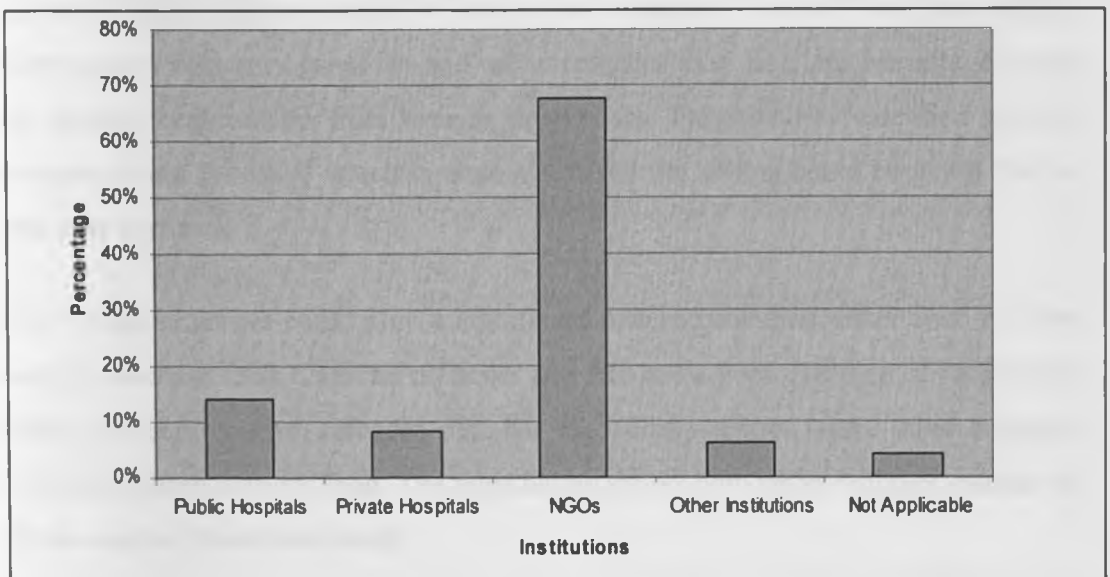
It was noted that NGO's such as GTZ were the main providers of medical care to urban refugees. Other providers were the churches, relatives and friends; both refugees and local community. However, a sizeable percentage of 15% of urban refugees were taking care of their medical expenses.

It is important to note that friends and relatives play a role in sponsoring urban refugees for medical care. This shows they still have some communication network with them even when they are across the borders. There are social structures and

systems in place to facilitate connections between the two groups. Communication especially through telephone costs a lot of money depending with the distance, period and frequency of the calls. Urban refugees may have other priorities other than food, health and shelter, unless they live with friends and relatives. There is also 15% of urban refugees who are able to take care of their medical needs. This is a big percentage especially in a situation where monthly income is not guaranteed. This demonstrates that urban refugees still are concerned about their health even when they don't have any income. It becomes more costly to ignore illness or defer treatment waiting for sponsors who may not be available at all.

This was collaborated when they were asked where they went for treatment. NGOs were the main institutions where 67.5% of urban refugees visit for treatment. In public hospitals and private hospitals, 14.0% and 8.2% respectively visited them. Six point one percent of the refugees said they visited other institutions and 4.2% said the question was not applicable. The figure below illustrates:

**Graph 4: Health Care Institutions visited by Urban Refugees for Medical Treatment**





#### **4.7.5 Survival in Search of Food Among Urban Refugees**

Thirty-six point two percent of the respondents felt getting food was most challenging, 39.5% felt getting food was challenging and 24.1% felt getting food was least challenging. This means there were very divergent views on how individual refugees afforded food. To afford food was neither too challenging nor was it least challenging. It depended on sources of income of individuals.

Lack of work permits and business permits makes it difficult for urban refugees to work or own small businesses, which would enable them to buy foodstuff. Although capital is necessary to start-off any business, without valid legal documents makes it difficult to operate without police harassment. This makes it difficult for urban refugees to engage in activities where they could earn income for livelihood.

There are varieties of food available in most markets in urban centres which urban refugees could obtain at very cheap prices. In many markets, food is measured in as much small quantities as affordable by the buyer. This could be the reason why urban refugees feel getting food is not a challenge. Where consideration of balanced diets is ignored, urban refugees could be feeding on whatever foodstuff they can afford. Kenyans are also very generous and urban refugees may take this advantage to get any excess food remains from Kenyan neighbours. This could be extended into the markets where foodstuff which is almost outlived the selling could be given free to whoever borrows.

NGO's and churches could play a significant role in providing either food or little cash to purchase food. Catholic churches and JRS are a good example of institutions which are feeding urban refugees. JRS has big feeding centres where urban refugees visit every three days for food. The table below shows how urban refugees manage to obtain each of these basic needs:

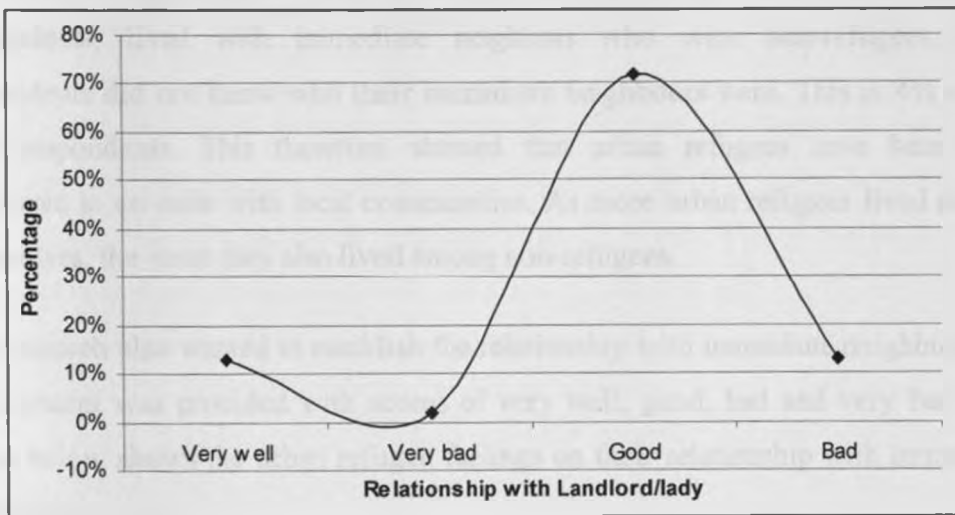
**Table 7: How the most challenging Basic Needs are obtained**

Basic Needs	Percentage of most challenging Basic Need	Some ways the Basic Needs are obtained
Housing	57.2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Three Point Eight percent share one roomed house with more than three people,</li> <li>○ Negotiate with landlords/ladies to give grace period to pay accruing rents,</li> <li>○ seek assistance from Kenyan immediate neighbors in paying of rent in months when in difficulties,</li> <li>○ Small percentage get assistance from Ngo's, UNHCR and transnational relatives and friends,</li> <li>○ income from petty small businesses, casual labour, illicit trade like prostitution,</li> <li>○ Small percentage is in formal employment though the income is not enough.</li> </ul>
Health	8.0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ self medication by buying medicine on the counter,</li> <li>○ seek financial assistance from Institutions such as Ngo's, UNHCR, GTZ, churches,</li> <li>○ attend GTZ clinic,</li> <li>○ assistance from transnational relatives and friends, local relatives and neighbours,</li> <li>○ a small proportion depends on formal employment and informal employment</li> </ul>
Food	36.2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ assistance from transnational relatives and friends, local relatives and neighbours,</li> <li>○ seek assistance from Institutions such as Ngo's, UNHCR, GTZ, churches,</li> <li>○ Income from Begging, prostitution, casual labour</li> </ul>

## 4.8 How Urban Refugees Relate with their Landlords/Ladies

Most urban refugees have cordial relationship with their landlords or land ladies. When asked to rate the relationship on the scale of very well, good, bad and very bad, 72% said they had a good relationship with their landlord or land lady. Only 2% had very bad relationships with their landlords or land ladies. Thirteen percent said the relationship has been very well and as another 13% indicated the relationship has been bad. This is illustrated by the pie chart below:

**Graph 5: Relationships Among Urban Refugees and their Landlords/Ladies**



Kenyan landlords treat urban refugees as they treat Kenyans when it comes to service provision. But because of suspicion, urban refugees are forced to pay higher rents than Kenyans and also pay deposit for several more months compared to Kenyans.

Conflicts and disputes arise when individual urban refugees are unable to pay rent in time. On very few occasions conflicts may arise from bad use of the facilities provided. These facilities may include water, electricity and bathrooms. Sometimes the conflict may be lack of adherence to informal agreements on use of the entire facility. These conflicts lead to individual refugees or family being thrown out of the premises if common agreement cannot be reached.

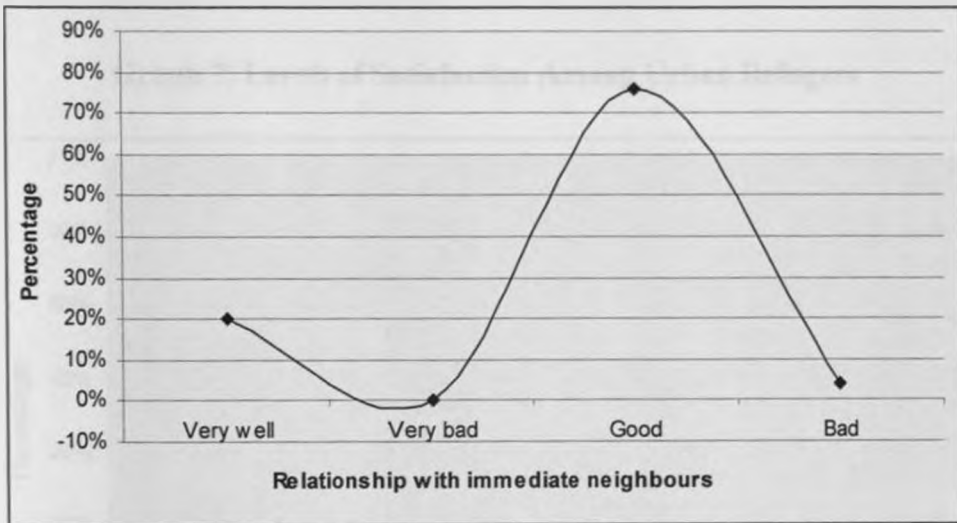
Urban refugees try to play down conflicts and disputes because they do not want to antagonize the landlords/ladies. They are aware of the risks involved if they are not in friendly relationships with the house owners, the worst being evictions. They also fear causing a lot of attention as authorities such as police would notice their presence and constantly harass them.

#### **4.8.1 Relationship with Neighbours**

When asked if they know their immediate neighbours, 62 out of 124 respondents said their immediate neighbours were refugees. This represents 50% of the total respondents. Forty five point nine percent of the respondents, which is 57 out of 124 respondents, lived with immediate neighbors who were non-refugees. Four respondents did not know who their immediate neighbours were. This is 4% of the total respondents. This therefore showed that urban refugees have been well integrated to co-exist with local communities. As more urban refugees lived among themselves, the more they also lived among non-refugees.

The research also wanted to establish the relationship with immediate neighbours. A rank system was provided with scores of very well, good, bad and very bad. The graph below shows the urban refugee feelings on their relationship with immediate neighbours.

**Graph 6: Relationship Among Urban Refugees and Immediate Neighbours**



This showed that urban refugees co-exist and integrate well with the immediate neighbours as 76% represent good relationship with no respondent who said the relationship with the neighbour was very bad. However 4% of the respondents indicated that their relationship with neighbours was bad while 20% ranked their relationship with immediate neighbours to be very well.

There are no serious conflicts and disputes among refugees and the local communities. Local communities are generous and help out the refugees to settle down. Where the immediate neighbours are refugees, they help the newcomers in learning the do's and don'ts.

Urban refugees are also likely to choose their urban refugees' neighbours carefully. They are likely to choose neighbours from their countries and even of the same ethnic groups. They would be looking for social support in a foreign land. Therefore, there are likely to be very little conflicts and disputes with these neighbours.

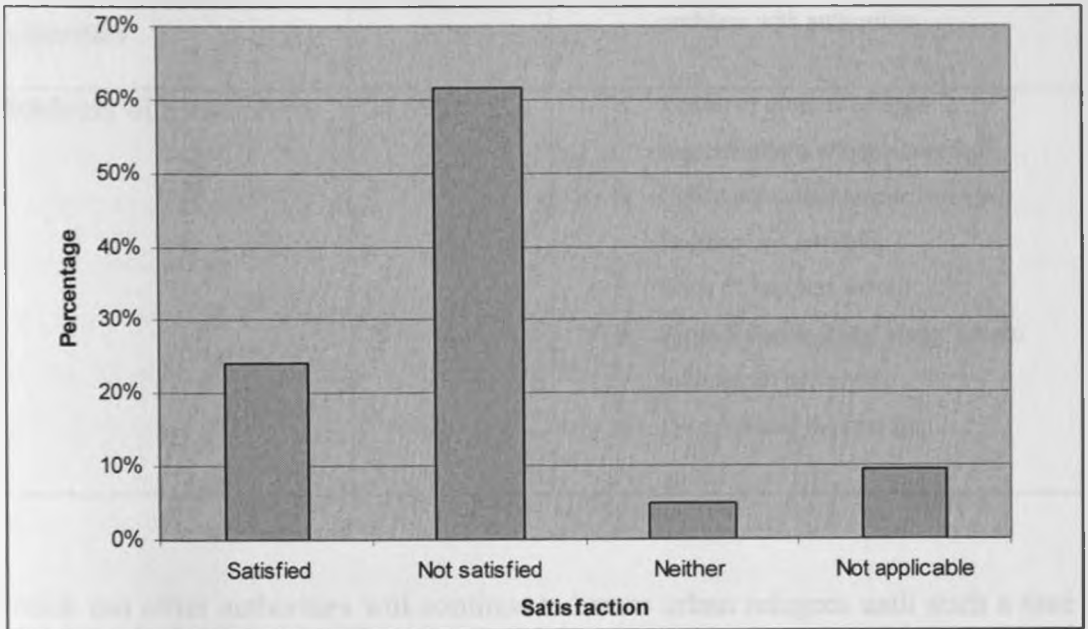
#### **4.8.2 How Satisfied or Dissatisfied are Urban Refugees**

Urban refugees were asked whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied being in Nairobi. Out of 124 respondents over half (61.5%) felt they were not satisfied, 24.1% said they were satisfied as refugees in Nairobi, while 4.8% were neither satisfied nor

dissatisfied and 9.6% responded by indicating that the question was not applicable.

The graph below shows the representation of urban refugees' feelings:

**Graph 7: Levels of Satisfaction Among Urban Refugees**



It is unlikely that urban refugees can be satisfied in Nairobi. They live with no legal documents. This is the root cause of most of their problems. Without valid legal documents, they cannot engage in any meaningful search of livelihood without harassment. City council security personnel take advantage of this situation. Regular policemen/women also harass urban refugees without any adequate reason. For the urban refugees who are distinct especially the Somali and Sudanese refugees, they are easily picked out by police. Other factors that negatively affect urban refugees is language problem. Even when they have opportunities, they cannot express themselves.

When asked whether they ever had any problems with the authorities such as police, city council authorities or security personnel, 65.4% said they never had any problems with the security or city council while 34.6% said they have had problems at times with the security or city council. The table below shows the kinds of problems they encountered:

**Table 8: Experiences of Urban Refugees with Authorities**

<b>Problems experienced with City Council or security authorities</b>		
	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Some Major Reasons for Harassment</b>
No problems with authorities	65.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have never been in any kind of problem with authorities</li> </ul>
Problems with authorities	34.6%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Required to show refugee identifications which never had</li> <li>○ Could not communicate in either English or Kiswahili</li> <li>○ Lack of business permit</li> <li>○ Rounded with others along streets/ loitering at late night</li> <li>○ Do not know the reasons</li> </ul>

Police and other authorities will continue to harass urban refugees until such a time when the urban refugees are recognized by law. Police are aware urban refugees fear arrests because they don't have valid refugee documents, valid business permits and where they are available, police ignore them. The authorities have little knowledge about the rights of refugees. They take refugees as criminals. More often Kenya police mishandle and arrest people without any sufficient reason. At night they would take everybody as a criminal. The fact that urban refugees can easily be recognized and are unable to argue or reason out with the police or city council authorities because of language complicates their situation. They are arrested without being given a chance to explain. Kenya police are also ranked high in corruption and they assume urban refugees would automatically bribe them. Arrest and confinement of urban refugees may lead to repatriation to their countries, a situation any refugee would least expect.

Many urban refugees keep to themselves and move out very little. This is a strategy to ensure they don't expose themselves to arrests. A big percentage therefore would not have any contact with city authorities, because they rarely move out of their

compounds, neighbourhood or even in houses where they live. But at times police carry out swoops in areas where they believe they want to enhance security. This may lead to arrests of urban refugees.

#### **4.9 Mandate Papers and Other Legal Documents**

Urban refugees are only supposed to be out of the camps with special permission. They are issued with mandate papers when they are recognized as refugees by UNHCR. However, asked whether they have mandate papers or any other legal document as refugees, 68.5% said they have them while 31.5% said they don't have any legal document as refugees. Mandate papers are usually issued by UNHCR. Kenya government at one point issued Alien Identity Documents. Many of the urban refugees gave the following reasons of not having any legal document:

- Awaiting interviews at UNCHR offices,
- Validity of the documents expired long ago but decided to continue staying in Nairobi,
- Have never sought for any documents from UNHCR office or Kenya government,
- No idea of the need of the refugee legal documents

There is a lot of confusion as different individuals hold different kinds of documents. The major categories were the mandate papers, alien identity documents and appointment letters to the UNHCR offices. But most of these documents were either not valid as they expired many months ago, were due to expire with a couple of days. Photocopies of these documents were also provided. It was not able to certify them as true copies of originals.

Screening, registration and issuance of mandate papers by UNHCR is currently taking considerable amount of time. This allows many refugees and asylum seekers to hang around the city waiting for interviews. At one point they adapt and integrate themselves to the lifestyle of the city. UNCHR is to blame on time taken in processing mandate papers, the proliferation of different types of legal documents



issued to refugees, and lack of effective reach out to the refugees arriving into the city centre.

#### **4.9.1 Leadership Structures Among Urban Refugees**

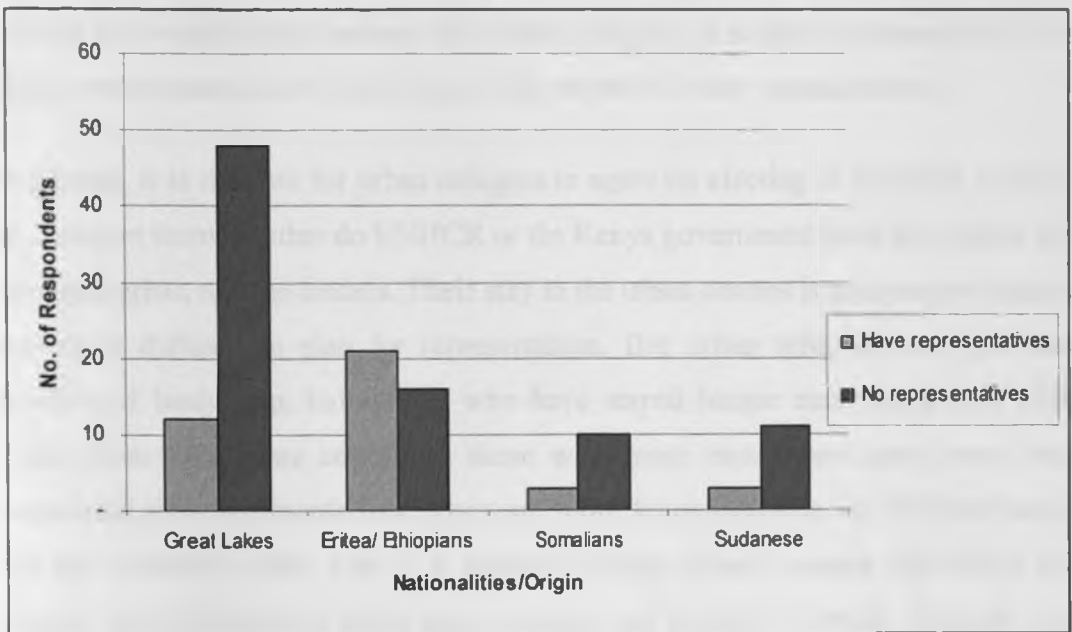
Majority of urban refugees have no defined leadership structures. Conflicts and disputes are resolved through amicable arbitration procedures. UNHCR used to have meetings with refugees' leaders but did away with the system when it became clear that the leaders were using their positions to play the role of gatekeepers.

In reality, refugees have their own opinion leaders, but this varies from one community to the other and the way individuals perceived others. Out of 124 respondents interviewed, 85 respondents said they don't have any recognized leader against 39 who said they have recognized leaders. This is a percentage of 68.6% for those with no leaders against 31.4 % for those with recognized leaders.

Classified into four distinct nationalities of: Great lakes, Somalis, Sudanese, Eriterian/Ethiopians, 85 respondents said they don't have any known leaders. Forty eight of these respondents came from Great Lakes, 16 from Eriterian/Ethiopian origin, 10 Somalis and 11 Sudanese.

However, 39 of the total respondents acknowledged they have representatives. Twelve of them were from Great Lakes, 21 from Eriterian/Ethiopian origin, 3 from Sudanese origin and 3 from Somali origin. The chart below summarizes this representation:

**Graph 8: Leadership Among Urban Refugees**



Leaders among urban refugees were selected based on sex, economic power and knowledge of refugee problems. Their role is to arbitrate disputes and conflicts among refugees and also between refugees and local communities. As leaders, they are respected and they are looked upon to solve disputes.

Leaders serve as a channel of communication serving as links between UNHCR, NGOs, Government and their country of origin. When the government issues decrees such as a census for urban refugees they are relied upon by UNHCR to pass this information to the others. Although, UNHCR and the government do not recognize these leaders in paper, they recognize them informally and they work with them in translation and interpretation of policy issues to the grassroots.

Different groups have their own opinion leader whom they recognize informally. UNHCR and the government have no systems through which channels of communication should flow to reach all urban refugees. Urban refugees likewise have no recognized forums through which they can channel their problems to the UNHCR or to the Kenya government. They use protests, demonstrations and strikes to put their problems to the authorities.

Majority of urban refugees from Great Lakes would not want their presence noticed because many run away out of fear of persecution. They are concentrated in urban centres and would rarely interact with other refugees or Kenyan communities. This aspect makes them to live individually with no need for any representation.

In general, it is difficult for urban refugees to agree on electing or choosing a leader to represent them. Neither do UNHCR or the Kenya government have any criteria for selecting urban refugee leaders. Their stay in the urban centres is also not predictable making it difficult to plan for representation. But urban refugees have put into position of leadership, individuals who have stayed longer near where they live. Also, those with more education, those with more money and men have been considered their representatives. They are more knowledgeable on different issues and are consulted often. This is a survival strategy which ensures individuals are abreast with information about their country and impact of social, political and economic issues on them in the host country.

## CHAPTER FIVE:

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction to Summaries, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter is divided into three major parts: summary, conclusions and recommendations. The sections are arranged into: general summary, summaries on problems and survival strategies for housing, health and food. The last section deals with general recommendations and sub-section on policy recommendations and recommendation for further research.

#### 5.1 General Summary

1. The influx of urban refugees into urban areas is gradually going to increase in the coming years. The research noted a tremendous increase of urban refugees from the year 2000 and onward. Today, the crisis in Darfur, Northern Uganda, renewed fighting in Somalia and prevailing drought would definitely contribute to increase of urban refugees in Kenya.
2. The hostile living conditions in Kakuma and Dadaab camps play a significant role among refugees to sneak out of the camps into urban centres. Issues of sexual harassment to female refugees, individual security especially to political self-exiled, weather problems (location of the camps) and income generating activities need to be looked into in order to address the issue of migration of refugees into urban centres.
3. Housing, health and food remains the biggest challenge for urban refugees. Other challenges include security for individual who fear persecution for political purposes, education for students and means to engage in income generating activities.

### **5.1.1 Summary on Problems and Survival Strategies in Housing**

1. Urban refugees live in the outskirts of the city. Based on the rent they pay, these houses are only found on the periphery of the city boundaries or in near slum environments. It is here they contend with high bus fares in commuting to the city centres for health/medical attention, to the NGO's and churches who help them. UNHCR office is also located in the city centre. These areas usually have security problems such as mugging, house breaking among others because of lack of police patrols and poor lighting of the general areas.
2. Majority of them live in one-roomed houses and they also share one room with more than three other people. This enables them to share on rent. They also play a part in providing shelter to the new arrivals and also the disadvantaged who are unable to contribute in any way for rent. The research established that 47.5% have no source of income at all and 21.7% earn between Kenya shillings 500 and 2000 a month. By sharing one-roomed houses with more than three people brings into focus the issues of hygiene.
3. Landlords/ladies exploit urban refugees by charging them slightly higher rent and many months deposit compared to the rates Kenyan living in the same areas pay. This is meant to guarantee the landlords some kind of security incase the tenants leave without notice or misuse the facility such as bathrooms if any, kitchen, walls and roofs.
4. There are no formal (contracts) agreements between landlords and tenants in housing. This complicates the issues of dispute and conflict resolution. They live at the mercy of landlords. Although many Kenyan tenants also don't have formal contracts, they have dispute and conflicts resolution systems and structures such as house tribunals, provincial administration systems such as assistant chiefs and chiefs who sort out most of these problems on daily basis. Urban refugees have no access to these systems and structures by virtue of being aliens and illegal immigrants into the urban centres.

5. There is cordial relationship between urban refugees and the local communities. There is also cordial relationship between the landlords and urban refugees generally. There is mutual trust between the urban refugees and local communities. But small conflicts do occur when urban refugees are unable to raise rent in good time or have been in rent arrears for a considerable period of time.

### **5.1.2 Summary on Problems and Survival Strategies in Health**

1. The most frequent ailments among urban refugees are common colds and malaria. This was attributed to where they live and the conditions in which they are exposed to. They don't afford warm clothing and are forced to walk long distances early in the morning and late in the evenings in search of casual labour, begging and also late evenings. They also live in areas where mosquitoes can breed faster due to stagnant water and sewages.
2. Majority of urban refugees (90%) have had health problems in the past one year and consulted a doctor. In public and private health clinics and hospitals, they pay as foreigners for medical consultation. It is only in the city council clinics where urban refugees are attended and charged the same rate as Kenyan patients.
3. NGOs play a significant role in sponsoring urban refugees for medical care and treatment. Others who contribute towards healthcare of urban refugees are the churches and transnational relatives and friends.
4. NGOs (GTZ) operate healthcare clinic, but is only open to recognized refugees who have special permission to be in the urban areas. The facility is not able to cater for all urban refugees. Like churches and other NGOs, there are agreements (contracts) with medical hospitals and health centres where complicated cases are referred for specialized attention.

5. Where urban refugees cannot raise busfare to attend clinics or NGOs and churches who can attend to their health needs, or in cases where the individual urban refugee is not recognized by these institutions, they opt for self-treatment at home by buying or borrowing medication.

### **5.1.3 Summary on Problems and Survival Strategies in Search of Food**

1. Most urban refugees (76%) feel they are not satisfied as urban refugees in Nairobi. Thirty-one point four percent have no legal documents or mandate papers and live as aliens in Nairobi. Thirty-four percent have at any one time experienced problems with the city authorities such as city council or regular policemen/women on patrol. Being aliens they are not able to freely engage in search for food through employment or businesses.
2. With majority of urban refugees without legal documents, they have no opportunity to work. They therefore depend on churches, NGOs as channels of food donations. Thirty five percent said between food, health issues and housing, getting food was most challenging and 39.5% said getting food was challenging.
3. To obtain food, they resort to prostitution, begging and casual labor when lucky. But transnational friends and relatives play a key role by remitting some monies for their livelihood.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

1. Unless the government and UNHCR address the root causes of influx of refugees to the urban centres such as poor housing, poor health systems and structures in the camps and lack of livelihood means in the camps, there will be a continued rise of urban refugees in each preceding year. Majority of urban refugees though did not come from the camps (37.04% of male urban refugees and 29.8% of female urban refugees).

2. Housing will remain the greatest challenge for urban refugees to obtain compared to health and food. As much, most refugees will continue to live in congested less than two-roomed houses and on the outskirts of the city centre. Living on the periphery of the city centre, sharing the houses among other refugees, negotiating with landlords for rent arrears are the major survival strategies among urban refugees for their housing needs.
3. NGOs, churches and transnational friends and relatives play a significant role in sponsoring and providing for the urban refugees' health needs. Self-treatment, reliance on NGOs, churches and friends are the coping strategies on health needs among urban refugees.
4. Obtaining food is not a challenge among urban refugees. But to obtain food, urban refugees engage in deviant behaviour such as prostitution, begging and when available casual labour. In such of livelihood, they are constantly harassed by city security authorities for small offences such as operating small businesses without permit, lack of identity documents and loitering.
5. There are no structured leadership systems among urban refugees. It is not therefore possible for the government and UNHCR to communicate efficiently and effectively to all urban refugees. However, communities among urban refugees have their own opinion leaders on social, political and economic situations affecting them.
6. The strategies for survival for basic needs are very dynamic and have no direct relationship to the period of arrival of individual urban refugees into the city. Adaptation is therefore not connected with the years spent in the city. Individuals from different countries have their own means of survival and adaptation.
7. Local communities are very hospitable and treat urban refugees with apathy and sympathy. Urban refugees have been able to interact with local



communities with no serious disputes or conflicts in search of basic needs. Urban refugees have trust on local communities.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

This section is divided into general recommendations, recommendations for policy implementations and recommendations for further research. These recommendations emerged from discussions on the data captured and the summary and conclusions of the findings.

### **5.3.1 General Recommendations**

The following general recommendations emerged from the study:

1. For improved welfare of urban refugees, they should have access to facilities like credit and soft loans so that they can engage in meaningful business and income-generating activities. This would ensure they have proper housing, health and food. NGOs and churches dealing with refugees should guarantee security of the loans.
2. UNHCR need to reduce bureaucracy in screening and registration of refugees. The long time taken in these procedures allows individual refugees to adapt to the urban systems and structures. At the point of finalizing these procedures, individuals already have settled to live in Nairobi and are unwilling to relocate to the camps.
3. UNHCR in collaboration with the Kenya government should develop a system of repatriation to the country of origin and blacklisting of individual refugees who fail in the screening and registration procedures. This would discourage applicants who are not genuine from travelling across borders to try their luck.
4. UNHCR need to de-centralize its registration and screening procedure to ensure they have offices especially in the porous borders where incoming refugees can register and be screened before they enter into the city centre. Opening of sub-offices on all the borders would ensure no individuals come

to Nairobi claiming they are seeking refugee status. This will be cheap in terms of repatriation of those rejected.

5. Enhanced road checks should be mounted on all roads from the refugee camps. The checks should involve checking of identity documents to ensure refugees do not leave the camps. Where refugees have special permission to leave the camps, UNHCR officials should accompany them out of the camps to their destinations and also accompany them back to the camps. This would ensure no refugees leave the camp but fail to return.
6. UNHCR should improve life in the camps. This can be done by offering incentives like soft loans, credit to individuals who want to conduct small businesses in the camps. Offering of more quality medical care, education facilities and housing would ensure individual refugees have a reason to stay in the camps.
7. Police constantly harass refugees on lack of proper legal documents. They are usually insensitive to the lifestyle of refugees. Government should create a special police force – Refugee Police Unit within police stations to deal with issues concerning the refugees. They should be trained on human rights, and forced immigration studies. The establishment of this unit should be done the way diplomatic police units, tourists police units are currently established.
8. NGOs should facilitate for the creation of leadership structures among urban refugees based on countries of nationality. The leaders should have the mandate to represent others in meetings with UNHCR, NGOs and government to ensure conflicts are diffused early enough. These agencies should also organize regular meetings with refugees in order to understand their needs and also to stay in touch with the reality on the ground.

### **5.3.2 Policy Recommendations**

The following emerged as policy recommendations from this study:

1. There is an urgent need for the government to pass the Refugee Bill. This will define clearly who are urban refugees and enable interventions for their

needs. This can be done through lobby and advocacy by interest groups and NGOs who have programmes dealing with refugees. At the moment the vacuum that exists in definition leads to exploitation of urban refugees by individuals, social systems and social structures.

2. Governments should be more actively involved in regional bodies such as East African Cooperation, African Union, IGAD and others to deal with the root causes of refugees. Internal conflicts, hostilities and wars between nations bordering Kenya are some of the root causes of refugees. It is only the regional bodies who can sanction the end of these wars by placing trade, economic and social barriers to those countries.
3. There is an urgent need to conduct a census of urban refugees and issue genuine ones with proper refugee documents. This would facilitate provision of services to the recognized refugees. The statistics of urban refugees is not known to date. UNHCR the lead agency working for refugees do not know the exact number of refugees in various urban centres. Its working figure of 15,000 urban refugees is highly disputed by other agencies dealing with urban refugees, although it has unofficial figure of 70,000. Neither does the Ministry of immigration has the figures.
4. A significant number of urban refugees do not have mandate papers or any other legal document as urban refugees. Although more than half of urban refugees have these legal documents, they cannot be authenticated as majority of them do not resemble. The use of alien identity documents and mandate papers creates confusion in service delivery. There is need to standardize the legal documents by issuing all genuine refugees with one standard document.

### **5.3.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

From this research, the following topical issues emerged as topics for possible further research:

1. The survival strategies of vulnerable groups among urban refugees (women, children, aged and disabled). In studying these groups, focus should be on

post-natal and pre-natal care for expectant mothers because health facilities are not free, the experiences these mothers face during delivery, the immunization procedures for children, nutrition requirement for both mothers and children. In discussing the disabled, focus should be on the structures of obtaining livelihood where they are not able to engage in work, their motivation factors of living in the urban centres visa viz the camps.

2. The positive contribution of urban refugees in economy and politics. Very many Somali refugees have matatu and clothing businesses in Eastleigh. Only business people who have PIN numbers pay taxes. As aliens and illegal immigrants, how do they pay the taxes? In places like Eastleigh, the aliens and illegal immigrants never participate in politics. How then are their needs and aspirations represented? For communities like Somali and Sudanese, are they involved with the day –to- day politics of their countries and do they have plans to relocate to their countries?
3. The long-term role of transnational relatives and friends among urban refugees in social network. Many refugees have relatives and friends in Europe. Do they facilitate for fake documentation into the visa applications to enable the urban refugees to join them in Europe. How do they remit monies for basic needs to illegal immigrants and aliens and how the urban refugees collect this money are important issues to understand. And also to find out if these channels are legal.
4. The communication network among urban refugees. UNHCR and the government sometimes issue directives touching on the lifestyle of refugees. What are the communication systems and structures among urban refugees to ensure each member stays informed? The urban refugees organize demonstrations to UNHCR offices to embassies for instant the recent demonstration of Ethiopians to their embassy, how do they manage to communicate to each member of their community in different parts of the city?

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9b). If yes, how do you feel about yourself as a refugee in Nairobi?

a). Satisfied      b). Dissatisfied

c). Others specify)

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9c). If the answer for question 9(a) above is No please explain why you do not have the right documents

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10a). As an urban refugee in Kenya, have you had to get into any problem with Kenyan authorities?    a). Yes      b). No    (Tick where appropriate)

10b) If the answer above is yes, what was the nature of the problem?

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**SECTION B: SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA**

11. What is your profession/career .....

12a). Do you have a family in Kenya? (Tick the correct answer)

(Yes)      (No)

12b). If yes, how many members of your family are living with you today? .....

13. How do you earn your living here in Nairobi?

a). Business (specify)

b). Employed (specify)

14. What is your total monthly household income in Kshs. (take approximately last month for example)

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15. Rank the following social economic needs in order of the most challenging to obtain/afford for you/family: i.e. 1, 2, 3

Housing, ..... Health, ..... Food, .....

others (if any) Mention them in order of priority

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- Key:** 1. Most challenging
- 2. Challenging
- 3. Least challenging
- 4. Affordable/obtainable
- 5. Not applicable

16. Explain how you manage to obtain/afford the item you have ranked the most challenging for you/family

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17. In your opinion, what do you think should be the solution for urban refugee social economic needs.....

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**SECTION C: HOUSING**

18. Which material is used to construct most of the walls of your house? (Tick where necessary)

- a). Stones
- b). Timber
- c). Iron sheet
- d). Mud
- e). Others (specify)

.....

- 19a). How many rooms is the house you are living in? .....
- 19b). In total how many people including your children are accommodated in these room(s) .....
- 20. How much rent do you pay for the house in Kshs. (Incl. Water & electricity) .....
- 21a). Do you consider your total household income enough to pay for your house rent?

(Tick the correct answer)

- a) Yes
- b) No

21b) If **No** explain how you manage to pay your rent?

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22a). How do you relate with your landlord/landlady? (Tick the correct answer)

- a). Very well
- b). Good
- c). Bad,
- d). Very bad

22b). If the answer for the above is not **a** or **b** what is the conflict/issues about?

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23. Who are your immediate door neighbours? (Tick where necessary)

- a). Refugees
- b). Non-refugees
- c). I don't know

24a). How do you relate with your immediate door neighbours:

- a). Very well
- b). Good
- c). Bad,
- d). Very bad

24b). If the answer is not **a** or **b** what is the conflict/issues about?

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5. In your opinion what do you think should be the solution to the refugee problem in housing?

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**SECTION C: HEALTH**

26. How many times on average do you and your family consult a doctor in one year?

(Take last one year for example) .....

27. Where do you or your family members go for medication? (Tick the correct answer)

a) Private hospital/clinic      b) Public hospital/clinic

c) NGO clinic      d) Others (specify) .....

28. How much money on average do you pay for medical consultation and prescription

combined for the whole family (take the last one year for example) Kshs. ....

29. Who provides the money to pay for you/family medical expenses?

- a). Self
- b). Friends
- c). Relatives
- d). UNHCR/GTZ
- e) Others (specify)

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30a) Have you or your family at any one time within the last one year been hospitalised?

(Tick the correct answer)

(Yes)      (No)

30b) If yes, how many days did you/family member stay in hospital? .....

31. What were you diagnosed to be suffering from? (if you were told/know)

32. In your opinion what do you think should be the solution for the urban refugee health problems?

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**SECTION D: LEADERSHIP**

33a). Do you have a refugee leader in your community who you identify with?

- a) Yes                      b) No      (Tick where appropriate)

33b). If yes, how did your community identify him/her as your leader? (Tick where necessary)

- a). Age                      b). Sex                      c). Economic well off  
d). Knowledge of your needs  
e). Other (specify)

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34. Where does he/she live?      (Tick where appropriate)

- a). Within my neighbourhood                      b). Far from my neighbourhood                      c). I don't Know

35. How does your leader help you during conflicts and disputes with your refugee community or with the local community?

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36. In absence of your leader, how are conflicts and disputes within your community resolved?

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37. What is the role of your leader (s) in housing, health and food issues for your refugee community?

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38 In your opinion, does UNHCR recognize your leaders? (Tick the correct answer)

(Yes)

(No)

39 In your opinion, how do you think the issue of leadership among urban refugees can be improved?

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## Key Informant Interview Guide

Dear Respondent,

The interviewer introduces him/herself to the interviewee. He/she introduces the objectives of the study and assures the respondent of confidentiality of all information obtained. The interviewee is also given an opportunity to make any clarification so that the interview could start without fear.

### SECTION A (To be completed by the Interviewer)

Name of the Interviewee.....

Occupation.....

Sex Male/Female (Tick the correct answer)

### SECTION B: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What reasons makes refugees move from camps to the city?
2. To your estimate how many urban refugees do we have in Nairobi today?
3. How do most of urban refugees earn their living in the city?
4. What are their most basic needs?
5. Describe the daily life of an urban refugee?
6. According to you what are the most three challenging social-economic needs for urban refugees?
7. What coping mechanisms do they employ to achieve the most challenging needs?

### SECTION C: HOUSING

8. How do urban refugees access housing?

9. What type of houses do most of them live in?
10. How much do you think they pay for the houses on average?
11. Where do they get money to pay for their rent?
12. How do they relate with their landlords/ladies?
13. How do they relate with the local community and other refugees?
14. In your views, what should be the solution to urban refugees housing problems?

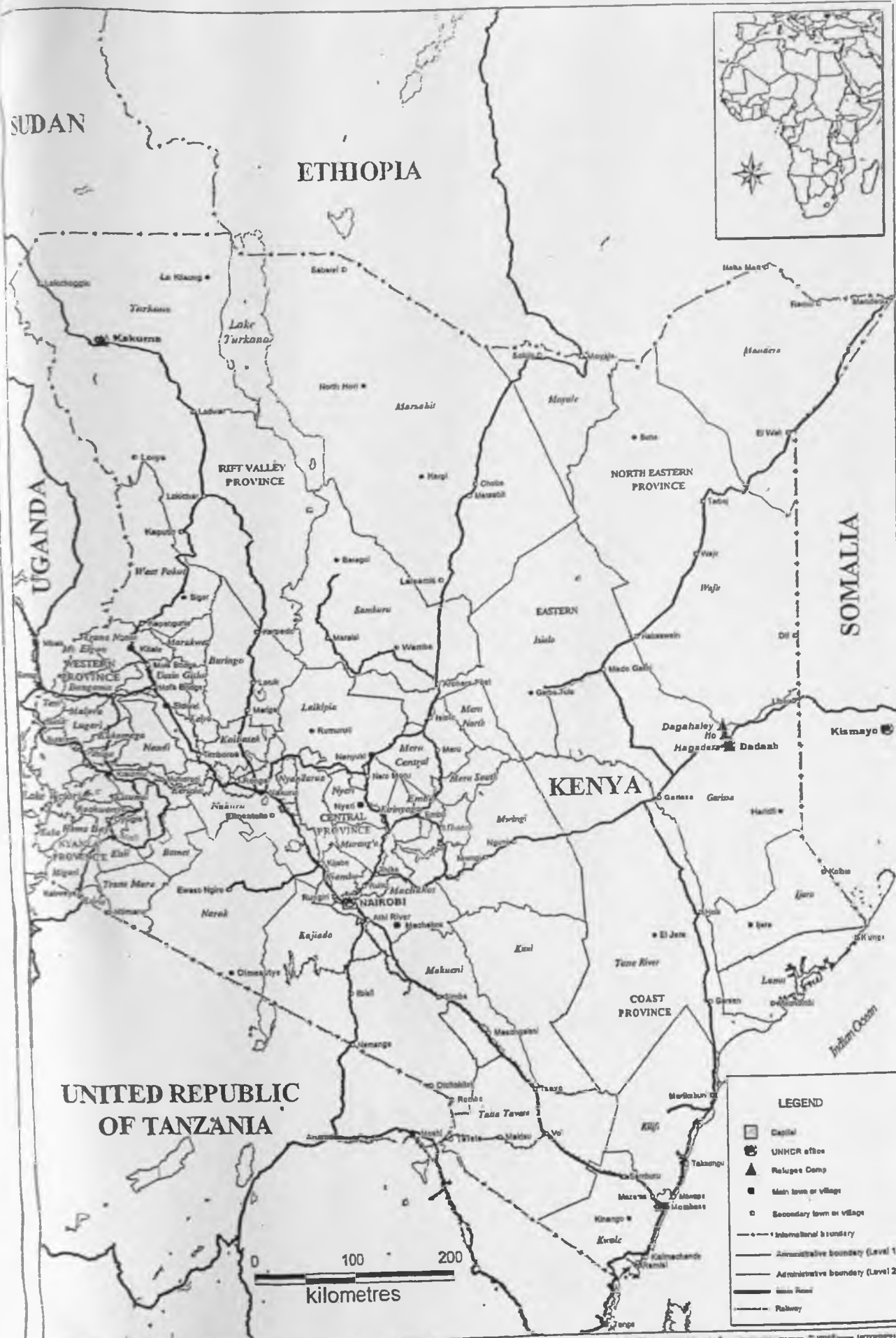
#### **SECTION D: HEALTH**

15. Where do urban refugees go for medical treatment?
16. On average how much do an urban refugees family (maximum 5persons) spend on medical care per year in Kshs?
17. Who pays for their medical treatment?
18. What are the common ailments that affect the urban refugees?
19. In your opinion, what should be the solution to the urban refugees health problems?

#### **SECTION E: LEADERSHIP**

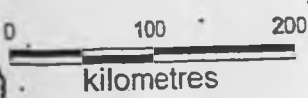
20. What leadership structures are in place for urban refugees?
21. Are these structures recognized by UNHCR, NGOs and the government?
22. If yes what is the role of the leader?
23. What are the benefits of a leader to the other refugees?
24. In your opinion, what should be improved on the leadership structures of urban refugees?
25. What major problems of refugees in Nairobi are often discussed and resolved through leadership?





**LEGEND**

- Capital
- UNHCR office
- Refugee Camp
- Main town or village
- Secondary town or village
- International boundary
- Administrative boundary (Level 1)
- Administrative boundary (Level 2)
- Main Road
- Railway



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply the endorsement of the United Nations.