

## **Refugees and Host Communities: Critical Issues and Implications for Policy-making in Tanzania**

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### **Abstract**

Over the past three decades, Tanzania has hosted thousands of refugees from Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC. The hosting communities have had mixed perceptions regarding the benefits and effects of hosting refugees. This study aimed to identify major challenges attributed to the presence of refugees and related governing policies. It employed mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative approaches, and the wealth quantile analysis. A total of 403 participants were interviewed: 201 (49.9%) and 202 (50.1%) from Kasulu and Kibondo districts, respectively. The study presents the perception data in frequencies, and uses regression analysis to determine associations. The results show that most participants perceive increased costs of goods and services, pressure on social services, criminality, social vices, and the deterioration of natural resources, including the environment, as the negative outcomes of hosting refugees. Also, while some research participants thought there were no effects on the integrity of the environment, the higher wealth quintiles reported an association between refugees and environmental degradation. Repatriation and camp patrolling were proposed as the durable solutions for the refugee-associated problems. The study proposes a review of policies related to peaceful coexistence, permission of movement and businesses, and increased interactions between refugees and host populations to minimize negative perceptions and hostilities.

**Keywords:** *host communities, environment degradation, peaceful coexistence, refugees, Tanzania*

### **Introduction**

Refugee hosting is a humanitarian action that aims to ensure safety and provide access to shelter, food, and health services to vulnerable people displaced from their homes of origin. Several parties are commonly involved in rescuing lives by ensuring that all the needs and wants of the refugees are well handled. Such parties include neighbouring or host countries, host communities, and humanitarian agencies. Most host countries receive and act on refugees right out with the most immediate needs, particularly lifesaving, through their communities. In contrast, the distribution of relief items such as infrastructures, buildings, and long-term food and health services becomes the role of humanitarian agencies (Harrell-bond, 2002).

Three decades of in- and out-movement of refugees in Tanzania have led to two contesting views. On the one hand, host communities feel that refugees have increased the cost of goods and services, brought pressure on facilities, increased social vices and criminality, and deteriorated environmental resources.

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Specifically, host communities argue that refugees negatively impact their lives. One study has noted that the presence of refugees in western Tanzania has resulted in a high level of deforestation in areas surrounding refugee camps (Ongpin, 2008). Another study argues that although deforestation existed even before the arrival of refugees, its rate was negligible. After the arrival of refugees, the rate of deforestation increased to 65 percent (Berry, 2008). This happens because refugees depend more on firewood as the source of energy (Nii et al., 2012). In some situations, there have been reports of physical conflicts between refugees and host communities over access to natural resources, including firewood (Lung, 2019).

On the other hand, studies reveal that host communities have perceived refugees as a market for locally produced goods, and hence a source of income. These studies argued that the increase in local markets has generated a massive surge in business and trade conducted by host communities and refugees (Boeyink & Falisse, 2022; Ongpin, 2008; Whitaker, 2002). Also, host communities point out that refugees have brought with them significant changes in infrastructure developments through the operations of relief organizations. Similarly, others posit that refugees have been a source of cheap labour, most often paid in kind, such in foodstuffs for refugee families. Also, the coming of refugees has resulted in the influx of relief organizations, which has created local jobs opportunities (Boeyink & Falisse, 2022; Ongpin, 2008).

Given the nature of the refugees' displacement, conflicts with host communities, as we have seen above, become inevitable. The arrival of refugees in most cases is often viewed as an intrusion of competing opponents who will be vying to use the same resources as the host communities (Nii et al., 2012). With this view, the two populations cannot acquire resources equally in typical living scenarios, as a result they destabilize their communities; thus, necessitating strategies for peaceful coexistence. Peaceful coexistence means living in peace with each other in the same geographical area, while sharing available resources (Ullah, 2018). A sound, balanced co-existing environment fosters community development by enhancing productivity, personal growth, and social solidity for sustainable societies (Fajth et al., 2019). Therefore, refugees and host communities need to co-exist and live on mutual benefits to one another to build a well-functioning society.

#### ***Refugee Governing Policies in Tanzania***

Currently, refugee affairs in Tanzania are under the guidance of the Refugees Act of 1998 and the National Refugee Policy (NRP) of 2003. According to the two documents, the government of Tanzania is conferred powers to determine the refugee status of individuals and/or groups. The 1988 Act stipulates that individual status determinations should base on the conception laid by the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees (URT, 1998). This Convention describes a refugee as a person running from persecution for race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.

However, the NRP and the refugee Act are regarded as among the most restrictive refugee frameworks. For example, the NRP directs that asylum-seekers be allowed to stay in Tanzania for one year, after which they would have to return to safe areas in their respective countries of origin (URT, 2003). Yet para. 1 and 8 categorically state that "... international protection is exclusively provided to those individuals who satisfy the definition and meet the criteria for refugee status under international refugee instruments" (URT, 2003). Furthermore, some scholars argue that the adoption of the Act and NRP marked the end of the heyday of the 'open door policy' period of the Nyerere era. These new frameworks have made it impossible for group determination of refugees' status by institutionalizing the individualized status determination system. With this new system, the determination process has been lengthy and characterized by high rejection rates (Chimanda & Moris, 2020).

Furthermore, the existing policies and laws restrict refugees from free movement, work, and education. According to the Refugee Act, refugees can be legally allowed to work in Tanzania if given a permit to do so by the Director of Refugees Services (URT, 1998). However, in operationalization, constraints emanate from the NRP, which only allows refugees to engage in small income-generating activities as they rarely get legal work permits in the country (Chimanda & Moris, 2020). Regarding freedom of movement, scholars argue that freedom of movement is one of the major constraints facing refugees and constitutes one of the setbacks to developing fertile businesses in Tanzania. Such restrictions even inhibit host communities from having free and full access to refugee camps for business purposes (Chimanda & Moris, 2020). While the policy requires refugees to live in designated areas where they can easily receive services from the international community, the refugee Act provides a punishment of up to five years sentences for the breach of that provision (URT, 1998). According to the policy, a refugee camp is supposed to accommodate up to 50,000 refugees at least 30km apart (URT, 2003).

Moreover, the existing laws have provisions regarding non-refoulement voluntary repatriation and the right to education. Section 34 (1) of Tanzania's Refugees Act provides for the voluntary repatriation rights for refugees/asylum seekers back to their home countries (URT, 1998). Likewise, the NRP considers voluntary repatriation the best solution and calls on the international community to support initiatives to create peace in the land of origin (URT, 2003). These two documents do not support the local integration of refugees and asylum seekers as the enduring solution. It has been noted by scholars that, contrary to provisions of its laws and the 1951 Convention, the pressure for forceful repatriation by the government is mounting in Tanzania (Chimanda & Moris, 2020). The 1951 Convention stipulates that no contracting state shall expel or return ('refueler') a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his/her life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion (UHCR, 1951; Weis, 1999).

Regarding the right to education, the Refugee Act, Para. 31, states that every refugee child shall be entitled to primary education by the National Education Act 1978. Also, every refugee adult who desires to participate in adult education shall be allowed to do so under the Adult Education Act No. 25 of 1978 (URT, 1998). Similarly, the NRP enables refugees and asylum seekers to learn through the curricula of their country of origin (URT, 2003). It is in this regard that, in collaboration with refugee agencies, the government has attempted to build schools and other infrastructures in refugee camps where refugees acquire basic education based on the curriculum of their country of origin (Magos & Margaroni, n.d.; Ndiujye & Rao, 2018).

Regarding environmental degradation, forests in particular, are prone to competitive harvesting for firewood for energy. The more pessimistic option thinks the refugees are primarily passive recipients who deplete natural resources in host countries and contribute to environmental degradation (Kirui, 2012; Morel, 1969). However, to avoid the challenge of environmental destruction the NRP declares that no camp shall accommodate more than 50,000 refugees. Also, it stipulates that camps should not be concentrated in one area (at least 30km apart) to avoid imminent pressure on natural resources and minimize the burden placed on the shoulders of local authorities (URT, 2003).

Given the preceding context, there is a need to investigate the effectiveness of refugee-related policies and how they are implemented to realize peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities in African countries, including Tanzania. This paper, therefore, aims to provide a comprehensive investigation of the current challenges attributed to the prolonged presence of refugees in the study area, interpret and assess the related governing policies, and propose an innovative policy system for peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities in the future. Apart from the introduction, the remaining part of this article is divided into four sections: a brief explanation of the research methodology and the characteristics of the survey sample; the results; and a discussion of findings. The last part presents the conclusion and policy implications.

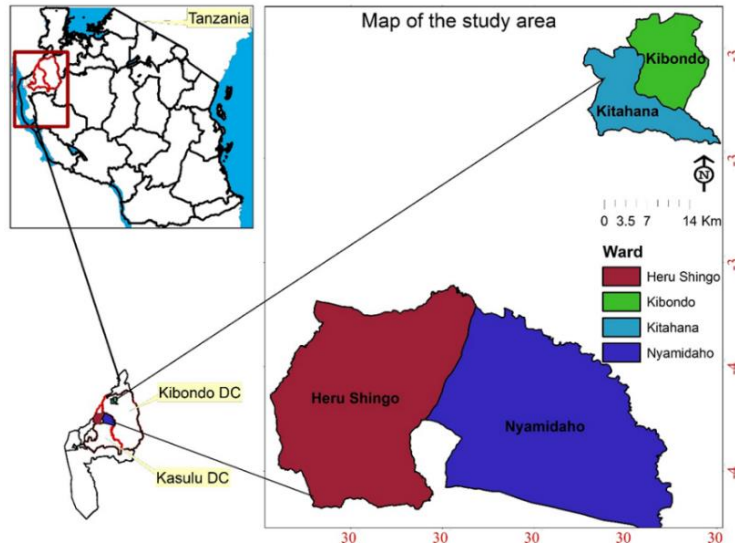
## **Material and Methods**

### ***Study Context***

Tanzania has been a home to refugees from Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since the 1950s. By 2022, the total population of refugees and asylum-seekers in Tanzania was 247,207, mainly from Burundi and the DRC, the majority (83%) living in Kibondo's Nduta camp [76,647 = 31%] and Kasulu's Nyarugusu camp [129,703 = 52.5%] (Figure 1) (URT, 2023). The two districts have a 261,331 and 425,794 populations, respectively, leading to a 1:3.4 refugee-host population ratio.

### ***Research Design and Data Collection Methods***

This study used a cross-sectional design with quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The survey was conducted in Kibondo and Kasulu districts at the end of 2022. We interviewed 403 participants, 201 (49.9%) and 202 (50.1%), in



**Figure 1: Map of the Study Area**

Kasulu and Kibondo districts, respectively. We selected administrative wards from each district within a 20km radius of the refugee camp. Among the 403 respondents, twenty-eight participated (28) in the FGDs, and 9 were key informants (Kis) (Table 1). The questionnaire covered aspects such as social and demographic characteristics and household items. It also included the pressure on social services, social vices, environmental degradation, and criminality.

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents**

Category of Population	Total Number in Each Category		
	Kasulu	Kibondo	Total
Host communities	201	202	403
Refugee camp commandants	1	1	2
Police officers	1	1	2
Refugee Relief Agencies' representatives	1	1	2
Refugees' representatives	2	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>412</b>

Source: Field Survey 2022

The data were coded, checked, edited, and entered into Microsoft 10 v 14.0 Excel Software (Redmond, Washington, US) and exported to STATA v 14.2 (STATA Corp. 2015 Texas USA) for analysis. The researcher used the Adjusted Odds Ratio (AOR) to test for associations. Any p-value of <0.05 at a 95% confidence interval (CI) was considered statistically significant.

Furthermore, the Wealth Quintile Analysis (WQA) was calculated using data on a household's ownership of selected assets, such as televisions, radio, television, and bicycles; materials used for cooking and house ownership; and water access and sanitation facilities. To establish the wealth index and the quintiles, the researchers used principal component analysis (PCA) (Filmer, 2001; Rutstein, 2004). The first quintile represents the lowest fifth values from 0–20%; the second quintile from 20–40%, the third quintile from 40–60%, the fourth quintile comprises 60–80%, and the fifth quintile includes the highest fifth from 80–100%. Also, the first and second quintiles were grouped to represent poor households ( $\leq 40\%$ ), while those in the third, fourth, and fifth quintiles were grouped to represent wealthy households ( $>40\%$ ).

Regarding environmental degradation, the researchers used remotely sensed data to assess land use and land cover (LULC) change in the study area. The publicly accessible time series-based Landsat images were downloaded from the US Geological Survey's Earth Resources Observations and Science (USGS) through <https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/>. The downloaded images represented the dry seasons between July and October over the study area for 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2020, respectively. Table 2 contains the parameters of each image used in the analysis.

**Table 2: Parameters and Characteristics of Satellite Images**

No.	Satellite Name	Sensor	Date of Acquisition	Resolution	Number of Bands
1	Land sat 4-5	TM	1990	30m	6
2	Land sat 4-5	TM	2000	30m	6
3	Land sat 7	ETM+	2010	30m	7
4	Landsat 8	OLI	2020	30m	8

Image pre-processing, such as composite image generation, were performed by combining bands 2, 3, and 4 for T.M. and ETM+; as well as bands 3, 4, and 5 for Landsat 8 OLI to enhance the visual quality of the images during training sites extraction. The composite colour images were then projected into the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) WGS1984 ZONE 35S to calibrate them into the actual location of the study area. Then, supervised image classification using maximum likelihood was conducted in ArcGIS 10.7.1. The analysis identified five dominant LULC classes in the study areas (i.e., vegetation, built-up area, water, grassland, and bare soil).

## **Results**

### ***Social and Demographic Characteristics***

In total, 403 participants were interviewed, 201 (49.9%) and 202 (50.1%) in Kasulu and Kibondo districts, respectively. More interviewed participants were females, 221 (54.8%), than males, 182 (45.2%). Most respondents (232 (57.6%)), were married, aged between 31–50 years (194 (48.1%)) (Table 3). Also, nearly a quarter (24.3%) and 17.1% of the participants were in the first and the second quintile, respectively, indicating that 41% of the population is classified as poor.

**Table 3: Demographics Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>n (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	182 (45.2)
Female	221 (54.8)
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Married	232 (57.6)
Single	103 (25.6)
Separated	15 (3.7)
Widow	53 (13.2)
<b>Age</b>	
20-30 years	158 (39.2)
31-50 years	194 (48.1)
50 years and above	51 (12.7)
<b>Education Background</b>	
Formal education	340 (84.4)
Non-formal education	63 (15.6)
<b>Wealth Quintiles</b>	
First quintiles	98 (24.32)
Second quintiles	69 (17.12)
Third quintiles	86 (21.34)
Fourth quintiles	71 (17.62)
Fifth quintiles	79 (19.60)

Source: Field Survey 2022

***Perception of the Increased Cost of Living***

Overall, the majority, 91.6% of the participants, reported an increased cost of living. A sub-section of the domain indicated that the majority reported rising food prices (95.5%) and construction costs (89.3%) (Table 4). Also, less than half of the participants reported increased costs of water services (42.2%), health services (44.4%), and increased educational costs (45.7%).

**Table 4: Perception that Refugees Have Led to the Increased Cost of Living**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>No n (%)</b>	<b>Yes n (%)</b>
Rising food prices	18 (4.5)	385 (95.5)
Water service costs	233 (57.8)	170 (42.2)
Construction costs	43 (10.7)	360 (89.3)
Health service costs	224 (55.6)	179 (44.4)
Education costs	219 (54.3)	184 (45.7)
Labor costs	61 (15.1)	342 (84.9)
Transport costs	19 (4.7)	384 (95.3)
Food production costs	20 (5.0)	383 (95.0)
Market access costs for food supplies	198 (49.1)	205 (50.9)
House renting costs	46 (11.4)	357 (88.6)
Raise the price of land	65 (16.1)	338 (83.9)
Shortage of workers/labourers	236 (58.6)	167 (41.4)
<b>Overall score</b>	<b>34 (8.4)</b>	<b>369 (91.6)</b>

Source: Field Survey 2022

**Perception of Increased Pressure on Resources**

Regarding pressure on resources, most participants reported increased educational resources (89.3%) and health delivery equipment (90.1%), and nearly three-fourths of the participants reported land scarcity (74.2%) (Table 5). The overall score for the five items was 90.8%, agreeing to increased pressure on resources.

**Table 5: Perception that Refugees Have Led to Increased Pressure on Resources**

Variable	No n (%)	Yes n (%)
Facilities for providing educational services	43 (10.7)	360 (89.3)
Health service delivery equipment	40 (9.9)	363 (90.1)
Equipment to provide sanitation services	49 (12.2)	354 (87.8)
Shortage of food crops	22 (5.5)	381 (94.5)
Scarcity of land	104 (25.8)	299 (74.2)
<b>Overall score</b>	<b>37 (9.2)</b>	<b>366 (90.8)</b>

Source: Field Survey 2022

**Perception of Increased Evil Actions in the Communities**

Looking at the evils in society, the majority of the participants reported increased drunkenness (96.8%), prostitution (94.8%), armed robbery (98.3%), and violence in the society (97.3%) (Table 6). However, fewer (38%) reported illegal trading of firearms. The overall score for the reported evils in the community was 96%.

**Table 6: Perception that Refugees Have Led to the Increase in Evil Actions**

Variable	No n (%)	Yes n (%)
Drunkenness	12 (3.2)	390 (96.8)
Prostitution	21 (5.2)	382 (94.8)
Armed robbery	7 (1.7)	396 (98.3)
Violence in society	11 (2.7)	392 (97.3)
Drugs abuse	74 (18.4)	329 (81.6)
Drugs smuggling	128 (31.8)	275 (68.2)
Illegal trade of firearms	250 (62.0)	153 (38.0)
Land conflicts	125 (31.0)	278 (69.0)
<b>Overall score</b>	<b>16 (4.0)</b>	<b>387 (96.0)</b>

Source: Field Survey 2022

**Perception of Increased Evil Actions in Society by Gender, Marital Status, Age, Education Level, and Wealth Quintile**

The female (96.8%), single (98.1%), and those with a formal education, although not statistically significant, reported higher odds of increased evils in society attributed to the coming of the refugees (Table 7). None of the wealth quintiles were associated with increased evil actions in the communities.



**Table 7: Perception of the Increased Evil Actions in Society by Gender, Marital Status, Age, Education Level, And Wealth Quintile**

Variables	No, n (%)	Yes, n (%)	COR, 95% CI	p-value	AOR, 95% CI	p-value
<b>Gender</b>						
Male (ref)	9 (5.0)	173 (95.0)	1		1	
Female	7 (3.2)	214 (96.8)	1.6 (0.6-4.4)	0.367	1.7 (0.6-5.1)	0.317
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Married (ref)	10 (4.3)	222 (95.7)	1		1	
Single	2 (1.9)	101 (98.1)	2.2 (0.5-10.6)	0.294	1.7 (0.3-9.6)	0.519
Separated	2 (13.3)	13 (86.7)	0.3 (0.1-1.5)	0.137	0.2 (0.04-1.8)	0.186
Widow	2 (3.8)	51 (96.2)	1.1 (0.2-5.4)	0.861	1.4 (0.2-8.9)	0.693
<b>Age</b>						
20-30 years (ref)	6 (3.8)	152 (96.2)	1		1	
31-50 years	6 (3.1)	188 (96.9)	1.2 (0.4-3.9)	0.718	1.6 (0.5-5.8)	0.445
50 years and above	4 (7.8)	47 (92.2)	0.5 (0.1-1.7)	0.249	0.7 (0.1-4.4)	0.767
<b>Education level</b>						
Non-formal	5 (7.9)	58 (92.1)	1		1	
Formal education	11 (3.2)	329 (96.8)	2.6 (0.9-7.7)	<0.001	1.6 (0.4-6.8)	0.457
<b>Wealth quintiles</b>						
First quintiles	8 (8.1)	90 (91.8)	1		1	
Second quintiles	2 (2.9)	67 (97.1)	2.9 (0.6-14.5)	0.176	2.1 (0.4-10.8)	0.394
Third quintiles	1 (1.2)	85 (98.8)	7.6 (0.9-61.7)	0.059	6.8 (0.8-57.1)	0.078
Fourth quintiles	3 (4.2)	68 (95.8)	2.0 (0.5-7.9)	0.314	1.8 (0.4-7.6)	0.424
Fifth quintiles	2 (2.5)	77 (97.5)	3.4 (0.7-16.6)	0.127	2.7 (0.5-14.5)	0.233

Source: Field Survey 2022

Moreover, evil actions were also reported during FGDs with host communities:

*“Theft, social harassment, and widespread fear of robbery are the most common threats to host communities. Items such as bicycles, crops, livestock, and any valuable items become a target for theft” (FGD, Kasulu District).*

Some incidents could be very severe in that they result in the loss of human lives and properties, according to government officials and the refugee representative:

*“There have been incidences including rapes, injuries, casualties, and sometimes refugees being taken to court for encroaching host communities’ farms or forest reserves in search of firewood” (KII Refugee Rep, KII-1 Nduta Camp Management)*

***Perception that Refugees Have Increased Pressure on the Environment***

Half of the participants reported careless disposal of solid and liquid wastes (Table 8). Most reported careless cutting of trees and burning of forests and natural vegetation: 97.8% and 93.3%, respectively. Less than half reported floods (41.7%) and soil erosion (40.7%). Nearly half of the respondents reported overall pressure on the environment.

**Table 8: Perception that Refugees Have Led to Increased Pressure on the Environment**

Variable	No n (%)	Yes n (%)
Careless disposal of solid waste	196 (48.6)	207 (51.4)
Careless disposal of liquid waste	195 (48.4)	208 (51.6)
Careless cutting of trees	9 (2.2)	394 (97.8)
Pollution of water sources	124 (30.8)	279 (69.2)
Burning of forests and natural vegetation	27 (6.7)	376 (93.3)
Floods	235 (58.3)	168 (41.7)
Land/soil erosion	239 (58.3)	164 (40.7)
<b>Overall score</b>	<b>205 (50.9)</b>	<b>198 (49.1)</b>

Source: Field Survey 2022

**Perception of Increased Pressure on the Environment by Gender, Marital Status, Age, Educational Level, and Wealth Quintile**

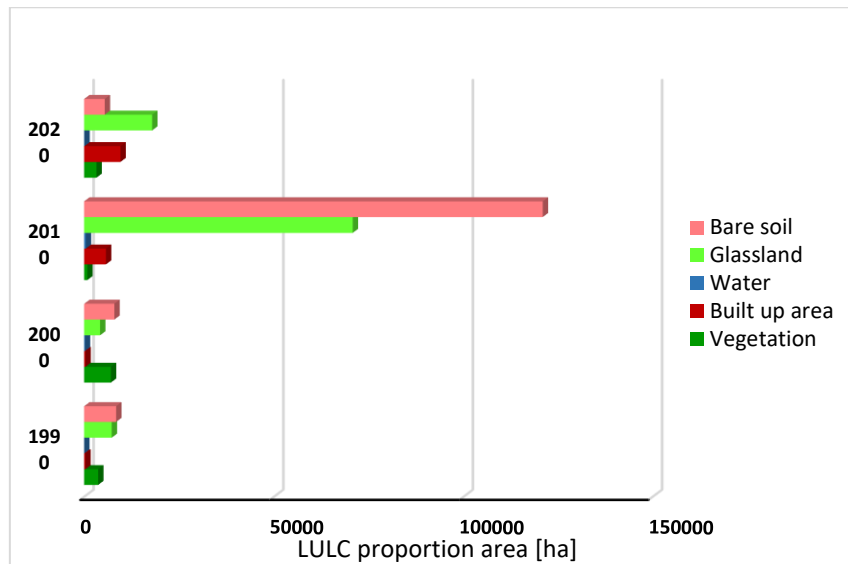
In this respect, the single and the widowed had higher odds, although not statistically significant. Those with no formal education were more likely to report environmental degradation, and remained so after multivariate regression. The third, fourth, and fifth wealth quintiles were associated with higher odds (CoR Odds 12.7 (95% CI, 6.0–26.9, p-value < 0.001); 21.1 (95% CI, 9.4-47.4, p-value < 0.001); and 40 (95% CI, 16.9 – 94.7, p-value <0.001) and remained so after multivariate analysis (Table 9).

**Table 9: Perception of the Increased Pressure on The Environment by Gender, Marital Status, Age, Educational Level and Wealth Quintile**

Variables	No, n (%)	Yes, n (%)	COR, 95% CI	p-value	AOR, 95% CI	p-value
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	90 (49.5)	92 (50.5)	1		1	
Female	115 (52.0)	106 (48.0)	0.9 (0.6-1.4)	0.605	1.2 (0.7-2.0)	0.558
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Married	128 (55.2)	104 (44.8)	1		1	
Single	45 (43.7)	58 (56.3)	1.6 (0.99-2.5)	0.053	1.3 (0.6-2.5)	0.495
Separated	8 (53.3)	7 (46.7)	1.1 (0.4-3.1)	0.890	1.6 (0.4-6.4)	0.530
Widow	24 (45.3)	29 (54.7)	1.5 (0.8-2.7)	0.194	1.6 (0.7-3.8)	0.276
<b>Age</b>						
20-30 years	78 (49.3)	80 (50.6)	1		1	
31-50 years	100 (51.6)	94 (48.5)	0.9 (0.6-1.4)	0.684	0.98 (0.5-1.8)	0.949
50 years and above	27 (52.9)	24 (47.1)	0.9 (0.5-1.6)	0.657	1.1 (0.4-3.0)	0.788
<b>Education background</b>						
Non-formal	25 (39.7)	38 (60.3)	1		1	
Formal education	180 (52.9)	160 (47.1)	0.6 (0.3-1.0)	0.055	0.4 (0.2-0.9)	0.035
<b>Wealth quintiles</b>						
First quintiles	86 (87.8)	12 (12.2)	1		1	
Second quintiles	58 (84.1)	11 (15.9)	1.4 (0.6-3.3)	0.496	1.7 (0.6-4.4)	0.294
Third quintiles	31 (36.1)	55 (63.9)	12.7 (6.0-26.9)	<0.001	16.4 (7.2-37.1)	<0.001
Fourth quintiles	18 (25.3)	53 (74.7)	21.1 (9.4-47.3)	<0.001	27 (11.2-66.6)	<0.001
Fifth quintiles	12 (15.2)	67 (84.8)	40.0 (16.9-94.7)	<0.001	50.4 (19.4-131.1)	<0.001

Source: Field Survey 2022

Furthermore, we also observed pressure on the environment through remote sensing. Figure 2 shows the summary of the change in LULC over the past 20 years (from 1990 to 2020) in the wards bordered by refugee camps in the two districts of Kasulu and Kibondo, in Kigoma region.



**Figure 2: LULC Proportion Area [ha]**

The remote-sensed data show that during the previous years, the area covered with vegetation was enormous in terms of acreage (18.7%) in 1990, and increased in 2000 (36%). However, from 2010 to 2020, this land category witnessed a steady decline in size despite a slight observed increase (Figure 2). The decrease in vegetation cover has been attributed to increased anthropogenic activities within the study area, such as firewood collection, cultivated land expansion, ever-growing population, grazing of pastureland, logging activities of forests and timber for charcoal and/or income generation, and occurrence of natural drought.

The built-up area (acreage), however, had maintained spatio-temporal expansion over all the studied periods from 1.5% in 1990 to 1.7% (2000), 2.8% (2010), and 4.8% (2020) (Table 9). Grassland decreased from 36.8% in 1990 to 21.3% by 2000, but rose to 35.6% in 2010 and 90.7% in 2020. The bare soil was observed to be dominant in all studied periods: 42.8% (1990), 40.3% (2000), and 60.8% (2010); but decreased up to 2.7% by 2020 (Table 10). This decrease might have been attributed to the occurrence of high seasonal and annual rainfall in the country, including the Kigoma region, in that particular year. This contradicts the decrease in watery covered patches in the study area for this year. Watery-covered areas have shown a variable spatio-temporal change in the study area across all the study periods (Figure 3).

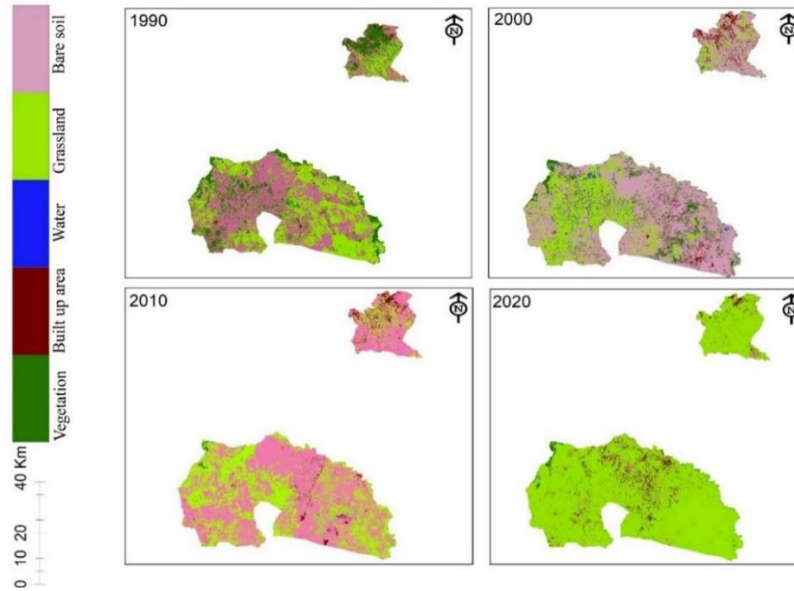


Figure 3: LULC in the Study Area from 1990 to 2020

Table 10: Individual LULC-type Land Area Proportional Change in (ha): 1990-2020

LULC classes	1990 [ha]	2000[ha]	2010[ha]	2020[ha]
Vegetation	3672 (18.7%)	7037 (36%)	799 (0.4%)	3248 (1.6%)
Built up area	297 (1.5%)	338 (1.7%)	5725 (2.8%)	9556 (4.8%)
Water	4 (0.02%)	191 (1%)	416 (0.21%)	42 (0.02%)
Grassland	7243 (36.8%)	4197 (21.3%)	70744 (35.6%)	17911 (90.7%)
Bare soil	8421 (42.8%)	7939 (40.3%)	120941 (60.8%)	5413 (2.7%)

Source: Field Survey 2022

**Proposed Solutions for the Refugee Problems**

The proposed solutions by sex (male vs female), included: educational advocacy (47.5% vs. 52.5%); tightening security (43.8 vs. 56.3%); enough food provisions (47.7% vs. 52.3%); and returning the refugee home (45.1% vs. 54.9%) (Figure 4).

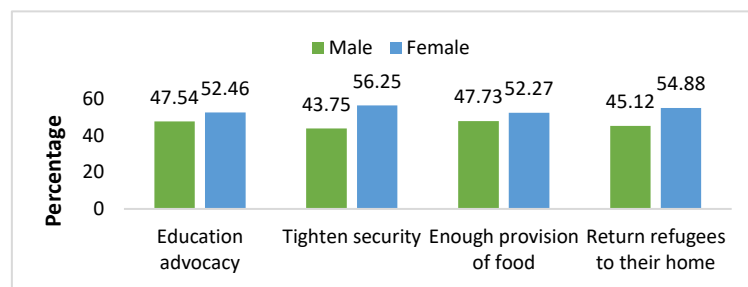


Figure 4: Proposed Solutions for the Refugee-associated Problems

Source: Field Survey 2022

Regarding the qualitative interviews related to durable refugee solutions, there were two main areas to address the refugee-host communities' sources of conflict.

*Policies to Address Fuel as a Conflict Source*

Programs that could minimize the quantities of firewood used were deemed as very useful in addressing dependence on forests, as one camp management staff reported:

*“Producing and providing bio-charcoal to individuals with special needs, including training on how to produce bio-charcoal, but the challenge is still where to find other materials, especially grain stalks and ending of the fund”* (KII 5 Management - Nyarugusu Camp).

Furthermore, the KII 4-Refugees rep-Nduta Camp suggests solutions to the challenges the two communities face. These solutions include renewing the neighbourhood joint meetings that addressed conflicts between the groups that existed formerly, but most villagers do not now attend.

*Durable Solutions*

During interviews with the key informants, some of the suggested durable solutions for the resolutions of conflicts between refugees and host communities included voluntary repatriation of refugees to back to their countries; as illustrated in the following statement:

*“Voluntary repatriation to their home countries or third countries has been another solution”* (KII 6-Management- Nyarugusu Camp).

Also, although they did not propose the mechanism and feasibility of implementation, the refugee interviewed suggested the patrol of camps and their surroundings:

*“Regular patrols to enforce both refugees and host communities to report unusual incidences within their areas would be useful”* (KII 3- Refugees' Rep-Nyarugusu Camp)

**Discussion of Findings**

Refugee laws in several countries require them to stay exclusively in allocated areas, such as camps (Chimanda & Moris, 2020). However, as a social being, a refugee creates social interactions with host societies and sometimes acts in self-defence (Marnell et al., 2021). This situation might lead to host communities perceiving refugees as evil beings even without concrete evidence of their wrongdoings, with prejudices influencing such perceptions (Ullah, 2018). This is similar to xenophobic statements reported elsewhere (Adeola et al., 2021). However, infiltration into refugee camps by refugees with evil intentions was testified in our study.

Studies have reported several interventions meant to address peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities, including the refugee agency financially facilitating host governments to secure both populations: refugees and surrounding communities (Kirui, 2012). Most insecurities happen when refugees stay longer than anticipated in camps (Boeyink & Falisse, 2022). One common form of

violence among refugees and host communities is rape and related acts of violence, which host communities have perceived to be increasing due to refugee movements. It is not very common for refugees to target host communities; however, this is likely to take place in camp settings (Whitaker, 2020). The actual crimes committed could differ from the perception of our study. Studies have documented more criminal incidents, such as armed robbery in non-refugee hosting regions than in Kagera and Kigoma areas, which host refugees (Ongpin, 2008). However, Ongpin did not link insecurity incidences directly to the refugees, which is very different from other refugee settings (see, e.g., Nii et al., 2012).

Refugees however, should not be regarded as a threat and should have freedom of movement, including access to services and other livelihood opportunities (Tippens, 2020). It is a humanitarian right and should remain as such. If this does not happen, host communities will continue seeing the refugees as a hostile population, which influences host community's negative perceptions. Some Tanzanian laws are very restrictive in that they dictate refugee movement and engagement in production activities with host communities. Sentiments, acts such as continued camp patrols are an indication of that hostility. Refugees cannot be a threat after long stay in a country; for some even for more than two decades (Chimanda & Moris, 2020).

Moreover, the refugee agency has a long history of implementing successful peace programs, including fostering good relationships with neighbours (Lung, 2019). We report concerns by host communities about the increased cost of living. This agrees with a study done in Ghana among Liberian refugees (Nii et al., 2012), which reported increased prices of foodstuffs in the area, although the latter study reported improved infrastructure. Refugees in Tanzania's camps might have created an additional demand for some commodities and also created a market for locally produced agricultural goods that refugees need to complement rations provided by the WFP and increase industrial goods. Some refugees might have created additional wealth while in camps and increased their purchasing powers, sometime higher than that of some individuals in the host communities (Boeyink & Falisse, 2022), by expanding their business (Brankamp & Daley, 2020; Whitaker, 2002).

Our study's findings indicate some members in host communities perceive that refugees have negatively impacted the provision of social services such as water, education, and healthcare. However, some reports have shown that the social sector and businesses are improving due to coming of refugees. Programs supporting refugees and host communities have promoted positive attitudes about the presence of refugee in an area. An example by Ongpin (2008) and Nii et al. (2012) reported some mixed changes in the pressure on shared resources and positive increases in business. Our study findings also revealed reported improved formal education and a higher wealth quintile because of societal hierarchies, presumably responding to the allegations of better services than that of refugees.

The study findings show that most participants reported conflicts in the provision of educational services, health equipment, and sanitation services. Besides, they also perceived that refugees were to blame for food shortages and land scarcity. These observation contradicts the earlier observation that the positive impact of refugees outweighs the negatives (Maystadt et al., 2020; Ongpin, 2008). This is supported by the phenomenon that the economies of hosting communities are poorer than those of the refugees, creating such unrealistic observations (Fajth et al., 2019). However, some scholars have reported competition from the increased number of refugees for meagre resources such as land and firewood (Whitaker, 2002); contracting studies that have reported refugees contributing to land development rather than creating scarcity (Kuch, 2018). Also, some scholars have attributed refugees staying in an area for a longer period than anticipated is to blame for resource competition (Erdilmen & Ayesiga Sosthenes, 2020).

The reported perception of high evil-doings in the community attributed to the refugees by our study has the connotation of failing refugees-host population interactions, and the lack of peace education. Regardless of facts, similar attributions have been reported previously from the host governments (Schwartz et al., 2022). Insecurity perception and national security interests rather than actualization have been reported (Brankamp & Daley, 2020). Contrary to what was reported in Rwanda that by assisting the refugees, the social and economic impact on the host communities was reduced (Fajth et al., 2019). However, a recent study in South Africa reported that the more refugees interacted with the host communities, the more positive were the attitudes (Vuningoma et al., 2021).

Environmental degradation and the arrival of refugee have also been reported (Berry, 2008), but without a necessarily causal relationship since host communities might also contribute to degradation. Our study reports that half of the respondents did not see it as a problem, when compared to the increased cost of living or evil-doings in the host communities. However, as resources such as firewood become depleted, the 4km radius pass-free movement may not be adhered to (Ruiz & Vargas-Silva, 2018). Hence, the longer refugees stay, the more regular a host community area is invaded, and the claim for additional territory (Kuch, 2018).

### ***Durable Solutions***

According to the study findings, the suggested durable solutions to the problems identified' include tightening security, strengthening patrols, providing adequate food, and voluntary repatriation. These suggestions indicate that the host communities are fed up with the refugees' stay; perceiving it as hostile since it has contributed increased societal evils and pressure on resources. One of the suggested durable solutions for the refugee problems, as mentioned earlier, is for refugees to repatriate voluntarily. However, this is only feasible when the security or fear of persecution in the refugees' home country no longer exists.

Theoretically, refugees should be facilitated to spontaneously and voluntarily repatriate after the expiry of the trip-partite agreement between the home country, the host government, and the refugee agency (Chimanda & Moris, 2020). However, a fine line exists between voluntary and forced repatriation (Ullah, 2018). Although the participants did not mention it, Tanzania had previously naturalized Burundian refugees. The time this has to happen, however, is too long for short-term solutions for peaceful coexistence. Also, naturalization has neither solved the relationship issue (Ndijuye & Rao, 2018), nor the land issues (Kuch, 2018).

Besides, the feasibility of patrolling camps and their environs is very remote. It may not be sustainable due to the lack of a workforce to do so, and the intricacies of the logistics involved (Chimni, 2019). However, promoting peaceful coexistence is more possible by strengthening the peacebuilding process based on neighbourhood joint meetings to discuss refugee-host affairs.

### **Conclusion and Policy Implications**

This study reports a highly perceived increase in the cost of living and competition for resources such as health care, education, and other natural resources. Also, it reports a perceived increase in evil-doings such as crime, rape, and alcohol abuse. Exceptional environmental policies, the policies to address peacebuilding, including the relationship between refugees and host communities, were either partially implemented or poorly understood. The age, wealth status, and level of education of the participants had a strong association with the perception and hence should be considered for future policy adjustment. Although these are essential lasting interventions, durable solutions such as voluntary repatriation of refugees may not offer answers to coexistence and perception matters.

This article, recommends the ideal model for addressing host refugees' affairs in the country. The model could be achieved within the existing legal framework without necessarily infringing on the permissible mandate of the government and refugee agencies. For these reasons, we suggest a review of the policies related to access to employment and business opportunities, free movements, and increased options for refugees-host communities interactions.

In view of the foregoing, this study makes the following recommendations:

- a) Small income-generating activities (IGA) exist in camps for refugees, but they are grossly minor and not substantive. Policies should strengthen these activities to reduce reliance on opportunities and natural resources such as forests in the host communities. For instance, the bio-charcoal project under Relief to Development Society (REDESO) should be enhanced, while exploring more alternative energy sources other than firewood, e.g., natural gas source. However, stakeholders must consider all the associated challenges for it to produce the required outcomes. This strategy will help minimize the extensive destruction of forests and the limit distances refugees drive from camps to forests beyond the 4km confines provided for refugees.



- b) The right to free movement may be an acceptable alternative for peaceful coexistence, in particular when refugees are no longer perceived as a threat to host communities. However, if this is not properly implemented and correctly translated by the host government, the host communities might question the integrity of refugees and misinterpret the government's intention to limit refugees' movement. Offering travel passes for distant travels is only limited to the sick, the educated, and the refugees within the high wealth quintile, a situation that limits the participation of the refugees in the country's economic activities. Allowing legal work and business for refugees minimizes hostility between the two populations (Schneiderheinze & Lücke, 2020).
- c) There is a need to promote new skills and acquire connectivity with host communities, as per the Australia model (Australian Government, 2016). This is model of working urban refugees can also be applied in Tanzania and elsewhere in the world. Contexts differ, but adapting the urban model can promote the sharing of new skills, particularly among refugees who share the same cultural values with their hosts.
- d) Efforts of peacebuilding knowledge exchange to enable host communities accept refugees in their areas should be increased. If this can involve many Tanzanians, it will help in creating positive refugee perceptions.

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