

Spaces of Interaction Between Protracted Refugees in Nyarugusu Camp and the Surrounding Hosting Communities

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Abstract

Refugee camps are by essence temporary facilities to provide immediate support to those who have been forced to flee their country. However, the protracted nature of refugees in camps has led to a decline in humanitarian support, creating challenges in accessing sufficient food and other important needs such as energy for cooking. This paper studied everyday interactions between refugees in the Nyarugusu camp and the surrounding host communities in western parts of Tanzania. The fieldwork was conducted between March and December 2020, where a total of 45 semi-structured interviews and 12 FGDs were carried out, with observations being done in the refugee camp, host community villages and different markets where refugees and the host communities interact. Drawing from literature on space, and how spaces are constructed and function over time, particularly on how humanitarian spaces are constructed, the paper argues that encamped refugees' interaction with host communities has led to the expansion of humanitarian space of support. The expansion of space by the mobility of refugees out of the camp to the host communities' areas symbolizes power and control of space by refugees, hence proving that the power of space construction does not only end with those in planning authorities and decision-makers, but to different users of space. Despite challenging the formal support to refugees in camps, which is mainly North to South support, and which is increasingly being minimised due to protracted situations, the paper shows that this support is useful to encamped refugees as it helps them interact with host communities by giving refugees something to bargain with.

Keywords: *space construction, refugees, host communities, interaction*

1. Introduction

In emergency situations where people have been forced to flee their countries for different reasons, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), in collaboration with host governments, establish refugee camps as temporal facilities to host refugees and provide them with basic needs such as food, shelter and medical treatment (UNHCR, 2014). The UNHCR is a United Nations' agency in operation since the 1950s, and it is dedicated in saving lives of those who are forced to flee their places due to violence, war, persecution, or disasters.

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It is also the global organization responsible for protecting rights of refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people by providing shelter, food and water; and to ensure their basic safety, rights and dignity (UNHCR, 2014).

Despite a refugee camp being an important tool for the UNHCR in providing important services, especially during emergencies and large influx of refugees (UNHCR, 2014), the UNHCR does not favour establishing refugee camps in the assumption that there are other options—e.g., integration—that create more normal life for refugees, compared to the camp option where there is restriction on freedom of movements. However, some host governments prefer the camp option for security purposes (Al-Nassir, 2016).

Tanzania has, for many years, hosted refugees by offering asylum to different groups, ranging from those fleeing colonial exploitation, famine and epidemics; to those fleeing post-colonial white domination, internal power struggle after independence and political refugees. The country has hosted refugees through different approaches: from open-door arrangements to encampment methods (Chaulia, 2003). Based on its open-door policy, refugees were provided with access to land, education and social services. The government, under the leadership of its first President, Mwl Julius Kambarage Nyerere, encouraged the support to refugees based on the view that they are victims of colonialism, and freedom fighters for political change; and that the political independence of the then Tanganyika was incomplete if the rest of Africa is not free (ibid.). The willingness of the country to support refugees by that time was also based on the availability of resources, and the belief that hosting refugees would not be a permanent issue, but rather a temporary situation (Ongpin, 2008).

However, over time the refugee situation has become not a temporary issue as their number increased, which means increasing the needs and resources to accommodate them. In the 1990s Tanzania received a big influx of refugees, which led to the change from settlements to camps for the aim of providing relief before repatriation (Chaulia, 2003). The country changed its approach from giving refugees access to land to encampment through the Refugee Act and Refugee policy of 2003, in which refugees are supposed to stay in camps where they can receive food rations and other needs that are provided through international support (Kweka, 2007).

By October 2021, the country had a total of 246,745 refugees, of which 83.5% lived in camps; and the rest either lived in villages, settlements or urban areas (UNHCR, 2021). Most refugees in Tanzania are found in Kigoma region, which has the Nyarugusu, Mtendeli and Nduta refugee camps in Kasulu, Kibondo and Kakonko districts, respectively. These camps are surrounded by Tanzanian communities whose main economic activity is agriculture. The Nyarugusu

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refugee camp—the biggest camp—currently has 128,638 refugees, and it hosts refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since 1996; and are now mixed with those from Burundi who came in 2015 (UNHCR, 2019).

Despite refugee camps being, by essence, temporally facilities to provide immediate support to those who have been forced to flee their countries, refugees in the Nyarugusu refugee camp have lived in a protracted situation as they receive their important needs like food from UNHCR as a formal assistance. However, the protracted nature of these refugees has of recent led to the decline in support, creating challenges in accessing sufficient food and other important needs such as energy for cooking. This has necessitated informal interactions between refugees in the camp and the surrounding host communities, where the former exchange their food rations with fresh foods; and also with firewood which is not provided in the camp.

As shown by different scholars, the interaction between refugees and host communities may occur in different spaces such as in commercial areas (Huizinga & Hoven, 2018; Terada et al., 2017), public open spaces (Cattell et al., 2008), neighbourhoods, public facilities, school grounds and sports fields (Radford, 2017): each of these depending on the policy of the host country on refugees matters. Refugees in the Nyarugusu refugee camp and host communities were interacting in a formal space at the border of the camp, known as the common market, which took place twice a week. In 2018 the Tanzanian government decided to close the common market, after which access to different products/commodities such as fresh food like *mugebuka* fish became limited not only in the camp, but also in the host communities.

Given that encamped refugees in the Nyarugusu camp and surrounding host communities can no longer interact in the common market—the formal space they used to—this has led to the expansion of their own space through creating new informal spaces for accessing their needs. This paper, therefore, presents everyday interactions of encamped refugees in the Nyarugusu refugee camp with the surrounding host communities to show how encamped refugees deconstruct the camp space by going beyond the formal camp space to get their needs in newly created informal spaces. It thus contributes to space theories by challenging the conception and applicability of camp space in protracted refugee situations.

This paper is organized into six sections. Section one is the introduction that provides the contextual background of the problem. Next to the introduction is section two that is on the theoretical framework, reviewing Henri Lefebvre's (1991) space theory in relation to camp space production. The section further reviews power and space production, and shows how encamped refugees and surrounding host communities reconstruct their own spaces. Section three

presents context and methods used in the paper. It describes the study area, data collection methods and data analysis. Section four provides the results of the research. The results are presented by showing expanded spaces of interaction beyond the Nyarugusu refugee camp and the implication of the interaction on the physical landscape; paving the way to section five which discusses these results. Section six summarises the findings and concludes the paper.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

This paper draws from the ideas of Henri Lefebvre's (1991) theory of space production, particularly on the meaning and use of space; and his conceptualization of space as a product of abstraction to understand the space of refugees in camps. However, as shown in this paper, the production of camp space and spaces for refugees does not only base on abstraction and the power of decision-makers, in which the power of refugees is not taken into consideration. As argued by Shalabi and Pugalis (2018), refugees create space out of resistance and agency.

Most often, encamped refugees and the surrounding host communities have been assumed to be two different communities. However, given that refugees have their needs that are at times not fulfilled in camps, and that host communities get some of their basic services from refugee camps, there exists a bidirectional relationship between the two, leading to one borderless community of refugee-host community. Within this refugee-host community there exists spaces of interactions that may either be created inside or outside of refugee camps. This paper is guided by the space theory of Henri Lefebvre (1991) in understanding how encamped refugees and surrounding host communities deconstruct their formal spaces by creating new informal spaces.

Space construction has been the focus of many scholars (Massey, 2005; Lefebvre, 1990; Peluso, 1995; Bourdieu, 1996). For Massey (2005), space is a product of relations and interactions, networks, links, exchanges and connections. The relations are made and remade every day, making the process of space construction always continuous, and never finished (Massey, 2005). It is also a sphere of heterogeneity of entities that offers opportunity for coexistence (ibid.). Lefebvre (1991) considers space as produced over time, which can be traced in different modes of production. He further considers space as made through spatial practices that are based on the way space is used and human relations; but also space production by representations of space through abstraction, knowledge, technology, ideologies, principles and believes of planners having power on the representation of space.

Space is physically produced and socially constructed through social processes (Setha, 1996; Anderson, n.d.; Lefebvre, 1991), and produces what Lefebvre

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refers to as representational space (produced based on meanings and lived experiences). According to Setha (1996), the social construction of space involves transforming space based on exchange, memories, and actual uses of materials that construct the symbolic meaning. It also reveals some social processes such as conflict, control, and exchange. People, as social agents, construct space by creating their own meaning and realities (ibid.), among others, resulting from social power and control over space; especially when other space contracts do—or do not—coexist (Martina, 2006).

Refugee camps are planned and designed by planners and decision-makers based on the knowledge and principles relating to hosting refugees, including protection and security (Hyndman, 2000; Daley, 2001). With that construction, refugee camps have been conceptualized by scholars as spaces creating bare life (Agamben, 1998); spaces of exclusion and exception (Agier, 2014); and spaces of protection (Jacobsen, 2001): with their residents depending on support from the international community (Almohamed, Vyas, & Zhang, 2017; Daley, 2013; Handyman, 2000), mostly from developed countries through UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Hilhorst, 2018). Thus, refugees in camps live in areas exempted from social environment, and live a life that is strictly confined; depending on aid for their needs and survival (Handyman, 2000; Hilhorst, 2018).

The construction of refugee camps as areas of exemption ignores the agency of refugees in accessing their livelihoods (Boeyink, 2020), but helps them to expand and produce their own space. The produced and expanded space, as termed by Lefebvre (1991), is a perceived space that can also be claimed through counter mapping as a way of showing community power in producing own space (Peluso, 1995). Such spaces are produced through everyday uses, interactions and networks (Massey 2005).

Space production over time and space is not without difference in terms of the power of those who can construct it (Peluso, 1995). As Bluwstein and Lund (2018) have argued, the mapping of space is based on ideas, principles, and abstractions in the representation of space by planners. It has a tendency of overlooking the history, knowledge, interests, and practices that have existed for a long time; and is only based on power and authorities in the presentation and construction of space (Bluwstein, 2019; Bluwstein & Lund, 2018). For instance, the construction of a refugee camp as a territory and a surveillance space, space of exception, exclusion and confinement (Agamben, 1998; Agier, 2014); or as a protected, and sensitive area where interactions are controlled by including and excluding others from accessing it, ignores the existence of interaction between refugees and surrounding communities from the borders (Daley, 2001).

The construction of refugee camps as spaces of social exclusion, confinement, exclusion (Agier, 2014) and protection (Jacobsen, 2001); and whose residents depend on aid for survival (Hilhorst, 2018) overlooks their power over the use of space. Over time, protracted refugees living in camps have expanded their camp spaces, and practised different forms of mobility to nearby villages. These different forms of mobility have produced new spaces which, as we argue in this paper, are important not only for mobility and obtaining their other needs; but also offer space for helping each other.

Peluso (1995) argues that the power of space construction is exercised through counter mapping, which offsets the monopoly of the state over space or resources. Through counter mapping, local groups may challenge the applicability of maps used for planners by mapping what is available on the representation maps, but also map what is not mapped in the representation maps (ibid.). For instance, the construction of refugee camps and host communities as separate communities by defining boundaries and imposing restrictions beyond the boundaries, and neglecting the agency and power in mobility that enable these communities to interact and produce their own space, the mapping of the informal spaces created may be used to claim for interaction of refugees and the host communities within and beyond the camp limits or boundaries.

2. Context and Methods

2.1 Study Area

The fieldwork for this paper was carried out in Kigoma region, Kasulu rural district; and specifically in the Nyarugusu Refugee Camp and its surrounding villages (Nyarugusu, Makere, Mwali and Nyamidaho), where interaction have been reported (Figure 1). The camp is located 4°12'44.951"S latitudes, and 30°23'22.191"E longitudes (UNHCR, 2018). It covers an area of 28km² (Rivoal & Haselip, 2017), with 12 zones and 142 villages as administrative divisions (UNHCR, 2018).

2.2 Data Collection Methods and Data Analysis

This paper applied a qualitative research methodology, and relied on primary data collection methods that included focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs) and field observation. The fieldwork was carried out between March and December, 2020. A total of 45 semi-structured open-ended formal, and informal interviews were conducted with key informants. Interview cases were selected through snowballing. 12 FGDs were carried out, three in each village, and were based on age and gender. Both interviews and FGDs used data collection guides as checklists to allow for focus on key crucial aspects covering issues such as space of interactions and giving. Observations were done in the refugee camp, host community villages and at different markets where refugees and the hosts interact for trade and helping each other.

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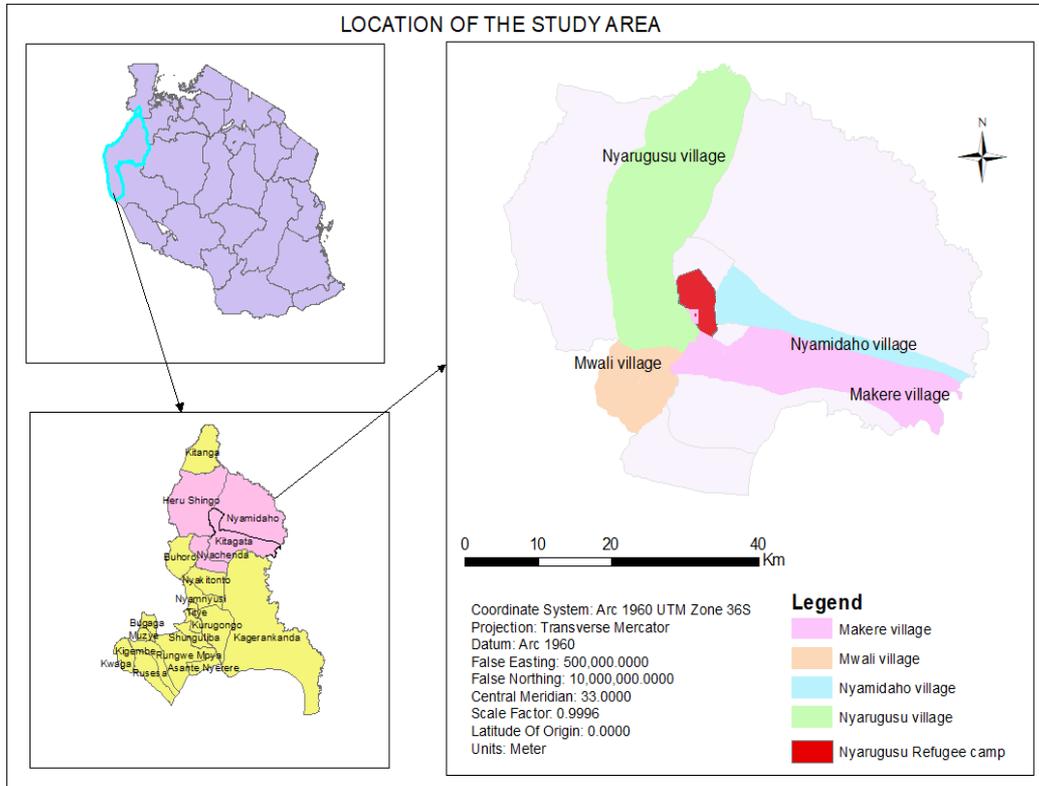


Figure 1: Location of the Study Area in Kigoma Region, Tanzania
Source: Author, 2021

The data collected were analysed qualitatively through content analysis, which enabled the generation of codes and patterns to understand the meaning of the everyday interactions of these groups in the context of humanitarianism. Evidences for the argument of this paper are provided using quotes, and physical and mental maps were drawn with the help of the host communities.

3. Results

3.1 Expanded Spaces of Interaction beyond the Nyarugusu Camp

It was noted that during the operation of the common market, there was only one formal space of interaction for encamped refugees and the surrounding host communities (Figure 2). Following its closure in 2018, new informal spaces for interactions have emerged in the host community villages surrounding the camp (Figure 3). The new informal spaces have expanded beyond the camp space. We, therefore, studied interactions in those spaces to understand how they are constructed.

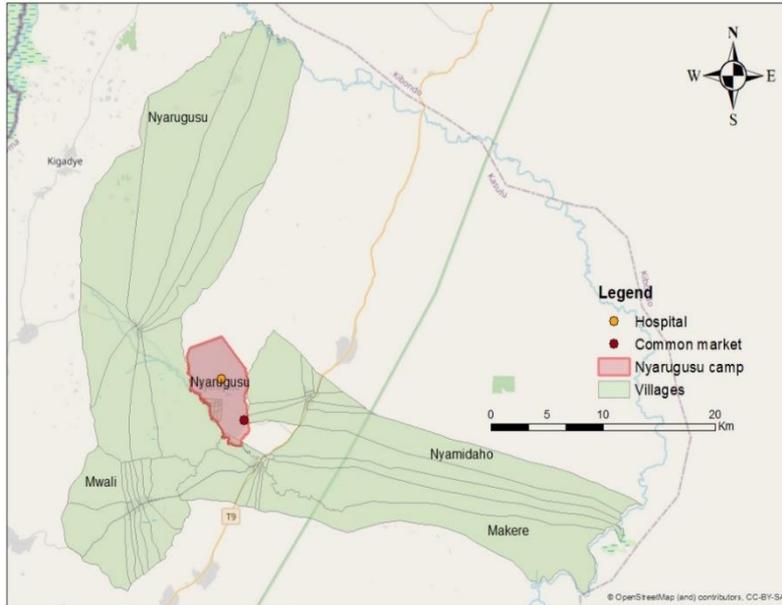


Figure 2: Map Showing Spaces of Interaction During the Common Market; the Common Market as the Major Space of Interaction
Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2021

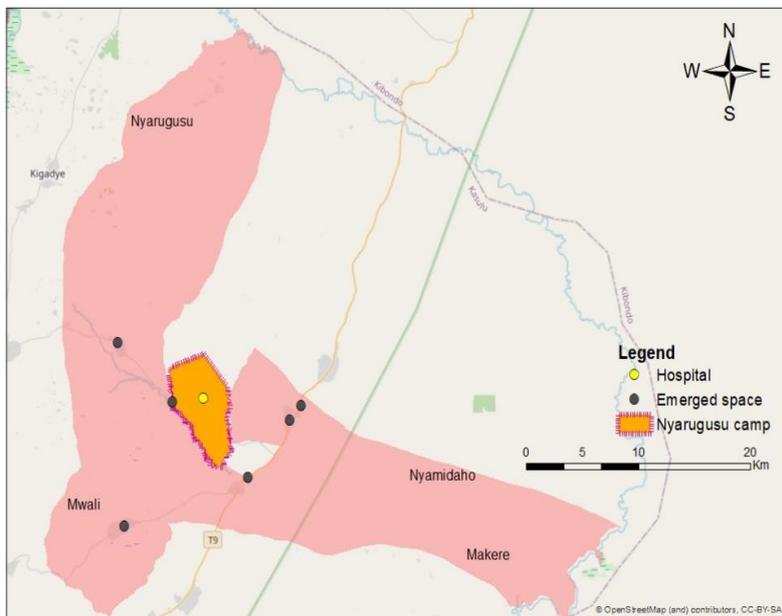


Figure 3: Expanded Spaces of Interaction Beyond the Camp
Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2021

3.2 Village Markets as Spaces of Interaction

It was found that some programs associated with encampment, particularly those on food provision to refugees, push refugees to expand their space beyond the camp space in quest for supplementing the availed food and changing diet. Participants in the FGDs explained that encamped refugees are given dry food rations, albeit some of them preferring to get locally available food. Hence, refugees—while in disguise—go to markets in nearby villages to obtain some locally available fresh foods; as testified by encamped refugee women during FGDs:

We can exchange our rations with either rice, yams, or fish, as eating the same food (peas) daily for six years.... We also wish to eat beef, fish, bananas, sardines... so we sell the food ration that we receive from the UNHCR, we exchange it at the Makere market... (FGD with refugees, November 2021).

It was also observed that encamped refugees and host communities interact in several ways while in the markets. Whereas some refugees interact by selling their food rations and cooking oil to buy locally available foodstuffs—such as maize/cassava flour, vegetables and locally produced palm oil—others interact by selling some of the items provided to them in the camp—such as cooking pots and buckets—to get cash to buy food or other items. In one KII, a host community member from Makere village narrates how they interact with refugees:

... refugees are now coming here at Makere to sell items... you can find them in the flour market where they sell the flour and peas given to them by UNHCR in the camp... (KII male, Makere 27/11/2020).

Moreover, it was also noted that markets in the host community offer more space for encamped refugees to interact as traders by selling sardines from Kagera region, or other items such as clothes, shoes and handmade items; or by getting employed by Tanzanians to do business in the camp on their behalf.

Several small market spaces were observed during field observation as presented in Photos 1–3. Photo 1 is a flour market within which encamped refugees interact with host community members by exchanging or selling their maize flour for cassava flour. Photo 2 is a fruit market in which refugees buy fruits to sell or eat in the camp. Photo 3 is of dry beans that are distributed in the camp, which refugees also exchange to get fresh beans that take fewer firewood to cook.

Moreover, it can be argued that the use of spaces and creation of new meanings of places from the interactions in the markets varies among individuals, and depends on what they get from such spaces. For example, some refugees go to the markets not only for shopping but to negotiate about access to farms or jobs in the host community, while some can go simply beg.



Photo 1: Flour Market



Photo 2: Fruit Market



Photo 3: Dry Beans Market

The emerging new spaces outside formal markets offer refugees with space for accessing their basic and additional needs. In the study by Baktir and Watson (2020) on the interactions between refugees and locals at marketplace, refugees experienced price discrimination in shopping places, unequal treatment and the lack of care and respect in shopping places. Local sellers could serve their fellow locals first, even in scenarios where a refugee had come first; and in some places locals could also increase the price of items to refugees. However, this is different in the case of refugees in the Nyarugusu camp: these receive help from the host communities who even reduce the prices of products in the markets and at farms; and who also help store refugees' commodities so that they can sell them in the next market day.

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It was further found that encamped refugees prefer creating newer spaces closer to the camp space. This is attributed to the encampment policy that restricts their movement beyond the camp space. From KIIs and FGDs, it was noted that the Makere market—which is closer to the camp compared to other markets in the surrounding host communities' villages—is more active than the other markets. This market is preferred more by both refugees and the host community members from other villages such as Mwali and Nyarugusu as they use it as a place for interaction with refugees, and an alternative to the common market.

Furthermore, the market is served by a road from Kagera to Kigoma that simplifies the mobility of people and goods. Below is a sketch map of spaces of interaction between the refugees and the hosts at the Makere market.

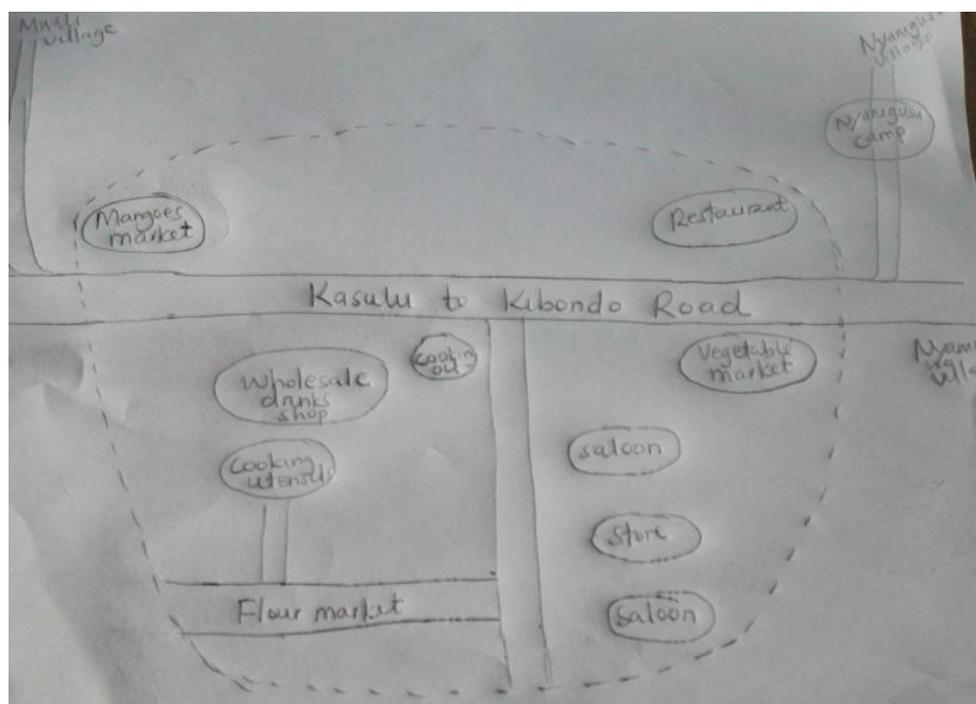


Figure 2: Sketch Map of the Makere Market Showing Spaces of Interaction in the Market

Source: Authors' fieldwork 2021

It was further learned that encamped refugees and host communities interact in other spaces other than markets. In non-market days refugees and host communities create new spaces by changing the function of other spaces to save as market spaces. Such spaces include rivers in the host community, which can

be accessed informally anytime. In such spaces, those that engage in the interaction are neither businesspeople nor those interested in profit-making: it is just those who go there to shop for their daily needs. In FGDs in Mwali village, men describe how they can also meet by a river and exchange items. Thus, the river in this instance becomes an important space for refugees to get their needs and expand the river's function to include a river market. Participants in the FGDs in Mwali village explained:

.....because the market at Makere is on Tuesdays and Saturdays, when it is not a market day, they [the refugees] go to the river. There they can be waiting all the time for someone to appear, I think because they are refugees (they are in need) they can waiting all the time: if they get [what they need] it is fine, if they do not get, it is also fine (FGD with women in Mwali village 04/12/2020).

... there are other needs they depend on us to take to them there. Now, after the common market was closed, they come here struggling to cross the river by hiding and if they communicate with us, we take our crops there and sell by the river (FGD with men in Mwali village 04/12/2020).

3.3 Farmlands in Host Communities as Spaces of Interaction

We argue in this paper that host communities' farmlands offer a central informal space, and play a pivotal role in the interaction between encamped refugees and the host communities. It was revealed that most refugees who want to ask for support go to the farmlands of host communities to ask for food and firewood, and to negotiate on wage labour. It was learned that there are several forms of interactions in farmlands. These include interactions in terms of wage labour, free farming, farm renting, and in terms of sharecropping.

The above-mentioned different forms of interaction in farmlands show that social relations are essential in the creation of new spaces beyond the camp space. For instance, it was revealed that host community members may interact with refugees in farms where refugees may be given farmlands free of charge. However, for a host community member to give a farm to a refugee for free, they need to have a relationship such as of business dealings or friendship. Also, a member in the host communities may give a plot of land to a refugee to farm free of charge based on good neighbourhood relations to reduce the refugee's hunger. Thus, relations are essential in establishing trust and allowing interaction through farming. In one KII, a male from Makere village narrated:

I have never rented my farm to any refugee, but due to the friendship and good neighbourhood friendship, I normally give them a plot of land to farm for free (FGD with men in Nyamidaho, 9/12/2020).

I once gave a Congolese refugee a plot of land of about half an acre... we had a business relationship since we used to sell cassava together... so when he asked me for help, I gave him half an acre... he only farmed for one year and he couldn't farm anymore... (KII Male, Makere, 27/11/2020).

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It was significantly noted that the new spaces created do not only offer room for interaction, but also loopholes for host community members to use encamped refugees as cheap laborers. As such, interaction in terms of share-cropping is synonymous to in-kind interaction, as a refugee and a host community member agree that a host community member will provide land free of charge to the refugee, while the refugee will prepare the farm, and then they will both grow different crops on that same plot. This form of interaction is mostly practiced by refugees who want to produce food in bigger amounts, most of whom are Burundians refugees.

3.4 Host Communities and Refugees Homes as Spaces of Interaction

This paper challenges the construction of refugee camp as an international and monitored space, where inclusion and exclusion are defined for security purposes (Hyndman, 2000), as it was revealed that encamped refugees interact with hosts despite the fact that their practices are affected by the camp, as also argued by Turner (2016). Encamped refugees in the Nyarugusu camp and the surrounding host communities interact in the refugees' homes in the camp or in the host communities' homes in search of food, firewood, or charcoal. However, relations determine interaction in these spaces as friendship becomes a major determinant of this interaction. It is common for refugees to go to host communities' homes to ask for items such as mangoes during the mangoes season. The same applies to members of the host community who also enter the camp: most of these are friends with the refugees, and they go to visit fellow friends; and can be given anything or exchange foods with refugees. It was further revealed that refugees can also visit friends in the host community and bring items to them. Also, refugees can spend nights in the homes of the host community when it is too late for them to go back to the camp.

3.5 Implication of the Interaction on the Physical Landscape

As seen in the previous sections, the space of refugees in the Nyarugusu refugee camp that is assumed as a demarcated humanitarian space with boundaries has expanded to include the host community's space, where refugees can also get support that is different from the one they receive in the camp. Such an expansion that is caused by the interaction of encamped refugees and host communities has had impacts on the physical landscape in the refugee-host community spaces.

The need for energy by refugees to cook raw food creates informal spaces of interaction in areas where they get them. Access to firewood and charcoal is the major challenge facing refugees in the Nyarugusu camp. Raw food provided to refugees creates room for them to expand their space beyond the camp space in search of fuel resources that is not provided in the camp, but can be accessed from nearby host communities' spaces.

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It was noted that most refugees go to nearby forest reserves to collect firewood and burn charcoal. Others may go to the farmlands of the host community or villagers' homes to either request, buy or take (on their own) firewood and charcoal. With the exception of a minority—those with special needs—who are provided with firewood or charcoal by an organization in the camp, the rest have to fetch fuelwood for themselves. Women from Nyarugusu village and youths from Makere village narrate:

They normally go themselves in the forest to search for firewood... You may go to collect firewood from the bush, then a refugee comes to buy from you (FGD with women Nyarugusu, 03/12/2020).

There are times that they are given for free and other times they may buy depending on the amount required... mostly they get firewood for free and buy charcoal because they can easily pick firewood from the forest / people's farms....it's not that all refugees beg for firewood, there are those who just go and pick firewood and walk away (FGD with Youth Makere,30/11/2020).

The use of host community spaces and forest reserves by refugees for fuel collection and farming creates challenges on the physical landscape through destruction of forests and other forest resources. Cutting down trees for firewood and charcoal-making may lead to desertification, and this is attributed to the high number of refugees depending on forest resources for energy. A report by Rivoal and Haselip (2018) shows that Nyarugusu, Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps alone consume 380 tons of fuelwood per day.

It was noted in the FGDs with members of the host community that the arrival of refugees in 1996 has led to the destruction of the natural environment due to unregulated cutting down of trees for firewood and building materials, such as poles. Moreover, due to the provision of inadequate food in the camp, refugees use different ways to supplement their food requirements. For example, they enter the forest reserve and cultivate food crops, especially maize and beans. Others farm not only to add on their own food reserves, but for commercial purposes; and as such they clear large areas for farming. Also, some rivers in the area have started to dry up; and the environmental challenge is expected to increase due to the protracted refugee situation.

4. Discussion

In July 2018, the government of Tanzania closed the common market between encamped Nyarugusu refugees and the surrounding host villages, which was said to be beneficial to both. The closure of the common market led to restrictions on formal interactions between refugees and the host communities. However, this resulted to increased informal interactions beyond the camp space. Therefore, refugees and the host communities have reconstructed the administrative space with boundaries that considers them as two separate communities by creating new informal spaces for interactions beyond the camp.

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Boundaries are created for the purposes of control by including and excluding others from accessing some spaces (Peluso, 1995). The same is the case with the Nyarugusu camp and the host community's spaces, which are planned separately by defining refugee camp space and host community space differently; with demarcated boundaries for the camp, and the host villages and sub-villages. Demarcating boundaries is one way of planning based on the powers of planners and decision-makers who possess the authority on space representation (Bluwstein & Lund 2018; Lefebvre, 1991; Bluwstein, 2019). However, this power is not exclusive to the planning authorities and decision-makers: the different users have also the power to decide on—and map their space based on—their needs, realities and meanings. Through the power of refugees and host communities' everyday mobility, the two have deconstructed the camp space and host community space to create new spaces that go beyond boundaries, and are used not only for interaction but for everyday humanitarianism that is also reciprocal in nature. The new spaces are also socially constructed by relations and different mobility practices of refugees and the host community seeking to obtain their needs out of their spaces. However, this reconstruction of new spaces goes against the Tanzania encampment policy that restricts refugees' movement beyond the camp space.

Despite refugees in the Nyarugusu camp residing in a camp and being provided with support from the international community, their protracted situation has necessitated interactions outside of the provided humanitarian (camp) space). They interact in expanded space in markets, farms, rivers and (host community) homes to get humanitarian support, similar to the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon who do not live in a refugee camp space (Mackreath, 2014). Thus, due formal support—which is mainly North to South—becoming increasingly minimum due to the global protracted situation (UNHCR, 2020), this creation of informal spaces is crucial to the refugees in the camp as it helps them interact with the host communities where they also receive support.

Furthermore, the expansion of space by the mobility of refugees out of the camp to the host communities symbolizes power and control of space by these able-bodied individuals, though marginalized by planning practices that are based on abstractions, principles, guidelines and power of decision-makers in space production (Lefebvre, 1991).

The deconstruction of the camp space questions the applicability of the theories of the construction of refugee camps as spaces of humanitarianism for refugees to get their needs, especially in protracted situations, and further in the South-South/local humanitarianism, where giving is found to be reciprocal. Camp space creation theories are a typical construction of North to South humanitarianism that sees refugees as strangers kept in 'spaces of the others' (Hyndman, 2000).

In addition, camp creation theories may not be applicable in a protracted situation where there is decrease in international support (UNHCR, 2020), high mobility influenced by familiarity (Huizinga & Hoven, 2018), and interactive social relations (Cattell et al., 2008). The theories also neglect the fact that refugees get support from surrounding host communities, and the support is reciprocal.

Refugees and host communities helping each other contradict the existing assumption that host communities are not humanitarians as they do not provide any support to refugees, and that camp residents are mere receivers of humanitarian aid from the North. It is argued in this paper that the reconstruction of different spaces is not only for refugees to get their needs, but also for host community members who also seek support from refugees, especially during farming seasons when they have food shortage. Both refugees and members of host communities have needs that are obtained from their interactions that happen in informal spaces, which at times are not only invisible to strangers, but also unrecognized as humanitarian spaces.

5. Conclusion

This paper has presented the interaction between encamped refugees in the Nyarugusu refugee camp and the surrounding host communities, and how it has expanded what was considered as the only humanitarian space—the camp—to spaces beyond the camp in the host communities. The protracted situation and needs for fresh food and other needs not available in the camp have led to the expansion of refugees' spaces beyond the camp. These spaces have been for trading; and also of giving and receiving between the two communities either through begging, borrowing, or friendship. Thus, refugees and host communities have reconstructed the administrative space that considers them as two separate communities, and have created new spaces for interactions.

The spaces of interactions discussed in this paper are not only informal and unregulated, but they are also results of illegal interaction as refugees are not allowed to engage in economic activities, such as business and farming, outside the designated area of the camp. Encamped refugees are not allowed to leave the camp without permission from the camp commandant, something that refugees themselves admit not to always adhere to; and say that times when caught by authorities they get punished. Also, it is worth noting that interactions between refugees and host communities, as discussed in the expanded spaces of interactions, are similarly illegal as per the Tanzanian encampment policy. However, this has not managed to prevent the creation, out of necessity, of own spaces between refugees and the host communities.

Spaces of Interaction Between Protracted Refugees and Surrounding Communities

Furthermore, the paper has shown how the support given to the refugees in the camp by the UNHCR is very crucial as it gives refugees something to hold on and engage in creating relationships with the host communities. In addition to providing support refugees with their needs, it also indirectly helps them supplement essentials that are not provided—such as firewood, fruits and fish—through interactions with host communities.

The paper has further shown that despite the existing Tanzania restrictive policy on movement, refugees in the Nyarugusu camp have fashioned ways of finding their needs outside the camp by interacting with the surrounding host communities through their social capital and networks. Therefore, encampment policies are not strictly limiting refugees and the hosts from interactions; rather, interactions happen informally, facilitated by relations between the two parties.

The expansion of space by the mobility of refugees out of the camp to the host communities symbolizes power and control of space by the refugees and host communities, hence proving that the power of space construction does not only rest with planning authorities and decision-makers, but to different users of space. Despite challenging the formal support to refugees in camps, which is mainly North to South support, and which is increasingly decreasing due to the protracted refugee situation, the paper has also shown that this support is of significance to encamped refugees as it helps them interact with host communities by giving them something to bargain with.

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