

“YOU MAY THINK HE IS NOT A HUMAN BEING”

**REFUGEE AND HOST COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN AND AROUND NDUTA
AND MTENDELI REFUGEE CAMPS, WESTERN TANZANIA**

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FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The lead researcher and author of the study is Diana Felix da Costa, and she alone is responsible for any errors or misinterpretations in the report. The core research team was also composed of some protection officers with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) Tanzania and of Burundian volunteers working with DRC in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps. One month of qualitative field research was conducted in August 2017 in Mtendeli and Nduta refugee camps and surrounding host communities. Tanzanian host villages were selected based on their proximity to the refugee camps and included Kasanda, Kewe, Nkuba and Kazalamihunda villages in Kasanda ward (close to Mtendeli camp) as well as Kumhasha village in Murungu ward and Maloregwa and Rusohoko villages in Rusohoko ward (by Nduta refugee camp) (see map 1).

The overall purpose of the study was to improve DRC's understanding of the real and perceived causes of conflict between refugees in Nduta and Mtendeli camps, as well as between refugees and the host communities living in the areas surrounding the camps. The research tackled two different yet highly interconnected themes: 1) refugee dynamics and relationships within Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps; and 2) refugee and host community relations. Two reports have been produced referring specifically to each set of dynamics, which can be read independently but which also build on each other.¹ This report considers refugee and host community relations.

The analysis combines existing studies and reports collected in a literature review with empirical findings from 132 interviews. The methodology for this study was qualitative and relied on semi-structured individual interviews with a variety of informants (87), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (42) and life histories (3). Research participants include women and men of different ages from the refugee camps and the host communities, including community authorities and government authorities. Analysis is also drawn from participation in key events such as public meetings and forums. The report relies on extensive quotes and accounts from research informants that assist in relaying local perspectives and understandings held by Burundian refugees and Tanzanian host communities. All informants have been anonymised.

Most interviews with Tanzanian host communities were conducted in Swahili, while the majority of discussions with Burundians were carried out in Kirundi with interpretation to Swahili or to English. There are obvious limitations in the simultaneous translation of discussions, but due to the extensive number of discussions, findings have been triangulated and represent an accurate picture of the context of the camps as well as of the issues framing the interactions between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian host communities.

¹ See also the other report originating from the study, Danish Refugee Council, 2017. "If you miss food, it's like a weapon, it's like a war": *refugee relations in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps, western Tanzania*, by Diana Felix da Costa for the Danish Refugee Council Tanzania.

The study was made possible through ECHO funding. The research team is very grateful to all Burundian and Tanzanian stakeholders who offered their time to meet with the research team and share their views. Poul Thisted, Stefania Rigotto and Julia Butillon from DRC Tanzania provided valuable feedback to the two reports, as did Mads Frilander and Natasha Leite. Simon Turner from the Centre for Advanced Migration Studies at the University of Copenhagen provided peer review to the two reports. The contents of the two reports are the ideas and opinions of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the donor agency, the organisation or the people above.

Photographs from cover pages: 1) A drawing of a farmer glued to the door of a Tanzanian home by the entrance of Mtendeli refugee camp; 2) refugees in the integrated market by Nduta refugee camp; 3) bicycle carrying wood by a Tanzania home in Kasanda.

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ACRONYMS AND TERMS

CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CWT	Community Watch Team; refers to a group of refugees expected to voluntarily assist in the community's safety and security (CWT is the name for sungusungu in the refugee camps)
DDG	Danish Demining Group
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EFS	Emergency Family Shelter
GoB	Government of Burundi
GoT	Government of Tanzania
GoU	Government of Uganda
HH	Head of Household
MHA	Ministry/Minister of Home Affairs
Mwenyekiti	Village leader normally in charge/overseeing 64 households in a zone; term used both in Burundi and Tanzania
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
Nyumbakumi	Local chief normally in charge/overseeing roughly 10 households within a village; term used both in Burundi and in Tanzania
REDESO	Relief to Development Society
RHA	Refugee-Hosting Area
Sungusungu	Village defence groups which have become formalised as community volunteers with a role in crime prevention
TCRS	Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service
TRCS	Tanzanian Red Cross Society
TSH	Tanzanian Shillings
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
VEO	Village Executive Officer (Tanzanian administrative unit)
WEO	Ward Executive Officer (Tanzanian administrative unit)
WFP	World Food Programme (UN)
WLAC	The Women's Legal Aid Centre
USD	United States Dollars

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report explores causes and triggers of conflicts, but also elements of positive relationships, between Burundian refugees in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps and Tanzanian host communities in neighbouring villages. The report begins by deconstructing and disaggregating the broad notion of ‘host communities’, exploring the nuance that exists within this monolithic and sometimes rather unhelpful category. It also explores the shared historical continuities and discontinuities between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian host communities, exploring memories, social and economic connections and existing mutual social stereotypes constructed between different groups.

The report then turns to the central theme of the research: an examination of relationships between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian refugee hosting communities around Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps. Field research identified two main factors which combined have led to growing tensions between Burundian refugees and host communities: 1) the insufficient provision of food to refugees in the camps; and 2) the current refugee hosting environment in Tanzania, in particular with regard to the enforcement of a strict encampment policy which prevents refugees from legally searching for alternative livelihood opportunities. The conjunction of these two factors force Burundians to exit the camps without formal permits and search for employment under precarious conditions. The report analyses in some detail the consequences of these institutional constraints. A second section turns to the real and perceived benefits as well as negative narratives around hosting refugees, from the perspective of host communities. A third section outlines the formal and informal interactions between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian hosts. The report also includes a discussion of existing structures of authority in the camps and in the host villages. While there are certainly common elements in Nduta and Mtendeli camps as well as with regard to the dynamics with host communities, there are also important nuances that this report will raise and seek to explain. Some key findings include:

- Tanzanians in the villages neighbouring the camps as well as refugees made the important point that not all Tanzanians can be categorized under the “host community” banner. Rather, the social and political category of “host communities” refers specifically to the Waha communities directly neighbouring the camps, who are also those who directly bear the social and material consequences of the sudden establishment of the camps. Even within that understanding of ‘host communities’, members of host communities established a ‘rank’ of how much different Tanzanian social and geographical groups are affected. This is important to recognize because it reveals nuance and demonstrates how this nuance is lived and experienced locally by different Tanzanian ‘hosts’. This also identifies the most relevant host communities that should be targeted in integrated programming.
- As is the case of Burundians and their memories as a means to understand contemporary experiences of displacement, many of the issues raised by Tanzanians referring to the changes and impact of the arrival of Burundian refugees since 2015 are framed by the memories of hosting refugees in the 1990s

and late 2000s. In this sense, Tanzanians are using memories of that period to understand and make sense of what is happening now. Notably, many of the threats they perceive the refugees to pose had not actually occurred in the current refugee encounter.

- Social and geographic proximity and relationships between Burundians and western Tanzanians – beyond the refugee-host dichotomy – also mean that there are deeply embedded social stereotypes between and within each group, with both positive and negative elements. The social and economic continuities between Burundians and Waha are undeniable and they share more than a common religion, language and a socio-cultural history. A large part share livelihoods, which are a significant element in one’s identity and plays a part in shaping one’s routines and lifestyle, social practices and food habits.
- Research findings reveal that Burundian refugees and Tanzanian hosts of different genders and ages share the view that the relationship between them has deteriorated significantly during this current wave of displacement, in comparison to previous times. As noted, two main institutional factors appear to explain the deterioration in relationships: 1) Food insecurity in the camps, due to the decrease of monthly food rations; and 2) The strict enforcement of the government’s encampment policy.
- The delivery – the withholding or the mismanagement – of aid in the refugee camps is directly linked to an escalation of tensions, conflict and violence between refugees and host communities as well as among refugees. Patterns and trends of food distribution can be correlated with patterns of conflict within the camps as well as between refugees and Tanzanians outside the camps.
- As per Tanzanian law, refugees are legally confined to the camps. Although in principle they are allowed to move up to four kilometres outside the boundaries of the camps to collect firewood, this is ambiguous and unclear not least because there is no border demarcation around the camps. Thus, refugees often cross the four kilometre boundary and are exposed to multiple risks. According to testimonies from both refugees and people in the host community, refugees are exposed to abuse and mistreatment by Tanzanian employers, vigilante groups, sungusungu and in some cases by the police, including arrest, extortion, beatings and other physical violence.²
- Refugees are compelled to leave camps for three main reasons. First, out of the daily necessity of collecting firewood, usually close to the invisible boundaries of the camps. Second, Burundians who aspire to leave Nduta and Mtendeli to seek a life elsewhere. Third, refugees leave the camps to seek employment in Tanzanian farms.
- The influx of some nearly 200,000 refugees to the areas and the establishment of the refugee camps has had an undeniable effect on local communities, some real and others imagined. The sudden demographic shift and imbalance is perceived as menacing. Kasanda has a population of 16,203

² Sungusungu are village defence groups that have become formalised as community volunteers with a role in crime prevention. For a historical analysis of sungusungu, see Abrahams, R. 1987. ‘Sungusungu: village vigilante groups in Tanzania’, *African Affairs* 86, no. 343 (1987): 179–196; and Heald, S. 2002. *Domesticating Leviathan: Sungusungu groups in Tanzania*, Crisis States Programme Working paper no.16, London: London School of Economics

compared to Mtendeli's 50,000 people. Even more dramatically, the sparsely populated and even more isolated areas around Nduta number just under 20,000, 106,000 people less than the roughly 126,000 Burundians living in Nduta camp.

- There are a number of factors behind the negative narratives established around the hosting of refugees. First, prevailing narratives associate refugees with an increase in and spread of diseases. While there can certainly be a connection between overcrowded conditions in camps and the spread of diseases beyond the camp, this does not appear to be an issue in Nduta and Mtendeli. Second, one of the greatest and most common grievances expressed by Tanzanians in host communities – but also acknowledged as a cause of conflict by refugees – regards the land where Nduta and Mtendeli camps were established which had until then been productively used by Tanzanian farmers. Third, it is also widely recognized that the sudden increase in population with the arrival of refugees can have a harmful effect on the natural resources of the area and lead to competition over resources. Fourth, there is a pervasive narrative that refugees have led to an increase in insecurity, although this may be more connected to people's perceptions than to reality as there is limited evidence that violent crime has actually increased. Still, perceptions matter and should be acknowledged as equally meaningful because they have the power to shape reality and relationships.
- Despite the very challenging internal and external institutional environment framing the relationship between refugees and host communities, there is a shared history, social, cultural and economic relationships that go beyond the formal. Significantly, the relationship between Waha and Burundians extends well beyond the simple refugee-host community rapport.
- There appear to be limited state-sanctioned and formalised relationships between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian hosts, apart from the integrated markets by the entrances of the two camps. However, there are a number of very significant signs that informal relationships prevail. Some somewhat exploitative such as abusive employment, others more meaningful as regular visits between friends and inter-marriages.
- There is a sense that those who bear the burden – farmers and small businesses neighbouring the camps – are those who perceive themselves to have benefited the least. Although employment opportunities have increased, there is a sense that jobs are given to Tanzanians that are not from the areas even for positions that do not require extensive technical skills. Most of the recognisable benefits of hosting refugees were associated with the possibility of accessing humanitarian and development projects and social services.
- Among the Tanzanian host communities there is an important distinction between leaders that have been appointed (such as Ward Executive Officers (WEO) and Village Executive Officers (VEO)) and those which have been elected (such as mwenyekiti and nyumbakumi).³ Refugee structures of authority are similar in the camps, with issues – whether a conflict or a request for help – first taken to the

³ A nyumbakumi is a local chief normally in charge of and overseeing roughly 10 households within a village. A mwenyekiti is a village leader normally in charge/overseeing 64 households in a zone. Both terms are used in Burundi and Tanzania.

nyumbakumi, then mwenyekiti and if still unsolved on to the zone leader. There is an important distinction between conflicts which may belong to the private sphere of the 'home', and those belonging to the public sphere that may require the intervention of the police or of more 'official'/formal authorities.

IMPROVING REFUGEE AND HOST COMMUNITY RELATIONS: RECOMMENDATIONS

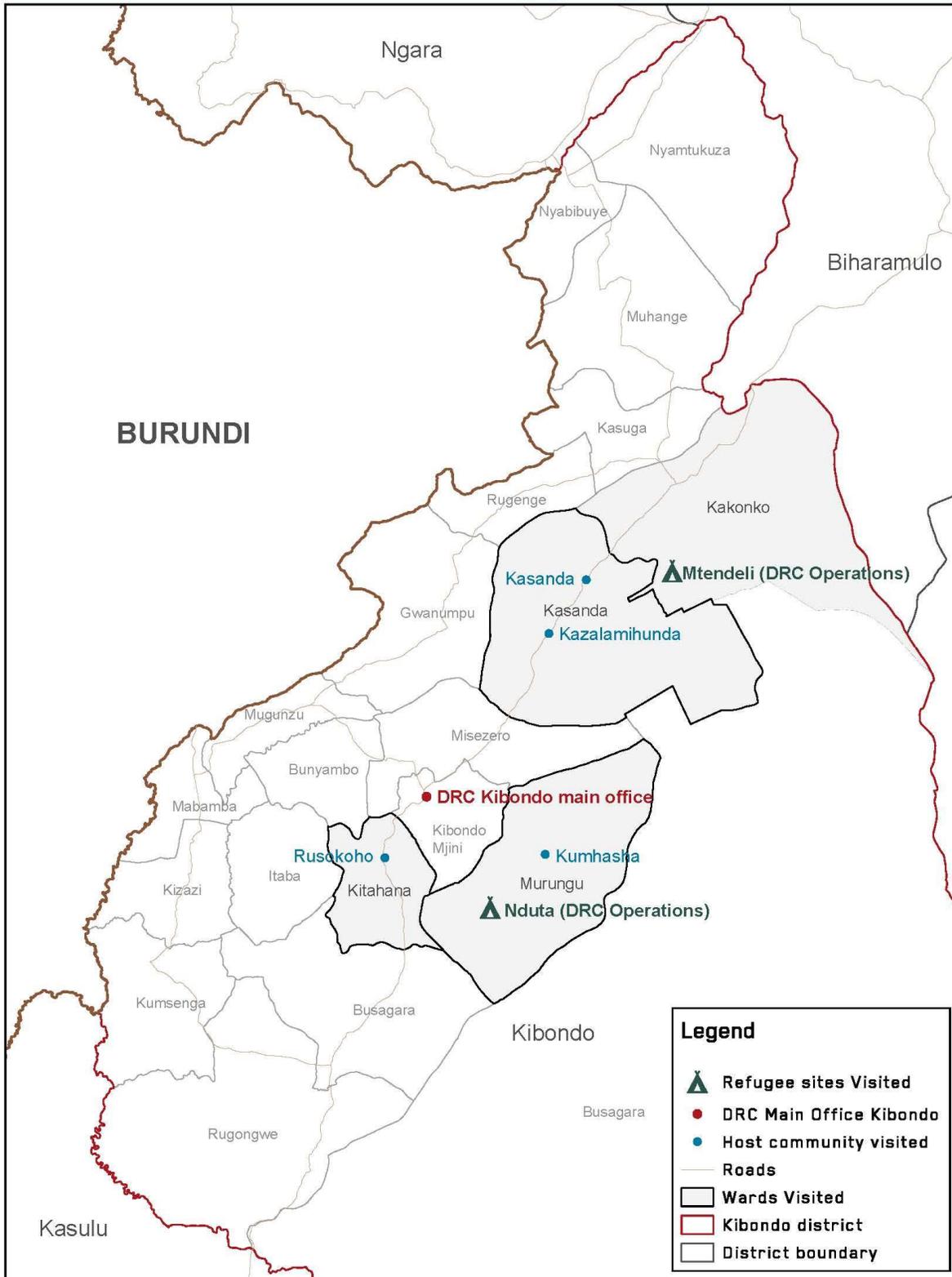
- *All actors involved in humanitarian and development programmes in western Tanzania must make sure they understand the context and its interaction with their programmes, taking concrete actions to maximise positive impacts and avoid contributing to further conflict and tensions.*
- *Roll out integrated programming for refugees and host communities.* Recognise that supporting refugees without addressing the needs of host communities can contribute to host community resentment and tensions projected against refugees. It is widely agreed that programmes that provide both humanitarian and long-term development assistance to refugees and host communities are more successful and generally contribute to a reduction in tensions, even when conflict prevention is not one of the primary programme objectives. Working with host communities also creates a concrete incentive for host communities to be more welcoming to the refugee presence.
- *Develop responses that build on a comprehensive and thorough understanding of social and cultural dynamics, including gender relations and family dynamics, in order to mitigate the negative impact of aid on social changes.* Forced displacement can lead to individual and collective social transformation both among displaced populations as well as hosting communities. This can be seen as an opportunity but it also presents risks, which can lead to further inter-personal and inter-community conflict and should thus be mitigated through deep socio-cultural understanding.
- *Recognise how language may perpetuate social stereotypes.* For instance, ‘host communities’ are not monolithic and homogenous entities. Concretely, in terms of promoting peaceful coexistence, focus on shared history and values in terms of communication strategies as opposed to focus on differences. This does not mean that groups with special protection needs should not have targeted programming.
- *Ensure that all recruitment is conducted in a conflict sensitive manner, including awareness of recruitment dynamics and how these can fuel conflict as well as affect the success of humanitarian programming.* Specifically, this may involve privileging employing Tanzanians from the host communities, as much as this may be possible; greater efforts in promoting understanding and communication between Tanzanian staff and Burundian incentive workers; among other measures.
- *Foster and promote collaboration between communities to inspire collectively-owned solutions to shared problems.*

- *In the context of Tanzania's commitment to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), ease the current encampment policy that is 1) limiting interaction between Tanzanian host communities and refugees and 2) preventing refugees from pursuing self-reliance strategies and alternative livelihoods.*
- *Reduce restrictions on the movement of refugees by issuing more movement permits, in order to promote self-sufficiency and create economic inter-dependency and social integration. Refugee policies that allow integration and sustainable livelihoods are beneficial not only for better co-existence, they are also key for communities' economic development.*
- *Consider increasing financial support to allow for the restoration of full and adequate food rations. It is critical to re-establish full food rations that reflect and respect international standards, but also due to its direct impact on the level of conflict between refugees in the camps as well as between Burundian refugees and Tanzanians outside the camps. Insufficient food also places pressure on refugees to illegally exit the camps in search of alternative economic opportunities, exposing them to protection risks outside the camps.*
- *Support aid agencies in their pursuit of greater integrated programming to refugees and to host communities to avoid fuelling tensions between refugees and host communities. Doing otherwise promotes resentment and conflict. As noted by one farmer: "in order to improve relationships make sure we are provided with water and healthcare, then we'll have the feeling that we are all family members. We only want what we've been promised."⁴*
- *Ensure participatory planning, dialogue and decision-making with communities involved in hosting refugees. By facilitating the participation of both representatives from both refugee and host communities, programmes can improve social relations, promote dialogue and mutual understanding and thus reduce tensions.*
- *Support joint-collaborative cultural events emphasizing the shared history and values between refugees and host communities.*
- *Support dialogue forums between refugees and host communities that are well prepared, inclusive and involve all relevant actors:*
 - There are reports of sporadic dialogue forums bringing together local authorities from the camps and host communities; regular dialogues should be supported and institutionalized.

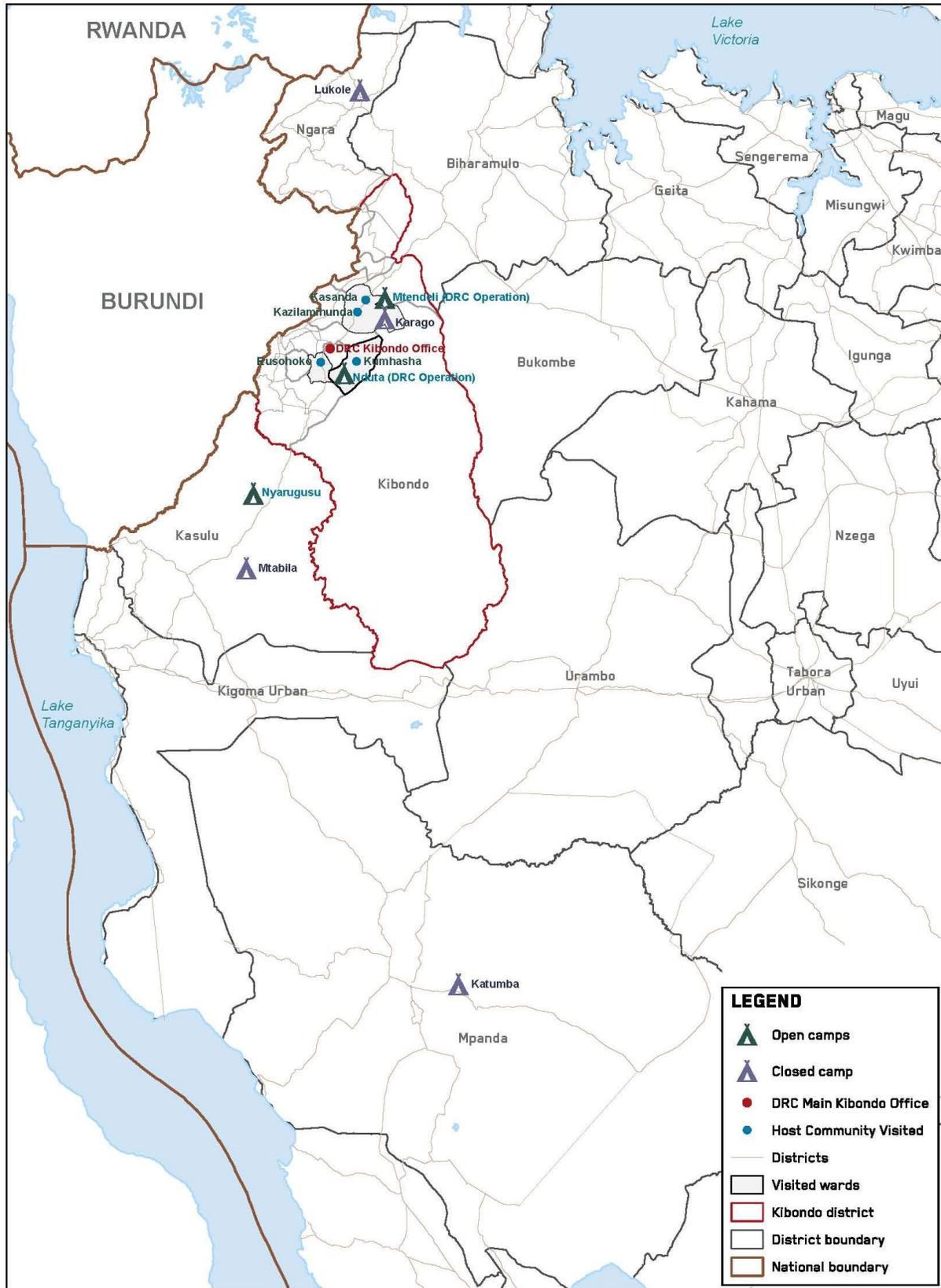
⁴ Interview with male farmer, 54 years old, Kasanda 04/08/2017.

- Agencies may also consider supporting dialogue forums bringing together individuals from different social groups from the camps and the neighbouring host communities, such as youth dialogues, all-women dialogues, inter-generational dialogues, among others.
 - Staff must make sure that proper preparation is placed into these forums and that they are not rushed, which could otherwise lead to further tension between participants and inadvertently contribute to conflict. Dialogue forums can have adverse results if they exclude key groups and individuals. Instead, poorly prepared forums can enhance grievances and lay the foundations for further conflict.
 - Agencies may also consider mainstreaming and integrating dialogue initiatives into other programmes, notably livelihoods programming. These may involve joint workshops, discussions or regular meeting between relevant groups of people from both communities.
- *Support formal and informal spheres of interaction between refugees and host communities.* These may include social activities such as sports and cultural events and economic activities such as further improvement of the integrated markets and trade.
 - *In the context of dialogue initiatives, integrate specific elements of Conflict Management Education/Training to relevant local authorities in host communities and refugee camps.* Drawing on well-established Danish Demining Group (DDG) conflict management methodologies and approaches, DRC staff could be trained in Conflict Management and a plan developed for rolling out Trainings in Conflict Management skills to relevant local authorities in host community villages and refugee camps. These are likely to include WEOs, VEOs, mwenyekiti, nyumbakumi and other local level authorities, as well as sungusungu and other local level security providers. With regard to security providers and other law enforcement actors:
 - Train police, sungusungu and other relevant security providers and local authorities in conflict management and rights-based policing approaches specifically adjusted to the context.
 - Support Community-Police Dialogue Forums that can strengthen trust between police and the community, possibly between police and refugees and police and host communities.
 - Support police in areas hosting refugees with more resources, including vehicles and fuel that will allow them to conduct more frequent and effective patrols.
 - Carry out information and sensitisation campaigns with host communities and with refugees which may involve the following:
 - Information sessions on Tanzanian law, roles and responsibilities of different authorities, both to refugees and local population.
 - Greater awareness of the markets in the areas close to Kumhasha, where some people were not aware of the existence of the integrated market in Nduta.

MAPS



Map 1. Field sites visited during the research



Map 2. Map identifying locations mentioned in the report.

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The political crisis in Burundi triggered by President Pierre Nkurunziza's efforts to change the constitution and be elected to a third term in office in April 2015 led to a spiral of political violence and human rights abuses, protests and civil unrest, amid a growing socio-economic crisis in the country.⁵ These political developments reversed a decade of refugee repatriation after the 1993-2005 civil war that saw some 500,000 refugees return home between 2002 and 2010, as a result of the 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement.⁶ The political crisis also contributed to a new wave of displacement to neighbouring countries, especially to Tanzania which has hosted Burundian refugees since the 1970s.

Since the 2015 political stalemate in Burundi, close to 250,000 Burundians have fled to refugee camps in Tanzania.⁷ Causes for flight include generalised insecurity, political violence and repression throughout Burundi, including land disputes exacerbated by local level conflicts playing out under the banner of the political conflict. There are fears among affected populations of forced recruitment or targeting by the *imbonerakure*, the ruling party's youth militia, as well as extra-judicial killings, disappearances and detentions.⁸

The Burundian government has maintained that the crisis is over and that those fleeing "are either insurgents or have fallen victim to the economic problems brought about, in their eyes, by international sanctions".⁹ On 20 July 2017 President Pierre Nkurunziza made a one day visit to Kagera in Western Tanzania to meet with his counterpart, President John Magufuli. The fact this was the Burundian president's first trip abroad since he survived a coup in May 2015 is indicative of the political friendship between the two leaders.¹⁰ In this visit, the Burundian leader maintained that "Burundi has gained peace and stability," and "call[ed] on all the refugees, our sisters and brothers who fled here to Tanzania, to return in Burundi so that we build together our nation."¹¹ The Tanzanian president also "urge[ed] Burundians to remain in their country. I have been assured the place is now calm."¹² On 25 August 2017,

⁵ International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI) 2017. "I fled because I was afraid to die": causes of exile of Burundian asylum seekers, August 2017, Kampala: IRRI; IRRI 2016a. "I know the consequences of war": Understanding the dynamics of displacement in Burundi, December 2016, Kampala: IRRI; IRRI 2016b, *Burundi: a country on the edge: A briefing paper by the International Refugee Rights Initiative*, April 2016 Kampala: IRRI

⁶ IRRI 2016a.

⁷ UNHCR, 2017. 'Tanzania Inter-Agency Operational Update on the Burundian Refugee Operation' *Bi-Weekly Operational Update*. Reporting Period: 28 April-11 May 2017, Available at: <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/burundi>

⁸ See FIDH, 2017. *Burundi on the brink: looking back on two years of terror*, Report by FIDH with League Iteka, APRODH, ACAT-Burundi, FOCODE, FORSC et CB-CPI, Report No. 693a. June 2017

Available at: https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/burundi_jointreport_june2017_eng_final.pdf

⁹ Moncrieff, R. 'Three lessons about Burundi's crisis from speaking to those who fled it', *African Arguments*, 20 January 2017. Available at: <http://africanarguments.org/2017/01/20/three-lessons-about-burundis-crisis-from-speaking-to-those-who-fled-it/>

¹⁰ Yihundimpundu, G. 'Burundi president goes abroad for first time in two years', *IOL South Africa*, 20 July 2017, Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/burundi-president-goes-abroad-for-first-time-in-two-years-10385994>

¹¹ The Citizen, 2017. 'Burundi President Nkurunziza calls on refugees to return home', *The Citizen*, 21 July 2017, Available at: <http://citizen.co.za/news/news-africa/1580729/burundi-president-nkurunziza-calls-on-refugees-to-return-home/>

¹² Nkengurutse, L. 2017. 'Burundi 2020: Is President Nkurunziza already at it again?', *African Arguments*, 15 August 2017. Available at: <http://africanarguments.org/2017/08/15/burundi-2020-is-president-nkurunziza-already-at-it-again/>

the Minister of Home Affairs of Tanzania, Mwigulu Nchemba visited Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps relaying the presidents' messages to refugees – Burundi is safe and refugees should return. He called on the UNHCR to facilitate the repatriation of those refugees who are said to want to return home, noting that “failure to repatriate the refugees, I will consult with the Minister for Defence to release military trucks that will ferry the refugees to Burundi”.¹³

By early September, some 11,600 Burundian refugees had registered for voluntary repatriation. On the one hand, many refugees pointed at food reductions as the main reason for registering for voluntary repatriation. On the other hand, some also explained that this was how the process of repatriation occurred in the late 2000s – refugees saw the reduction in food rations as a means to pressure refugees to return to Burundi. Many Burundian refugees previously displaced in Tanzania have traumatic memories of what was referred to as “orderly returns” back to Burundi in the late 2000s. According to reports from refugees (discussed further in the reports), “orderly returns” were violently staged, with homes being burnt, refugees deliberately dispossessed, people rounded up in markets and forced into buses, and many families separating as a result. Thus, the growing numbers of refugees registering to return must be understood in the context of the memories of the “orderly returns” of 2012 and fears these may occur again.¹⁴

Throughout 2017, the United Nations World Food Programme (UN WFP) severely reduced monthly food rations due to lack of funding.¹⁵ These peaked in early September 2017 with 60 per cent reductions in food rations. In turn, the Government of Tanzania's (GoT) encampment policy has meant that on the one hand, refugees are restricted in movement and are heavily dependent on aid, while also lacking the legal possibility of searching for other income-generating opportunities. On the other hand, the enforcement of encampment has also limited interaction and relationships between refugees and host communities, including opportunities and support for positive engagement. The Tanzanian host communities surrounding Nduta and Mtendeli are geographically isolated with limited socio-economic opportunities and services available. This increasingly restrictive institutional environment as well as overcrowded conditions and lack of food in the camps are contributing to growing tensions between refugees/asylum seekers within the camps, as well as between refugees/asylum seekers and host communities.¹⁶

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has been operating in Tanzania since June 2015. By the time of the study, its activities included camp management, community services, protection, livelihoods and

¹³ Xinhua, “Tanzania demands UN agency to repatriate Burundian refugees”, *Xinhua*, 25 August 2017. Available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-08/25/c_136553066.htm

¹⁴ For a more in-depth analysis of this issue see below, section on ‘Memories of Tanzania, of displacement and of repatriation’.

¹⁵ See WFP, *World Food Programme Tanzania Refugee Programme October Cycle - Food Ration Allocations 20 September 2017*, WFP Tanzania. See also All Africa, “Tanzania: WFP Cuts Food Rations for Burundi, DR Congo Refugees” *All Africa*, 28 August 2017. Available at: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708280260.html>.

¹⁶ Prima facie declaration for Burundian asylum seekers was revoked on 20 January 2017, meaning Burundians arriving have to undergo status determination processes. The research found that asylum seekers in Nduta did not experience any difference in their treatment and in accessing services, and referred to themselves as refugees. For this reason, and for the sake of fluidity, this report will use the term ‘refugee’, while aware some of those spoken with during this study may have been asylum seekers.

infrastructure. It began its operations in Nduta refugee camp in October 2015 and in Mtendeli refugee camp in January 2016 (opening of the camps), which by October hosted some 120,000 and 47,000 Burundian refugees respectively.¹⁷

This study is part of DRC's efforts to gain a better understanding of the interconnected macro and micro dynamics in the camps as well as between the refugees in the camps and the Tanzanian host communities. The overall purpose of the study is to improve DRC's understanding of the real and perceived causes of conflict between refugees in Nduta and Mtendeli camps, as well as between refugees and the host communities living in the areas surrounding the camps. The study is also expected to assist DRC and other humanitarian agencies operating in western Tanzania in further contextualising their humanitarian aid programmes, ensuring these are conflict sensitive.

Drawing from one month of intensive qualitative field research conducted in August 2017, this report seeks to better understand causes and triggers of conflict between Burundian refugees in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps and Tanzanian host communities in neighbouring villages. Findings and analysis in this report can be read alongside a second report produced from this research which considers the internal relationships between refugees in the two camps.¹⁸ Specifically, research was conducted in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps, as well as in Kumhasha village (Murungu ward) and Maloregwa and Rusohoko villages (Rusohoko ward) all immediately adjacent to Nduta camp; as well as Kasanda, Kazalamihunda, Kewe and Nkuba villages (Kasanda ward) by Mtendeli camp (see map 1). While there are certainly common elements in Nduta and Mtendeli camps as well as with regard to the dynamics with host communities, there are also important nuances that this report will raise and seek to explain.

The report begins by seeking to deconstruct and disaggregate the broad notion of 'host communities', exploring the nuance that exists within this monolithic and sometimes rather unhelpful category that often obscures more than it explains. The section also explores the shared historical continuities and discontinuities between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian host communities, exploring memories, social and economic connections and existing mutual social stereotypes constructed between different groups.

The report then turns to the central theme of the research: an examination of relationships between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian refugee hosting communities around Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps. A first section discusses the institutional environment which frames current relations between refugees and host communities. Field research identified two main factors which combined have led to growing tensions between Burundian refugees and host communities. First, the insufficient provision of food to refugees in the camps. Second, the current refugee hosting environment in Tanzania, in particular

¹⁷ UNHCR, *North-West Tanzania – refugee camps population update as of 31 October 2017*, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/60685.pdf>

¹⁸ See also the other report originating from the study, Danish Refugee Council, 2017. "If you miss food, it's like a weapon, it's like a war": *refugee relations in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps, western Tanzania*, by Diana Felix da Costa for the Danish Refugee Council Tanzania.

with regard to the enforcement of a strict encampment policy which prevents refugees from legally searching for alternative livelihood opportunities. The conjunction of these two factors force Burundians to exit the camps without formal permits and search for employment under precarious conditions. The report analyses in some detail the consequences of these institutional constraints. A second section turns to the real and perceived benefits as well as negative narratives around hosting refugees, from the perspective of host communities. A third section outlines the formal and informal interactions between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian hosts. The report provides a discussion of existing structures of authority in the camps and in the host villages, concluding with some final reflections.

DECONSTRUCTING AND DISAGGREGATING ‘THE HOST COMMUNITY’

While rather obvious, it is worth noting that not all Burundians are refugees nor all western Tanzanians hosts and that relationships between Burundians and western Tanzanians are rooted well beyond the refugee-host community dichotomy and divide. There is extensive licit and illicit cross-border trade between Burundians and Tanzanians. For instance, during fieldwork, which coincided with the period of cassava harvesting, trucks could be seen collecting tons of cassava to transport and sell in Burundi. There are also inter-marriages, friendships and there are deep historical, socio-cultural and economic connections. This section seeks to break down, deconstruct and disaggregate the broad category of ‘host community’ as it is locally understood and given meaning.¹⁹

The Tanzanian hosts: the context of the surrounding Tanzanian villages

Tanzanians in the villages neighbouring the camps as well as refugees made the important point that not all Tanzanians can be categorized under the “host community” banner. Rather, the social and political category of “host communities” refers specifically to the Waha communities directly neighbouring the camps, who are also those who directly bear the social and material consequences of the sudden establishment of a sizeable urban dwelling, the camps. Notably, referring to the naturalization of some 162,000 Burundians,²⁰ elders in Kasanda complained that the president could not decide to grant citizenship to Burundians without consulting them, since “we are the ones hosting them”.²¹

Even within that understanding of ‘host communities’, members of host communities established a ‘rank’ of how much different Tanzanian social and geographical groups are affected. One local authority from Kasanda ward, neighbouring Mtendeli, explained:

*“Kasanda village is especially affected [by refugees in Mtendeli]. First because it’s close to the camp, second because most farms are near the camp and third because people of Kasanda do not take as tough of a stand against them [refugees], they just take them to the police [when found outside], but in other villages they might beat them or even kill them. Also, the most fertile land is in Kasanda so many of the people from Kasanda ward farm here”.*²²

This is important to recognize because it reveals nuance and demonstrates how this nuance is lived and experienced locally by different Tanzanian ‘hosts’. In the case of Nduta refugee camp, Tanzanians who feel particularly affected by the refugee presence are those whose farms were appropriated by

¹⁹ For a discussion around the broad term ‘refugee’ in the context of Burundians in western Tanzania see the other report originating from the study, Danish Refugee Council, 2017. “If you miss food it’s like a weapon, it’s like a war”: *refugee relations in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps, western Tanzania*, by Diana Felix da Costa for the Danish Refugee Council Tanzania.

²⁰ The East African, ‘Tanzania to grant citizenship to Burundians’, *The East African*, 22 August 2017. Available at: <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Tanzania-to-grant-citizenship-to-Burundians-/2558-4066162-7pq22d/index.html>

²¹ FGD with male elders, host community, Nkuba 07/08/2017.

²² Interview with Nyumbakumi Kasanda 04/08/2017.

government to establish the camp. For this reason, this report uses the term ‘host community’ to refer to those Tanzanians living in the areas immediately surrounding the camps.

The Kigoma region bordering Burundi is the home to the Ha ethnic community, known more commonly in Swahili as Waha (plural / Muha: singular), numbering some 2,128,000 people.²³ The Waha people speak the Ha language, most often known as Kiha, also a Bantu language closely related to Kirundi and Kinyarwanda spoken in neighbouring Burundi and Rwanda. Culturally, it is possible to identify various social connections between Burundians and Waha people, arguably more so than between Waha and Tanzanians from the coast.

As is often the case in peripheral border areas, the Tanzanian villages bordering Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps are sparsely populated and with limited government presence and social services available. People living in Kasanda ward – neighbouring Mtendeli, and in Murungu, Rusohoko and Biturana wards – neighbouring Nduta, are mostly subsistence farmers, some also keeping small numbers of livestock and engaging in small business often selling surplus agricultural produce.²⁴ While most of the issues raised by Tanzanians in the villages surrounding Nduta and Mtendeli were very similar, there are notable differences between the areas that relate especially to different levels of isolation and exposure, access to services and to the perceived benefits brought by the presence of refugees.

Located in Kakonko district, Kasanda ward, which borders Mtendeli camp, is alongside the main road connecting Kakonko to Kibondo and on the road to Kigoma (see map 1). Kasanda ward has six villages, some which directly neighbour Mtendeli.²⁵ Kasanda ward has a police post in Kasanda village headquarters, several primary and secondary schools, phone network, a clinic located in Nkuba village and dispensaries (although allegedly poorly equipped and lacking medicine), with some of its villages having visible access to electricity. It also has a well-stocked market, a local hotel and several restaurants suggesting movement and exposure to trade, businesses and outsiders. The dozen or so NGO identification boards pointing to Mtendeli camp are also visible, some of which have started limited activities with host communities in Kasanda. The signs pointing at Mtendeli are indicative of the feelings of neglect by host communities in Kasanda. According to local authorities in Kasanda, the few NGOs operating in their area with limited programmes included DRC on livelihoods, Help Age supporting elders with NFIs and providing vocational training to widows, TRCS also supporting vulnerable households with

²³ Population figure for Kigoma region. Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2012. ‘Sub-Divisional Population Projection for Year 2016 Based on 2012 Population and Housing Census’, Available at:

http://www.nbs.go.tz/nbs/takwimu/census2012/Tanzania_Total_Population_by_District-Regions-2016.pdf

²⁴ For a discussion of the socio-economic context of host communities see also DRC, 2017a. *Livelihoods Snapshot Assessment Context and Capacity Analysis, Market Analysis, Cash Feasibility Study Mtendeli & Nduta Refugee Camp and host communities in Kibondo and Kakonko Districts*, DRC internal report, especially pp. 21-26; and DRC 2017b. *Needs Assessment Report: Livelihoods of Host communities*, 21 February 2017, DRC Livelihoods Programme internal document.

²⁵ These are Kasanda (HQ), Kazalamihunda, Chilambo, Kewe, Nkuba and Juhudi.

NFIs, Redeso on environmental conservation and Good Neighbours Tanzania with various infrastructure and livelihoods projects underway.

Nduta refugee camp, on the direction to Kasulu and Kigoma, borders three wards, all part of Kibondo District (see map 1). Rusohoko ward, with Maloregwa, Rusohoko and Kibingo villages located along the road from Kibondo to Kigoma, has three primary and one secondary schools and one dispensary which is said to lack medical supplies and health personnel. According to local authorities in the area, TCRS had established an entrepreneurship group and Oxfam was working on water and sanitation. Kumhasha village located in Murungu ward is 30 to 40 minute walk to zone 21 in Nduta, while Kumbanga village, also in Murungu ward, is about one and a half hours walk from Nduta.²⁶ Biturana ward is composed of Biturana (HQ) and Nengo villages. None of these wards have a police post, relying on the Kibondo Police Station for its security, and more immediately on the sungusungu. For instance, during discussions in Maloregwa the population complained “the area is not safe because we don’t have a police post, we have to go to Kitahana or to Kifura or Nduta camp” to reach the police. An example was given of an incident involving firearms in the area where the police from Kitahana were informed who in turn informed the police in the Nduta refugee camp police station and asked them to take action: “Because Kitahana is too far and Nduta Police Post was closer to the area of incident.”²⁷

In terms of services available, Kumhasha is possibly the most remote and harder to reach area of those immediately bordering Nduta camp. It is also where much of the land which now makes Nduta refugee camp was incorporated from. Kumhasha has a health dispensary with a nurse (although there were complaints of lack of medical supplies) and a primary and secondary schools. The roads are poorly maintained, there is no electricity and phone network only works with one phone company (Vodacom). Local authorities reported that DRC had been active in Kumhasha with livelihoods activities and Oxfam was supporting water and sanitation activities.

Ideas and memories around hosting refugees

Tanzanians in host villages, especially those surrounding Mtendeli, had a remarkable understanding of the history of conflict and current political situation of Burundi, of the decision-making around hosting refugees and wider displacement politics (“Tanzania is a signatory to the UN [convention] and it’s binding to receive refugees”) as well as of the historical and contemporary causes of the Burundian conflict and displacement crisis (“government supporters are harassing people, refugees are also leaving due to drought and hunger”).²⁸ There was also a great deal of empathy towards Burundians and an understanding of why Tanzania, as a border country, was a safe haven. It was common to hear remarks such as “they’ve fled conflict and have come here for safety” and “they’ve come to Tanzania because we

²⁶ The team did not visit Kumbanga as it is not as close to Nduta and less affected by its presence.

²⁷ FGD with men, Maloregwa 21/08/2017.

²⁸ Both statements by male Tanzanian farmer, 54 years old, Kasanda, 04/08/2017.

are a peaceful country”. While less consistent among respondents, there was also a great sense of empathy with the conditions and challenges that refugees faced in the camps, especially with regard to lack of sufficient food and water.

Host communities around Mtendeli and Nduta have a history of hosting refugees. Referring to Mtendeli, one nyumbakumi in Kasanda explained:

“Before the current influx of Burundians, we received refugees. In 1993 this area hosted Rwandans and in 1994 Burundians. But officially, Mtendeli was established in 1996. People were first received in open spaces like schools, some were in Bokelio, and when a larger number of people arrived the camp was established. People came because of the genocide in Rwanda and then in 1994 Burundians came due to the killing of president Ndadaye. Now they started arriving in 2015 because of the political conflict but also because of hunger.”²⁹

The same man estimated that based on his experience of hosting refugees, “it will take some seven to ten years for them to return home”. As is the case of Burundians and their memories as a means to rationalize contemporary experiences,³⁰ many of the issues raised by Tanzanians referring to the changes and impact of the arrival of Burundian refugees since 2015 are certainly framed by the memories of the presence of Burundians from the early 1990s to mid-2000s. In this sense, Tanzanians are using memories of that previous period to understand and make sense of what is happening now. Notably, many of the threats they perceive the refugees to pose had not actually occurred in the current refugee encounter: *“What people fear is armed robbery but so far it hasn’t happened, but we’ve heard rumours”*.³¹ Rather, they are memories of distant events that took place from the 1970s onwards.

For instance, disappointments and traumatic memories of betrayed friendship with a Burundian and subsequent theft were hard to erase and were mentioned repeatedly by several farmers on why they rejected friendship with Burundian refugees. Two elders shared their experiences on why they did not want to make friendship with refugees:

“In the previous time, I used to have friends but now I don’t want to have Burundians as friends. What they did to me I cannot forget. You see, I had a friend and we were doing business together, I used to give him money and he would buy different items from Burundi and I did the same to purchase items here in Tanzania. Then one time I gave him a lot of money and he ran away with my money, it was in 1980 and he ran away with 60,000 TSH and I never saw him again.”³²

²⁹ Interview with Nyumbakumi, Kasanda 04/08/2017.

³⁰ See report one, same research.

³¹ Interview with government official, Kasanda 04/08/2017.

³² Interview with male elder Kewe 07/08/2017.

“Before, when Burundians were here in the 1990s, I used to host a Burundian friend, but then he stole from my home. I hired him to work on my farm and cultivate my crops, but when the harvest came, he stole all the harvest. This was in 2000. Due to that incident I don’t want to interact more with Burundians.”³³

In this line, rumours and events that happened to someone’s neighbour pervaded the reasons why people insisted they did not want to develop friendships and relationships with Burundian refugees. Even though in reality, most admitted they had a number of ongoing relationships with refugees, whether these were of informal employment, of trade, or even of marriage, as discussed later in the report.

Representations and social stereotypes

These sort of memories have contributed to the creation of deeply entrenched social stereotypes. Social and geographic proximity and relationships between Burundians and western Tanzanians – beyond the refugee-host dichotomy – also mean that there are deeply embedded social stereotypes between and within each group, with both positive and negative elements. In many ways, Tanzanians from Kigoma region, Waha, are culturally closer to Burundians than to Tanzanians from the coast and other parts of the country. This was recognized by a number of Burundian interlocutors who noted that “we are the same people”, referring to the Waha. Referring to the social and physical similarities between Burundians and Waha, one young man in Mtendeli who had married a Muha woman who moved with him to the camp explained: “There are many Waha here [in the camp] but you can’t tell the difference, they’re like Burundians.”³⁴

These similarities were rejected by Waha, who felt the need to assert their ‘Tanzanian-ness’ and disassociate from the poverty and ‘other-ness’ of Burundians. One Tanzanian NGO worker from Dar Salaam shared his idea of the stereotypes around the Waha as “they are barely Tanzanians!”, a frequent stereotype among non-Waha Tanzanians. As is often the case with border communities, the Waha have to place a lot of effort into enacting and asserting their ‘Tanzania-ness’, and rejecting the associations with Burundians. One young Muha NGO worker explained that since the 2000s he preferred to speak Swahili in public, only using Kiha in the privacy of the home. Kiha, he thought, was negatively associated with Kirundi and Waha were keen to disassociate from Burundians and assert their ‘Tanzanian-ness’. This involved rejecting a common culture and history and even occasionally denying the undeniable closeness between Kiha and Kirundi languages.

Burundian reputation in Tanzania is of conflict-prone, violent, traumatized, poor and destitute: “Due to the traumatic experiences most refugees went through it is hard for them to resolve their conflicts in a

³³ Interview with female elder, Kasanda, 04/08/2017.

³⁴ Interview with male refugee, 22 years old Mtendeli 16/08/2017.

peaceful way,” one female Tanzanian NGO worker remarked. Another Tanzanian NGO worker from the Lakes region recounted that she grew up hearing “you’re looking like a Burundi” as an insult and abuse and “if you say that to someone they can fight you”. A group of men in Maloregwa also emphasized how refugees were represented as thieves: “Many people here perceive refugees as the ones who are committing crimes, involved in road robberies and stealing from farms.”³⁵

However, the social and economic continuities between Burundians and Waha are undeniable and they share more than a common religion, language and a socio-cultural history. A large part share livelihoods, which are a significant element in one’s identity and plays a part in shaping one’s routines, lifestyle and social practices.

But stereotypes are not all necessarily negative. Burundian refugees were spoken of as honest and hard-working by a great number of Tanzanian informants. One woman working in the judiciary sector in Kibondo explained:

“The difference between Tanzanians and Burundians – they tell the truth, if they did it [a crime] they’ll say it, they won’t deny it. If they say ‘I didn’t do it’, I believe it. Those people, they don’t lie. If you see one denying, then you know he’s learnt the Tanzanian ways of lying, you can hear him speaking Swahili, like he’s become Tanzanian!”³⁶

The same woman also noted that “There are two types of refugees in Tanzania: the Congolese [who] don’t steal, and Burundians [who] may steal and kidnap. The Congolese are lazy, they only know how to sing! Burundians, you will see them digging, they are hard-working.” Likewise, another Tanzanian farmer in Kasanda held that “Burundians are our tractors”, asserting not only that Burundians were indeed hard-working and excellent farmers but also hinting at a moral and social superiority and position of power.

Tellingly, Tanzanians from other parts of the country cannot distinguish between a Muha and a Burundian. There are however peculiar identification marks mentioned by Waha and Burundians to identify each other, which are also gendered as it was largely acknowledged that it is practically impossible to distinguish a Muha man from a Burundian man, perhaps only by the fact that Burundians tend to use more jackets and suffer more from the cold, as was curiously mentioned by some informants. For women, the external signs were easier to catch, most notably the ways in which women carry their children on their back.

These representations and stereotypes are important to raise, as problematic as they may also be, because they frame relationships between groups of people, among and between Burundian refugees, Waha farmers from surrounding villages, Tanzanian aid workers from the area and from afar and government officials.

³⁵ FGD with men, Maloregwa 21/08/2017

³⁶ Interview with Judicial officer, Kibondo 15/08/2017.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES: THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Research findings reveal that Burundian refugees and Tanzanian hosts of different genders and ages share the understanding that the relationship between them has deteriorated significantly during this current wave of displacement, in comparison to previous times, often referring to the 1990s and 2000s. According to interviews, two main institutional factors appear to explain the deterioration in relationships, discussed in some detail below:

1. Food insecurity in the camps, due to the decrease of monthly food rations;
2. The strict enforcement of the government's encampment policy.

Food shortages in the camps and an increase in conflict

"Even the Waha, [they say] 'if the food [ration] increases [in the camps], then we will have peace with Burundians'"³⁷

The delivery – or the withholding – of aid in the refugee camps is directly linked to an escalation of tensions, conflict and violence between refugees and host communities as well as among refugees (discussed also in report one). Refugees in both Mtendeli and Nduta agreed on the supreme importance of accessing sufficient food in order to be able to live a dignified life and maintain social peace within the home, the neighbourhood and within the camp, as well as with host communities. This section will focus on how the substantial decrease in the distribution of food by the UN's World Food Programme is being understood and some of its social, political and economic repercussions.

Patterns and trends of food distribution can be correlated with patterns of conflict within the camps as well as between refugees and Tanzanians outside the camps. There appears to be a correlation between decrease in food rations and an increase in theft by refugees among themselves and in the host communities. Over 2017, WFP progressively decreased its food rations by as low as 62% of the full food basket, although by end of the year these had slightly increased.³⁸ Both Burundian refugees and Tanzanians in neighbouring communities recognized the decrease in food rations as directly connected to an increase in conflict both within the camp as well as with host communities and directly impacting on the well-being of their everyday life:

³⁷ Interview with Nyumbakumi, Nduta 25/08/2017.

³⁸ See for instance WFP, *World Food Programme Tanzania Refugee Programme October Cycle - Food Ration Allocations 20 September 2017*; and WFP, *WFP Tanzania: Situation Report #62, 19 July 2017*, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP%20Tanzania%20Burundian%20Refugees%20Situation%20Report%20%2362%20-%2019%20July%202017.pdf>.

“You get four kilograms of food per person per month, this is not enough to live. That’s why when food finishes, I ask my neighbour and if he has none, I go out of the camp. The Tanzanians might arrest you and that’s why there are so many Burundians in prison. When you reach this point, I think did I flee or am I in Burundi?! The problems are the same as in Burundi.”³⁹

“The food is continuously reduced and if you leave the camp [to farm] you can be killed.”

“It’s like a prison”: strict encampment policy and firm enforcement

“As human beings, we think, plan, and we realize, but being here it becomes hard to think about my future because I’m stuck, it’s like I were in prison, and indeed that is the case since I don’t have the right to exit.”⁴⁰

Tanzania’s changing refugee hosting policies

Largely credited to its first President Julius Nyerere who promoted an “Open Door Policy” towards refugees and asylum seekers, Tanzania has been hosting refugees from its neighbouring countries since the early 1960s.⁴¹ The policy ensured that Tanzania remained very receptive to people seeking refuge from the early 1960s to the early 1990s. However, three events in the 1990s changed the Tanzanian government’s stance towards refugees. First, a change in leadership and legislation. When Nyerere retired from office in 1985, the new leadership changed its refugee policy. The “Refugee Act” of 1998 prompted the end of the “Open Door Policy”, it stipulated that refugees should settle in refugee camps, introduced further restrictions in movements and stressed voluntary repatriation as the preferred durable solution. Ongpin points out that the reception of refugees changed radically with “the restriction of their mobility within refugee camps rather than integrating them into Tanzanian society. Furthermore, refugees were prohibited from working outside of the camps or possessing farms within the camp grounds, thus changing the dynamics of the refugees in relation to their local hosts.”⁴²

Second, the launch of new economic policies moving away from socialist policies towards greater market liberalisation and capitalist principles, which among other things limited the allocation of resources for refugees. Finally the tragic events that took place in three of Tanzania’s neighbouring countries – Rwanda,

³⁹ Interview with male refugee, Nduta 17/08/2017.

⁴⁰ Interview with male refugee, 36 years old, Nduta 21/08/2017.

⁴¹ For a comprehensive discussion see Chaulia, S. 2003. ‘The Politics of Refugee Hosting in Tanzania: From Open Door to Unsustainability, insecurity and receding receptivity’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 16: 2, pp. 147-166.

⁴² See Landau, L. 2004. Challenge without transformations: Refugees, aid and trade in western Tanzania. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 42 (1), 31-59 in Ongpin, P. 2008. ‘Refugees in Tanzania – Asset or Burden?’, *Journal of Development and Social Transformation* 5, pp.13-23.

Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo – in the mid-1990s, resulting in an unprecedented mass exodus of refugees seeking safety in the country.⁴³

While these reflections may also indicate a tendency to romanticise the past, accounts by refugees and hosts suggest that the encampment policy was only partially enforced during the late 1990s and 2000s. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s Burundians displaced in camps across Tanzania needed permits to leave the four kilometre zone around the camp, but this rule was habitually broken without major consequences. Plus, the permits were relatively easy to get. Authorities also often turned a blind eye to movement of refugees without permits, and in practice refugees only required permits to move to other regions further away. The possibility of moving more or less freely outside the camps and Tanzanians into the camps ensured there were multiple forms of interaction between the two groups, including in terms of employment, friendship and inter-marriage.⁴⁴

Thus, as per Tanzanian law, refugees are now legally confined to the camps. Although in principle they are allowed to move up to four kilometres outside the boundaries of the camps to collect firewood, this is ambiguous and unclear, not least because there is no border demarcation around the camps. Thus, refugees often cross the four kilometre boundary and are exposed to multiple risks.

Elder in Mtendeli, 71 years old

“Most of the people go outside the camp because of insufficient food. People go outside to work in the farms, to conduct small business and even to greet each other because they’re friends. For example, those who farm nearby the camp they just pass by our homes when they go to their home. When I was at Lukole camp the relationship with Tanzanians was very nice, the government of that period gave out permits and allowed people to work in the villages. We worked a lot in farms and sometimes Tanzanians gave us farms to cultivate. Burundians were able to go outside the camp and Tanzanians able to come inside and the interaction was very high. But now when you cross the border of the camp and they catch you they just bring you to police. (...) I think Waha know that it’s forbidden to go outside the camp without a permit so they abuse us outside of the camp, but also they know that we don’t have enough food so we go outside of the camp to steal their cassava. (...) In previous times there we were inter-marrying, even my daughter got married to a Tanzanian in Ngara but now it’s not easy.”⁴⁵

⁴³ Ongpin, 2008.

⁴⁴ See also Turner, S. 2012. *Politics of Innocence: Hutu Identity, Conflict and Camp Life*, Oxford: Berghahn Books

⁴⁵ Interview with male refugee, 71 years old, Mtendeli 19/08/2017

Between a rock and a hard place

“MHA says no one can go out of the camp without a permit, but if we can’t do that and don’t have enough food, how can we live?”⁴⁶

This section takes the perspective of Burundian refugees and explores the conundrum they find themselves in, between a rock and a hard place. Aid agencies are unable to provide refugees with sufficient food that will last a full month (by August, refugees received 62 per cent of the required daily intake of 2,151 kilocalories),⁴⁷ yet refugees are legally denied movement outside the camps and the possibility of searching for and securing alternative livelihoods.

In principle, it is possible to acquire a free exit permit to leave the camp from camp authorities (the Ministry of Home Affairs) if a refugee provides a valid reason to do so. In practice, this does not seem to be a straightforward process, is extremely rare (no refugee spoken to during this study had succeeded in acquiring a permit) and it remains unclear what constitutes and is considered to be a “valid reason”. The process remains unclear for many refugees, with some considering it impossible to acquire a permit and others suggesting that only those better connected such as businessmen are able to acquire permits: “To get a permit is very difficult, because we are not important. We have heard it’s the MHA who give permits but we are small people so it’s difficult to get a permit. (...)”

The reality is that faced with this conundrum, many Burundian refugees choose to exit the camps illegally and search for work – most often farming but also other temporary jobs, exposing themselves to a variety of gendered risks as discussed over the next sub-sections. However, the decision to leave the camps ‘illegally’ in search of work can also be seen as an attempt by some refugees to regain some control over their existence in the face of the frustrations of life, stripped of the possibility of making a living in the camp and provide for one’s family.

Why refugees leave the camps: firewood, employment and escape

Refugees are compelled to leave camps for three main reasons. First, out of sheer necessity of collecting firewood on a daily basis which is not distributed in the camps. This is likely to be close to the invisible boundaries of the camps. Second, Burundians who may wish to travel out of Nduta and Mtendeli to seek life elsewhere. Third, and the most serious perhaps, refugees leave the camps to seek employment in Tanzanian farms.

Refugees can find a temporary job by going to Tanzanian homes or farms to ask the owner for some work or otherwise when meeting Tanzanians in the integrated market. One young Burundian refugee in

⁴⁶ Interview with male refugee, Nduta 14/08/2017

⁴⁷ In early September food was reduced again to 60% and in early October increased to 67%. WFP, *World Food Programme Tanzania Refugee Programme October Cycle - Food Ration Allocations* 20 September 2017.

Mtendeli who had worked in Tanzanian farms explained the process, common terms and conditions of employment at a farm:

“First there’s an agreement to prepare one acre. Another agreement for planting and another for harvesting. For one acre, it’s about 30,000 to 40,000 TSH, which would take one person about one month, or when you’re two, two weeks, and during that time they give you food. When you stay there, you get two meals, at 12pm and in the evening. During that time you sleep there.”⁴⁸

Although there were different responses regarding payment, it appears to depend on the size of the land and the type of work. One Tanzanian mentioned that payment for one acre of land which would take some three weeks for a single person to prepare would be 70,000 TSH. However, more often there are several Burundians working together on the same acre and sharing the money. One male refugee explained that during the period of temporary work at a Tanzanian farm, the refugees employed would sleep at the Tanzanian employer’s home and only return to the camp once the work was complete. He added: “if you work for a long time and in a good way, then you become friends.”

The consequences of exiting the camp: abuse and mistreatment

“If someone wants to die, he goes outside the camp.”

“The major challenge, many refugees are coming here [to Kasanda] to search for work in farms, they get lot of abuse and torture, some even die.”⁴⁹

Burundian refugees, but also Tanzanians, are aware of the dangers refugees face when they leave the camps. According to accounts from both refugees and people in the host community, refugees are exposed to abuse and mistreatment by Tanzanian employers, vigilante groups, sungusungu and in some cases by the police, including arrest, extortion, beatings and other physical violence. One Tanzanian elder in Kasanda ward began to cry as he lamented the challenges and abuses experienced by refugees: “The biggest challenge for fellows living in the camp is food shortage [...], second, they are prohibited from moving out of the camp without a permit, but getting a permit is very difficult. They are harshly beaten, refugees need to be assisted. I remember one day I was at Mganza [village] when a refugee was caught and he was harshly beaten by the police. You may think he is not a human being.”⁵⁰

For those refugees seeking to escape the camps and move further away, a common spot where the police are able to find Burundians is at the bus station in Kibondo, with a ticket to Mwanza, Dar Salaam or other

⁴⁸ Interview with male refugee, 22 years old, Mtendeli 16/08/2017.

⁴⁹ Interview with police officer, Kasanda 08/08/2017.

⁵⁰ Interview with male Tanzanian farmer, 59 years old Kasanda 07/08/2017.

urban centres. These are refugees who are seeking to escape Nduta and Mtendeli either to towns in Tanzania or to neighbouring countries. Caught with a ticket, they are arrested and taken to court for trial.

However, refugees who do not intend to leave Nduta or Mtendeli are also bound to leave the camps on a daily basis, at the very least to collect firewood or otherwise for longer periods of employment in farms. According to one well informed Tanzanian NGO worker, on a daily basis some 50 refugees who leave Nduta are caught and returned to the camp. Women and minors will usually be returned to the camp, whereas men face greater risks of arrest.

According to one judicial officer in Kibondo, leaving the camp without a permit is punished with a maximum sentence of six months in prison or a fine of 50,000 TSH, which most refugees are unable to pay. There are seemingly only two magistrates in Kibondo District Magistrate (which also covers Kakonko) and a high number of cases, thus also a large backlog of cases. According to one judicial officer in Kibondo, most of the accused are not the ones who committed the offenses and are thus acquitted, with the assistance of WLAC, a national NGO providing legal aid to refugees.

One senior police officer in Kibondo recognized that “Many Tanzanians are hiring refugees as cheap labour. We catch both, charging Tanzanians for harbouring and refugees for leaving the camps.”⁵¹ But this was perhaps not the whole picture and it was also reported that even Tanzanian judicial officers often complained that only Burundians were arrested and the Tanzanian farmers who employed them were let off. According to interviews, Burundians tend to be the only ones punished, contributing to a sense of impunity and lack of accountability. Also as a result, the prison in Kibondo is severely overcrowded: “Our prison here is supposed to host 176 prisoners, [but] now it has more than 400-plus prisoners, so very congested and overloaded. Almost two thirds are Burundians, most of them for illegal movement. All are men.”⁵²

According to one well-informed Tanzanian NGO worker, most cases of Burundians taken to court refer to those leaving the camps with no permit, theft in villages close by, fighting and rioting. All these had a direct correlation with the decrease in food distributed in the camps. It is possible to predict an increase in arrests of Burundian refugees when considering two factors, one internal factor to the camp and another external. Internally, on the one hand, as food rations decrease in the camps more individuals feel compelled to leave to search for alternative livelihoods and food for their family. On the other hand, externally, the farming and cultivation season which spans from August up to January also sees more demand by Tanzanian farmers to employ Burundians in their farms, thus there are more Burundians seeking employment out and consequently more arrests.

It was widely recognised by most Tanzanian informants that despite the fact it is illegal for refugees to move out of the camp, it is extremely common. This was noted by both Tanzanian farmers but also by

⁵¹ Senior police officer, Kibondo, 15/08/2017.

⁵² Senior police officer, Kibondo, 15/08/2017.

local authorities and even the police. One police officer in Kasanda explained, “if we were to go to the farms now, we’d find over 100 refugees working there!” This police officer was pragmatic in his understanding of the motivations behind both Tanzanians employing Burundians, and vice versa, why refugees felt the need to move out of the camp for employment and for other necessities, but also the vulnerabilities refugees encountered outside the camps: “The problem is when they come here, they get a lot of abuse, girls and boys, many of them are children”.

The consequences of leaving the camp

“I went out of the camp to search for a job but I was caught by police without documents and was put in jail in Kibondo for four months. Me and my neighbour, we were released two weeks ago. The problem is I was living with my six year old son here, and when I was in jail my child was taken to Burundi, my neighbours thought I had been killed so they sent my child back. Now I have no news, I don’t know where he is (...). I’m thinking of returning to Burundi to search for my son, but I have no money to return, even to get to the border. I don’t know what to do. (...) When the police caught us on the road they mistreated me, they beat me. Then they took us to a judge who sentenced us to four months in prison. (...) I worked in the jail digging holes for planting banana trees, carrying stones to construct the cells and also making bricks. There was no payment and we only ate once a day. It was very tough there, we were beaten and mistreated. There were some Tanzanians but they don’t have to work because they are citizens.”⁵³

As revealed by the account above, when people are arrested and do not return and are unable to communicate with their neighbours in the camp, they are often thought to have been killed. This may explain why there are so many rumours of Burundians allegedly killed outside the camp, who may in fact have been arrested. This may also be another reason for neighbourhood conflict. When a refugee is released from prison, he may find that his belongings and NFIs were sold or stolen by other refugees with whom they were sharing a shelter.

Exposure to deception and extortion

Since a great number of those who exit the camp do so without a permit, they risk being deceived by potential employers or subjected to extortion by security providers. Insights from interviews with both Tanzanian farmers and Burundian refugees suggest that Tanzanian farmers take advantage of the legal vulnerability of refugees and fail to pay them the pre-agreed salary. While it is difficult to assess the extent to which it happens, there was recognition by Tanzanians and many accounts from victims:

⁵³ Interview with male refugee, Nduta 12/08/2017.

“Because many people don’t have any occupation here, they decide to go to the Waha outside to search for a job. After they’ve worked, the employer says, ‘I won’t give you all the money’. Then, on the way back to the camp you’re stopped by the police who beat you and in order to be released you need to give them money.”⁵⁴

“Some people go outside [the camp], they agree with an employer but when he finishes the work he tries to return to the camp and he’s attacked by Tanzanians. It happened to my neighbour, one was killed and one injured with a panga. Both died, two months ago. (...) no one was caught because they’re Tanzanian.”⁵⁵

An account from Nduta: “If you’re caught outside of the camp, it seems like you’re a thief”

“I went outside the camp and was robbed by Tanzanians. I went to farm in Rubaho, then one Tanzanian called me to go make bricks for him. We agreed on 45,000 bricks, 15TSH per brick. We began working and when we made 10,000 bricks we asked him to pay but he refused and told us to wait, that he’d pay later. After a while he called us saying he didn’t have the money. He was a sungusungu and he threatened to send people to beat us, and we thought better flee because we had no [exit] permit to leave the camp. That evening, he brought us 45,000 TSH and told us, ‘if you don’t accept this money I’ll bring other sungusungu and we’ll beat you. We didn’t accept the money because it was less than what we had agreed. We had agreed 150,000 TSH. A group of sungusungu came with sticks and pangas to make us fear. (...) we managed to return [to the camp] and we thanked God. We called the man and he told us if we ever went back there, he would kill us. Until now we haven’t been paid. (...) we didn’t tell any leader because we had no permit to go out of the camp. So we kept silent. We decided to give up.

If you’re caught outside of the camp, it seems like you’re a thief, Tanzanians assume you are a criminal. Even if you’re caught by police, they’ll take you to jail or fine you with 50,000 TSH, but you can’t pay so you go to jail. Because this land belonged to Tanzanians and they were not compensated. When they see us outside the camp they’re angry at us. The law doesn’t protect Burundians outside the camp.”⁵⁶

As revealed in the stories above, there were accounts of refugees being ambushed on their way back to the camp after completing a job and thus with money in their pockets. These accounts also reveal a deep distrust and resentment against security providers. One nyumbakumi in Mtendeli explained that refugees did not feel comfortable to report violence or lack of payment to the police:

⁵⁴ FGD with male and female refugees, Mtendeli 16/08/2017.

⁵⁵ Interview with male refugee, Nduta 12/08/2017.

⁵⁶ FGD with male refugees, Nduta 12/08/2017.

“In many cases especially when it is outside of the camp refugees do not report because they are afraid to be caught as they went outside of the camp without a permit but Tanzanians here they have more power compared to Burundians. Even if you go to report to police, Tanzanians are favoured compared to Burundians. That’s why other people don’t report [cases] if there is the conflict.”⁵⁷

However, the consequences of not being paid are also well understood. Some Tanzanian interlocutors explained that the fact that some employers do not pay the labour of a refugee leads to revenge theft by refugees, most often of harvest. Thus, theft of crops can also be understood in the context of lack of payment and as an attempt to seek justice and accountability. One Tanzanian justice official remarked that “Refugees are stealing [from farms] what wasn’t paid to them [after they’ve worked]”. Another police officer in Kasanda shared a recent event he had witnessed:

“Last week one refugee gave money to someone in Kazalamihunda to buy him a goat, but the Tanzanian ran away and didn’t do it. The refugee didn’t press charges and complain but another Tanzanian called me to inform of the situation, so then I got involved, found the person and returned the money. Because if the situation isn’t resolved, the refugee will come back to revenge. So we are trying to mitigate the escalation of the situation. Most of this happens nearby so we encourage people to report and talk to us.”⁵⁸

As noted by this police officer, Burundian refugees who feel cheated and powerless to act through legal means may resort to theft as revenge and a means to obtain their payment and sense of justice.

⁵⁷ Interview with Nyumbakumi, 40 years old, Mtendeli 18/08/2017

⁵⁸ Interview with police officer Kasanda 08/08/2017

PREVAILING NARRATIVES AROUND HOSTING REFUGEES

“The disadvantages are high compared with advantages. On the one hand refugees are helping in our farms, but they’re also stealing our crops.”⁵⁹

This section discusses the prevailing narratives by Tanzanian host communities with regard to the presence of refugees which are overwhelmingly negative. In many respects, the concerns raised by Tanzanian informants with regard to living close to the camps and having the Burundian refugees close by resemble those pointed out by Whitaker in 1999.⁶⁰

There are a number of factors behind the negative narratives associated with refugees. First, it is understandable why the sudden demographic shift and imbalance through the creation of the camps as large urban dwellings in the footsteps of remote villages can be perceived as menacing. Comparing the numbers from table 1, it is clear why Tanzanian farmers would feel threatened by the Burundian refugee camps. Kasanda’s host population of 16,203 dwindles when compared to Mtendeli’s 47,000 people. Even more dramatically, the sparsely populated and even more isolated areas around Nduta number just under 20,000, which is 106,000 people less than the roughly 127,000 Burundians living in Nduta camp.

Table 1: Basic demographic analysis⁶¹

	<i>Kasanda (host community next to Mtendeli)</i>	<i>Kibondo (district capital, and largest town)</i>	<i>Host community villages next to Nduta</i>
<i>Total population</i>	16,203	200,935	19,503

The influx of some nearly 200,000 refugees to the area and the creation of what are in practice refugee towns with their own particular sovereignty in under two years has had an undeniable effect on local communities (see table 1 and figure 2). The increase in population has had a number of consequences, some real and others imagined and part of shaping narratives of fear.

Second, there are prevailing narratives that associate refugees with an increase in and spread of diseases. While there can certainly be a connection between overcrowded conditions in camps and the spread of diseases beyond the camp, there has not been an issue in Nduta and Mtendeli. Rather, this association

⁵⁹ Interview with female farmer, Kazalamihunda 08/08/2017.

⁶⁰ Whitaker, B. 1999, ‘Changing opportunities: refugees and host communities in western Tanzania’, Working Paper No. 11, UNHCR Centre for Documentation and Research; Whitaker, B. 2002. “Refugee in Western Tanzania - Distribution of Burdens and Benefits,” *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol.15, No. 4.

⁶¹ Table adapted from DRC 2017a. p.23.

with diseases is better explained by the association between refugees, the ‘other’, impurity and danger.⁶² Informants in host communities around Nduta and Mtendeli made reference to the *potential* of the eruption of a variety of diseases like cholera or bloody diarrhoea spread by refugees through the sharing of the river: “It hasn’t happened, but it can occur as the area is more densely populated. All rivers are being shared by Burundians and Tanzanians.”⁶³ Perhaps the emphasis here should be on fear and how to dispel this fear of ‘the other’, considering that fears have proven unfounded and that there has been no record of outbreaks of diseases due to the refugee presence. A discussion with male local authorities in Kumhasha connected the presence of refugees with the transmission of sexual transmitted diseases, which is challenging to assert, but suggests again the connection between refugees and impurity and danger.

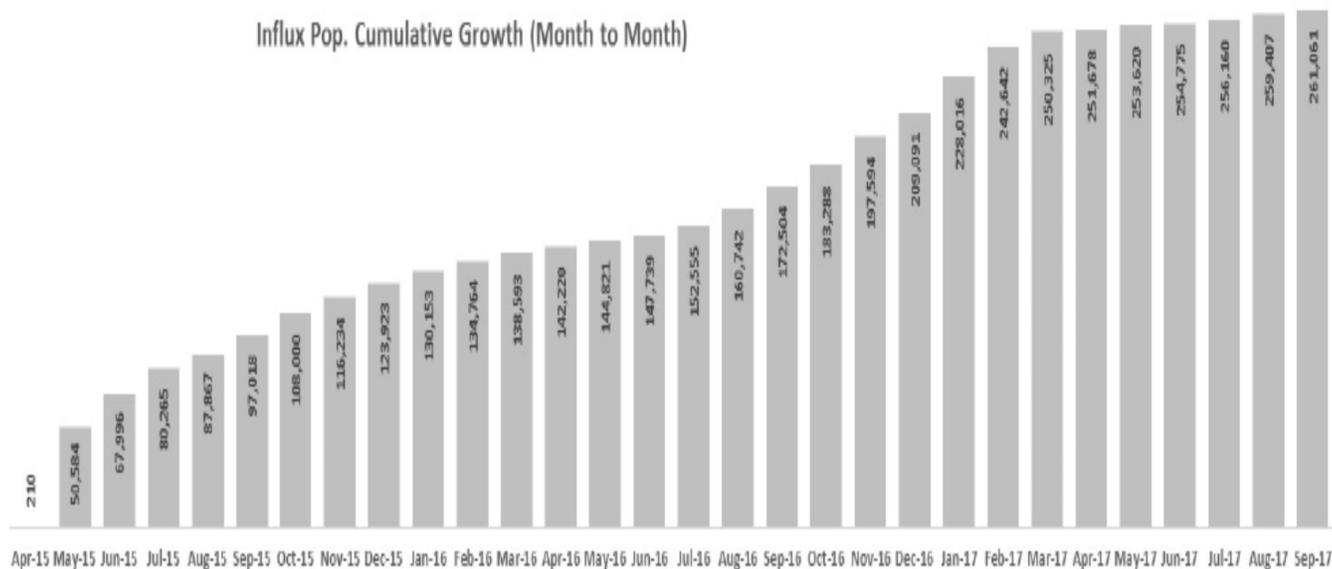


Figure 1 Influx of Burundian Population Cumulative Growth April 2015-September 2017⁶⁴

Contrary to the above, a very concrete grievance, perhaps one of the greatest and most common expressed by Tanzanians in host communities – but also acknowledged as a cause of conflict by refugees – regards the land where Nduta and Mtendeli camps were established which had until then been productively used by Tanzanian farmers. All communities around Mtendeli and Nduta reported that they used to farm in land in Mtendeli and Nduta refugee camps, but were asked by the Tanzanian government

⁶² See for example Douglas, M. 1966, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London: Routledge; and Malkki, L. 1995. *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*, Chicago: Chicago University Press

⁶³ Interview with government official, Nkuba 04/08/2017.

⁶⁴ UNHCR, Refugee Situation in Tanzania - Statistical Report Saturday, 30-Sep-2017, available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/60116>

to vacate those areas when the Burundian refugees arrived. Allegedly, there were initial negotiations with local authorities regarding compensation to those who moved out of their farmland and UNHCR disbursed 'token allowances' to some of those affected. However, interviews with Tanzanian host communities suggest that not all those affected were compensated and that grievances remain and are materialized in anti-refugee sentiments. Tanzanian farmers reported this to be a main grievance and thorn in their relationships. Refugees were also aware of these grievances: "We are a target to Tanzanians not because of the stealing. It's because of the land in Nduta, they [Tanzanians] were chased away without compensation".⁶⁵ One local authority in Mtendeli provided this account:

*"After the return of Burundians from Mtendeli in 2006-2007 there was no proper management of the land [of the camp] and people took over some of that land to cultivate. (...) They had a lot of promises, but nothing came through. The only problem of NGOs is they promised a lot but nothing came. For example, UNHCR came in 2015, we held eight meetings, we put forward a lot of priorities like water, healthcare... they said they couldn't do it all so we said ok, we said [we need] water, but so far nothing."*⁶⁶

It is widely recognized that the sudden increase in population with the arrival of refugees can have a harmful effect on the natural resources of the area and lead to tense competition for resources.⁶⁷ In addition to the land issue raised above, host communities by Nduta and Mtendeli complained of the depletion of forests due to the intensity in which refugees cut and collect firewood. Research by Berry in 2004-2006 in Kibondo district describes similar complaints and concerns by host communities with regard to environmental degradation and competition over resources. Finally, as noted above by a hamlet chairman in Kasanda, water scarcity plays a part in shaping refugee-host community relations, especially in Mtendeli camp and Kasanda ward which suffer from insufficient water resources. As noted by a 2017 DRC study, "The decreased water levels for nearby villages in Mtendeli Refugee Camp is one of the many environmental side effects as the humanitarian agencies are pumping water out of the river which was only meant to be for the host community."⁶⁸ In addition to NGOs formally pumping water out of the river to serve Mtendeli, individual refugees also make use of the river: "I've heard there's no water in the camp so refugees are searching outside for water, but even us we are struggling in the gardens, so we are competing for water, it would be better if water is made available in the camp."⁶⁹

The remark by the woman representative from Kazalamihunda in Kasanda ward neighbouring zone 8 and 10 relates to another issue which shapes refugee-host relationships. As noted earlier in the report, areas close to the camps are remote and lack adequate social services. The nearly-exclusive focus that

⁶⁵ Interview with male refugee, Nduta 25/08/2017.

⁶⁶ Interview with Nyumbakumi, Kasanda 04/08/2017.

⁶⁷ Berry, L. 2008. 'The impact of environmental degradation on refugee-host relations: a case study from Tanzania', *Working Paper No. 151* New Issues in Refugee Research, UNHCR Centre for Documentation and Research

⁶⁸ DRC 2017a. p.22.

⁶⁹ Interview with female farmer, 42 years old, Kazalamihunda 08/08/2017.

humanitarian actors have placed in supporting refugees, largely ignoring the needs of host communities (partially due to limitations in donor funding) has contributed to resentment by Tanzanian host communities which again translates in anti-refugee sentiments. The same woman representative in Kazalamihunda saw “One of the biggest differences in the camp is there is more development there than in our village. Here we put a lot of effort into our crops but at the end of the day they’re stolen”.⁷⁰ Another woman living by Mtendeli explained “The difference [between my village and the camp] is that in the camp they’re given food but we are required to farm to get food.”⁷¹ Donors and humanitarian agencies should engage in integrated programming that considers the needs of refugees and host communities as intimately tied and drawn together. Doing otherwise, has the potential to contribute to and promote tensions and conflict. As observed by the same female farmer from Kazalamihunda, “Now refugees are there and they don’t know when they’ll return to their country, maybe they’ll be here forever, so what should be done to ensure good development to all refugees and also [to us] in the villages?”⁷² The woman referred to employment opportunities in the camp for Tanzanians from the neighbouring villages. She also emphasised education “in the camps refugees are getting free high quality education even in English, so maybe take two or three children from here for school.”

Effective programming in refugee and host communities has been limited by the reluctance of donors to integrate humanitarian assistance targeting refugees with development aid. Humanitarian actors are often deeply aware of the challenges faced by host communities but are unable to address these due to a lack of resources.

Finally, the pervasive narrative that refugees have led to an increase in insecurity. Interviews with host communities suggest the presence of refugees has contributed significantly to an increase in insecurity although this may be more connected to people’s perceptions than to reality as there is limited evidence that violent crime has actually increased. Still, perceptions matter and should be acknowledged as equally meaningful because they have the power to shape reality and relationships. As noted by Berry in reference to the host community and refugee relations in the 2000s, “perceptions can be more important at times than the facts of the situation, when trying to understand the refugee-host relationship.”⁷³ Accusations such as the ones below were common:

“Our village is not safe, it is experiencing insecurity since the Burundians arrived. Our farms and lands have been confiscated to make the camp area and compensation has not been made to those people whose farms were taken. If that were not enough, since their arrival to the area the rate of theft had increased, these people are stealing our crops from farms. We have been attacked by refugees on the

⁷⁰ Interview with female farmer, 42 years old, Kazalamihunda 08/08/2017.

⁷¹ Interview with female refugee, 59 years old, Kasanda 04/08/2017.

⁷² Interview with female farmer, 42 years old, Kazalamihunda 08/08/2017.

⁷³ Berry, 2008 p.17.

roads to our farms since our farms are located on the other side of the camp. Also the road to Nyatundu is not safe, there are incidents of kidnapping buses carrying passengers. For example on 6 August there was an attempted hijacking of a bus by putting poles on the road. This situation is made worse due to cooperation between Tanzanians and Burundians in robberies.”⁷⁴

It is widely acknowledged, including by police, that much of the violent crime is committed in partnership between Burundian and Tanzanian criminals, especially carjacking on the roads: “Burundian refugees are collaborating with Tanzanian criminals. They don’t stop just any car, they know which have money.”⁷⁵ One senior police officer in Kibondo identified Kumhasha, Nengo villages and Kibao junction on the way to Nduta as areas that had experienced highway armed robberies, allegedly committed by Tanzanians and Burundian refugees possessing firearms hidden either within the camps or in the surrounding forest.

During fieldwork, Tanzanian informants in Kasanda referred to two recent episodes to illustrate the growth in insecurity. One story repeated by many Tanzanians in Kasanda referred to an event that occurred in October or November 2016 when a Tanzanian boda-boda driver was allegedly called by a Burundian in the camp to go pick him up and was asked to use a certain route. After two days, the driver didn’t come back and his body was allegedly found with his throat slit open under a bridge. According to some women in Kasanda, in early August there was another murder of a Tanzanian man from Kasulu who used to be a security guard at Mtendeli, whose body was found by the school. The women reported that they had actually gone to see the body.⁷⁶ While the perpetrators were not caught, the women were convinced these crimes had been committed by Burundian refugees. These anecdotal accounts which are difficult to assert truth provide evidence of the increase in feelings of insecurity by Tanzanian host communities and act as justification to anti-refugee sentiments and actions of abuse and violence. Insecurity was also associated with Burundians who came from the border to the camp for food distribution and would then return back to Burundi:

“When you meet them on the road, anything can happen. (...) They say they’re running from their country due to political instability but I see many Burundians just coming to collect food and then return across the border, so life must be OK there. If I was a leader, I’d make them go back. For me these refugees should return, now they’re running because of hunger, there’s no war and no political instability. Because of them, there’s kidnapping and theft and insecurity, so they should leave.”⁷⁷

One concrete angle with regard to the connection between refugees and insecurity concerns the increase in theft of crops, widely acknowledged by Tanzanians and Burundians. As discussed earlier in the report, insufficient food in the camps directly correlates with an increase in refugees involved in theft of crops

⁷⁴ FGD with men from host community, Kewe 07/07/2017.

⁷⁵ Interview with judicial officer, Kibondo, 15/08/2017.

⁷⁶ FGD with women from host community, Kasanda 07/08/2017.

⁷⁷ Interview with sungusungu, Kasanda 08/08/2017.

from farms belonging to host community farmers. One judicial officer in Kibondo shared a compelling account and explanation:

“For me, refugees of before and now, they’re different. Now they’re hungry. In the 2000s there was a lot of food in the camps, they didn’t complain. But now, wherever you see a refugee, he’s hungry. If they had food, you wouldn’t find theft. They’ll explain I have no food and I have a family [to feed]. (...) They don’t steal clothes from people, they steal food. One boy, he was 19 or 20 and he stole maize. We call it mitigation factor. He said he didn’t want to steal, it was only this empty stomach. Then I felt bad but I had to give him a punishment, so I gave him one month [in prison]. (...) If you have a sense of humanity, if a person has stolen two or three cassava, how can you not feel for them? But sometimes they’re beaten badly. Tanzanians who may find someone stealing and beat him so badly, nothing will happen to the Tanzanian. Unless maybe the refugee dies.”⁷⁸

As suggested in the above account, it is important to distinguish the motivations behind a crime, what the judicial officer refers to as ‘mitigating factors’ – as it helps understand potential preventive measures. In this regard, a distinction should also be made between theft of food as diverse from violent crime targeting vehicles. As noted earlier in the report, the motivation to steal crops arises from the lack of sufficient food distributed in the camps as well as “where a Tanzanian employs a Burundian but then doesn’t pay, so the Burundian goes to steal the harvest from the farm.”⁷⁹ Theft of harvest tends to occur at night because there is less control, “If they’re caught during the day they’re taken to the police, but even the owner of the farm, when he hears it’s because of hunger, he lets him go”.⁸⁰

Other more serious cases taken to court involved car-jacking and armed robbery as well as what one law enforcement agent termed as “rape”, while explaining that in fact these latter cases often had the consent of the two parties involved but were reported by the family as rape because they did not have the consent of the families. According to Tanzanian law, cases of theft have to be punished with a prison sentence of minimum six months and there is no possibility of paying a fine.⁸¹ Minor cases of theft and assault are dealt with by the Primary Magistrate in Kibondo, while more serious cases of violence such as armed robbery and murders, and taken to the Kibondo District Magistrate. One judicial officer noted that they had never had any case of assault brought to them and that most of the complaints regarded petty theft. Crime was also gendered, with all cases of theft the officer had solved being committed by men of various ages, but not women. According to another senior judicial officer, when Burundian minors are caught outside the camp they are sent back, while men are sent to prison to await trial.

⁷⁸ Interview with judicial officer Kibondo, 15/08/2017.

⁷⁹ Interview with sungusungu, Kasanda ward, 08/08/2017.

⁸⁰ Interview Nyumbakumi Kasanda, 04/08/2017.

⁸¹ Interview with judicial officer, Kibondo 15/08/2017.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN REFUGEES AND HOSTS: A CONNECTED HISTORY, COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS AND EMPATHY

*“Refugees are not bad. Those saying that have nothing to do with refugees. Those saying ‘we don’t want them here, go back to Burundi’, they’re jealous. There would be no development if there weren’t refugees. There are even houses being built to house NGO staff”.*⁸²

The section above paints a dire picture of relationships between refugees and host communities and of the alleged burden of hosting refugees which must be considered alongside the more nuanced and positive informal everyday relationships which exist. Despite the very challenging internal and external institutional environment framing the relationship between refugees and host communities discussed above, there is a shared history, social, cultural and economic relationships that go beyond the formal. Significantly, the relationship between Waha and Burundians extends well beyond the simple refugee-host community rapport. For instance, there is also much ongoing cross-border trade; in Kumhasha farmers sell their cassava to Burundian businessmen who buy it in bulk. Additionally, language and cultural ties also explain the extent of informal relationships between Burundian refugees and Waha people.

There appear to be limited state-sanctioned and formalised relationships between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian hosts, apart from the integrated markets that occur by the entrances of Mtendeli camp (on Wednesdays) named Muungano market and Nduta camp (on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays), which bring together the refugee population of the camps and the Waha of the surrounding areas, as well as people from outside Kibondo and Kakonko districts, as far as Geita, Kahama and even Mwanza.⁸³

Perhaps what is worth highlighting is the paradox of friendship and foe. The same question was asked to Burundian refugees and to Tanzanian informants: do you have Tanzanian or Burundian friends, respectively. The majority of informants insisted they had no friends, and at most some acquaintances that they met at the common markets. As noted by one Tanzanian living by Mtendeli, “I don’t have Burundian friends but I know many. I don’t consider them to be my friends because I don’t know them well, I don’t know why they’ve run from Burundi, maybe they’re criminals”.⁸⁴ Yet ironically, this man did identify the core reasons why Burundians were legitimately escaping their country.

However, there are a number of very significant signs that informal relationships prevail. Some somewhat exploitative such as abusive employment, others more meaningful as regular visits between friends and inter-marriages. Significantly, the level of empathy by Tanzanians in relation to their Burundian

⁸² Interview with police officer, Kasanda, 08/08/2017.

⁸³ Interview with two sungusungu, Kasanda 08/08/2017

⁸⁴ Interview with male refugee, 54 years old Kasanda, 04/08/2017.

neighbours was high. As noted by the same farmer, “life in the camps is so difficult, there is not enough water and food.”⁸⁵

Kasanda is much closer to Mtendeli than Kumhasha and Rusohoko are to Nduta and this has concrete repercussions in the ways Burundians and Tanzanians perceive each other. Most of the Tanzanians living close to Mtendeli camp had gone to Mtendeli at least once, most to access the hospital, others out of curiosity or to visit friends. However, most significantly, a great number crossed the camp daily to access their farms and this meant there were regular opportunities to demystify each other, make small talk and eventually develop some understanding of conditions and common challenges and develop relationships. Relationships in Nduta appear to be more strained partially because of the greater distance separating the camp from the host population and thus more limited informal interaction. This section will discuss informal existing relationships: in addition to informal employment, there are multiple reports and common accounts of inter-marriages between both Tanzanian women and men with Burundian male and female refugees, not just because of the cultural and geographical proximity between Burundians and Tanzanians.

First, a brief discussion of the perceived benefits of hosting refugees. Employment and business has boomed in Kibondo town, with the number of residents and cash available increasing due to the presence of humanitarian actors. Perhaps a worthwhile question here is who benefits and how do they benefit, as well as who bears the ‘burden’. There is a sense that those who bear the burden – farmers and small businesses neighbouring the camps – are those who perceive themselves to have benefited the least: “maybe contractors are benefiting more, but for small businesses not really.” Although employment opportunities have increased, it appears that a great number of these are given to Tanzanians that are not from the areas even for positions that do not require extensive technical skills:

“Villagers in this area had been negatively affected due to presence of this refugee, for example, employment opportunities within the camp are given to people coming far away from this area even position which can be performed by unskilled.”⁸⁶

“Even people employed are from far away areas. Of course technical positions need more educated people but sometimes even positions of guards are given to those from far away”.⁸⁷

Some of the positive changes referred to the availability of cheap labour and an increase in the levels of trade due to population growth as well as the integrated markets. While the majority of Tanzanian informants would not be as forthcoming as this local authority in Kasanda who openly stated “We have a lot of friends who are Burundian, they’re helping us in our farms”, most acknowledged that during the

⁸⁵ Interview with male refugee, 54 years old Kasanda, 04/08/2017.

⁸⁶ FGD with men from host community, Kewe 07/07/2017

⁸⁷ FGD with local authorities, Kasanda, 04/08/2017.

preparation, cultivation and harvesting season, Burundians were informally employed and paid either in cash or food. Burundians were spoken of as excellent farmers, more hard working than Tanzanians. As noted by one man, Burundian refugees “are our tractors”, another way of saying they are excellent in working the land, while simultaneously holding an exploitative tone. This informal interaction led one woman to note that “Many Tanzanians are employing Burundians, until we sometimes forget we’re Tanzanian or Burundian.”⁸⁸

The majority of Waha are Christians and share those ties with many Burundians in the camps. One nyumbakumi in Nduta reported that there were relationships established between churches and choirs from the camp and neighbouring areas, with movement of Tanzanians into the camp more often occurring: “Tanzanians are the ones who come into the camp, but sometimes the choir are getting permits to go to worship to the villages. For example, one choir went to Mushindi village to worship there but is very rare for this to happen.”⁸⁹

Historical interaction and social proximity between Waha and Burundians, including the periods of displacement from 1990s onwards have led to many past mixed marriages and friendships. These have decreased in the current context since the 1990s and 2000s because of the tighter restrictions in movement but still occur. However, it should be noted that the term ‘marriage’ is often used very loosely and has to be understood in its specific social context. There were reports of mixed marriages between Tanzanian men and Burundian women, as well as Burundian men with Tanzanian women, with Tanzanians of both genders relocating into the camps and Burundians of both genders relocating outside the camp. While generally a sign of positive relationships, one police officer in Kasanda also observed that many of the cases he received were GBV-related and what he termed child abuse cases where Tanzanian men married under-aged girls from the camp. He recalled one story:

“One man married two refugees from [Mtendeli] camp. First he married a refugee in 2000 and now he married the sister of his first wife [another refugee], then married another one, which is where the problem started. The woman got pregnant and he escaped with her. The second wife then came here to ask for assistance to write a letter to allow her to return to the camp. The first wife stayed in Kazalamihunda where she was already well established. Another problem, Tanzanian men leaving their family behind and moving to the camp to marry a woman there. They’re doing this because women in the camp are cheap, easy to get and no need to pay bridewealth or talk to the family and parents. Because it is hard to take the woman out so the man moves there. There are especially cases of this in Kazalamihunda.”⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Interview with female farmer, 42 years old Kazalamihunda, 08/08/2017.

⁸⁹ Interview with nyumbakumi, Nduta 14/08/2017

⁹⁰ Interview police officer, Kasanda 08/08/2017.

As noted by the officer, Kazalamihunda village in Kasanda ward was prone to high levels of (positive and negative) interaction because of its proximity to Mtendeli's invisible boundaries which are surrounded by Tanzanian farms. The presence of refugees was also interfering in Tanzanian family dynamics:

"Some women are complaining that their husbands haven't come home for a couple of nights. For example, if a husband marries a Burundian, it means he's forgetting his family, if he goes live in the camp then he's totally forgotten his family. There are three things [that can happen]: if he's married with a Burundian he can rent a new house; he can construct a new house or he can chase his family and take over the house. There are more than 15 houses with this situation, where either the husband has left or he brought a Burundian woman."⁹¹

However, most of the recognisable benefits of hosting refugees were associated with the possibility of accessing humanitarian and development projects and social services. When Nduta was established Waha women from Kumhasha reported that they went to the border to register as refugees and came to the camp from their village in order to gain access to food rations, "because by then our village was suffering from hunger." People in Kasanda acknowledged that they often entered Mtendeli to access the hospital, although this differed from the areas neighbouring Nduta that were more isolated and further away. Berry reports that between 1995 and 2006, UNHCR spent over 36 million USD on refugee-hosting area (RHA) projects in Tanzania expected "to mitigate the negative impact of hosting refugees, improve security in the region and ensure that the living standards for the local populations were not lower than in the refugee camps."⁹² RHA projects concentrated on infrastructure improvements, access to safe drinking water, education, health, security, local administration and the environment. Perhaps this also contributed to why the memories of past relationships between host communities and refugees were said to be better in the past.

⁹¹ Interview with female farmer, 42 years old, Kazalamihunda 08/08/2017.

⁹² Berry, 2008, p.16.

STRUCTURES OF AUTHORITY IN THE CAMPS AND BEYOND

Community leadership

Among the Tanzanian host communities there is an important distinction between leaders that have been appointed and those which have been elected. Administratively, the Ward Executive Officer (WEO) is the most senior official in the ward. A ward will normally be made of a couple of villages, each led by a Village Executive Officer (VEO). Both the WEO and the VEO are appointed civil servant roles, more institutional and connected to the state. As noted by one local authority in Kasanda, “Nyumbakumis [village chairmans] are the ones elected by the people themselves, they’re trusted and they are the ones involved in solving conflicts. They’re accepted by the people. The VEOs execute the laws, but the nyumbakumis have been chosen [by the people].”⁹³ Nyumbakumi which literally means ‘the owner of the chair’, are seen as closer to the people and more representative of the community’s concerns.

Refugee structures of authority are similar in the camps, with issues – whether a conflict or a request for help – first taken to the nyumbakumi, then mwenyekiti and if still unsolved on to the zone leader. There is an important distinction between conflicts which may belong to the private sphere of the ‘home’, and those belonging to the public sphere that may require the intervention of the police or of more ‘official’/formal authorities. Family and neighbourhood conflict are typically solved by refugee structures of authority unless it involves a crime. A nyumbakumi in Nduta offered the example of two women conflicting over the area where they both wanted to sell local brew and approached him for his help. He mediated between the two “and the conflict was solved.”

Family conflict between husband and wife, including the alleged increase in “promiscuity” that leads to adultery and family break-up, will also typically be solved by refugee authority structures. According to one Tanzanian in Kasanda, conflicts between Tanzanians and refugees should in principle be solved by the courts, but “refugees are very afraid of going to the courts (...) Some of the conflicts involving Tanzanians and refugees revolve around the stealing of crops although sometimes refugees steal crops as revenge for not being paid [for the farming labour] that was agreed. Police are doing patrols but I think it is illegal, they harass and arrest people and confiscate their property.”⁹⁴

Local community structures from the host community and refugees would be in a good position to engage in solving conflicts between refugees and hosts but as noted by one nyumbakumi “if it happened in the camp, it’s very easy to solve but if it happened outside of the camp it’s not easy because we are not allowed to go outside of the camp without a permit and most of the people here they just go outside of the camp without a permit to work to the farms.”⁹⁵

⁹³ Interview with government official, Kasanda 04/08/2017.

⁹⁴ Interview with male Tanzanian farmer, 59 years old Kewe 07/08/2017.

⁹⁵ Interview with nyumbakumi, Nduta 14/08/2017.

While this will vary between Mtendeli and Nduta, local authorities in Kasanda referred to having NGO-sponsored meetings bringing together key local authorities such as zone leaders, VEOs and nyumbakumi from Kasanda. Allegedly, the last meeting took place on 18 May 2017 inside the camp with the logistical support of Redeso and involved authorities from Kasanda and Kizigozigo wards. The leaders agreed on the value of the meeting and had hoped to be able to have regular meetings at least every three months, but depended on the support of logistical NGOs.⁹⁶

However, this is also partially personality driven. One mwenyekiti in Nduta explained: “once we were meant to meet the leaders of Kumhasha, but they refused to come. Zone leaders wanted to meet Tanzanian leaders, they tried to go to the MHA to ask to call Tanzanian leaders to discuss with them, but the meeting was not approved and did not take place. This was in July.”⁹⁷

One nyumbakumi in Nduta complained of corruption among camp leadership “the leaders here in the camp, we have a problem, the leaders may not be speaking for their people, if they get something they’ll keep it for themselves. There are problems with leadership.”

Police and sungusungu

Sungusungu are voluntary community security structures that exist in every Tanzanian hamlet.⁹⁸ In Kasanda ward, one experienced sungusungu reported that there were 80 sungusungu, roughly five per hamlet who worked in shifts and were thus always on duty. He explained:

“I was elected as a sungusungu by the community about ten years ago, I started in special training in local police. It is a volunteer role and I do it in order to protect my community. (...) There are many things people call us for (...). When refugees come to the village they sometimes steal crops or do criminal activities, from there I take the issue to the village office. (...) Last week it happened that refugees were caught stealing a goat. I got information from the owner of the goat. Refugees had come to the village in search of temporary work but didn’t find anything, but then they saw a goat tied to a stick by a house. They took the goat and put it in a sack, but a child saw them and started screaming, so the men left the goat and ran away, he escaped. I tell the community that to prevent these kind of issues we should all cooperate, but cooperation isn’t easy, sometimes it discourages this work because it’s not paid.”⁹⁹

Sungusungu are armed with pangas and patrol at night and rarely during the day, although each village will have its own patrolling system in place. One sungusungu admitted that refugees were also victims of

⁹⁶ Interview government official, Kasanda 05/08/2017. Interestingly Berry makes reference to Redeso’s activities of this nature in the 1990s/2000s.

⁹⁷ Interview with mwenyekiti, Nduta 14/08/2017.

⁹⁸ For a historical analysis of sungusungu, see Abrahams, R. 1987. ‘Sungusungu: village vigilante groups in Tanzania’, *African Affairs* 86, no. 343 (1987): 179–196; and Heald, S. 2002. *Domesticating Leviathan: Sungusungu groups in Tanzania*, Crisis States Programme Working paper no.16, London: London School of Economics

⁹⁹ Interview with sungusungu, Kasanda 08/08/2017.

vigilante violence, though this was specific to places with limited police or sungusungu presence. In Kasanda ward, Kazalamihunda was pointed out as particularly prone to violence between refugees and Tanzanian farmers because of its proximity to the edges of Mtendeli.

But there are also logistical challenges faced by the police: “We don’t have resources, including fuel to patrol, services from our government don’t come on time, so sometimes we are stuck.”¹⁰⁰ In some areas such as Kumhasha sungusungu are responsible for provision of security. “Now village chairmans arrest Burundians themselves and call us, and that has reduced cases of Burundians leaving the camps.”¹⁰¹ But it was widely shared by both Burundians and Tanzanians that when refugees are arrested by sungusungu, they are often beaten badly.

Individuals can hold multiple positions. One sungusungu who was also a hamlet chairman recalled a case that had taken place in February 2017:

“I’m a hamlet chairman, it happened that some refugees came to me to complain they were employed but had not been paid by the Tanzanian farmer. So I called the farmer and mediated between him and the Burundians. So as the third party, the payment was done at my home.”¹⁰²

A police officer complained of the challenges of following up on cases involving Tanzanians and refugees because of the lack of regular communication between police stations in the camp and outside the camp. He also regretted the lack of cooperation with NGOs that deal with specific issues such as SGBV: “some NGOs are coming here, but not from the camp. Like UNICEF is working with the police at national level and that’s why they’re reaching us here, but there’s no local cooperation.”¹⁰³

This sungusungu insisted on the importance of involving them in community safety, noting the difference with police: “It is very important to talk to us [sungusungu] because we are elected [unlike police or government], as we are close to the community and are the ones solving conflicts and preventing them from escalating. (...) sometimes there are so many things happening in the office but in the grassroots level [wananchi wa kawaida] we are not informed nor engaged.”¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Interview with senior police officer Kibondo, 15/08/2017.

¹⁰¹ Interview with senior police officer Kibondo, 15/08/2017.

¹⁰² Interview with sungusungu, Kasanda 08/08/2017.

¹⁰³ Interview police officer Kasanda, 08/08/2017.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with sungusungu, Kasanda 08/08/2017.

CONCLUSION

A number of key findings emerge clearly from the field research on refugee and host community relationships. The increase in conflict between Burundian refugees in Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps and Tanzanian host communities in the surrounding villages is a symptom of the institutional connections between various factors. Food shortages in the camps have forced refugees to seek alternative livelihoods outside the camps. In turn, restrictions on mobility outside the camps, more heavily enforced than in the 1990s and 2000s, mean that these movements are illegal, which then exposes refugees to extortion and violence and perpetuates distrust and hostility between refugees and host communities.

This was not always the case and Tanzania has shifted the ways in which it hosts refugees. Historically, refugees and host populations have had more opportunities of positive interactions and building meaningful relationships. The tightened institutional environment – in the camps and outside the camps – has impacted on the ability to maintain positive relationships. Meaningful changes in these relationships require institutional changes.

Still, there is a long history of complex and nuanced relationships between Burundian refugees and the Waha communities that are hosting them. On the one hand, because of the protracted experiences of Burundian displacement in Tanzania and in turn, the familiarity of Tanzanians in hosting refugees. Both refugees and those in the host communities understand and make sense of the current environment through the memories of previous experiences of displacement and of hosting refugees, respectively. On the other hand, Burundian refugees and Waha hosts share much more than that. They share a common heritage of culture, history, language and blood. In this sense, a “host community” is not just a host community, because they have a lot in common with the refugees they are hosting. Host communities also have to assert they are *the hosts*, thus stress their differences, draw borders and claims of entitlement and ownership of the land and of its resources, including the aid being brought for and allocated very often nearly exclusively to the refugees they are hosting in their land. This is also where unhelpful stereotypes are created and held. While these tensions may never fully resolved, they can be partially mitigated through integrated programming that holistically considers the needs of refugees and of host communities, recognizing that the needs of one ‘group’ are intricately tied to the needs of the other ‘group’.

There is great potential in promoting better relationships between Burundian refugees and their Waha hosts, not just because of the shared heritage but perhaps even more importantly, because of the shared practices of everyday life: common habits and routines, livelihoods and farming. These dimensions need to be tapped into, formalized and supported. The Tanzanian government, donors, UNHCR and other humanitarian actors such as DRC all play an important part in facilitating these relationships.



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