

African Migration Workshop: Understanding Migration Dynamics in the Continent

Title: Rethinking the African Refugees' Movements and Caring Practices in the Post Structural Adjustment Program Era

By

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Abstract

For the past four decades refugee movements have dominated the international migration arena in Africa. However, theorizing migration has mainly concentrated on international labor migration. The new transnational migration theory for example, assumes porous borders and assumes that all migrants are capable of accessing resources in the places to which they migrate. I argue, on the contrary, that in the era of structural adjustment programs in Africa, migrants such as refugees are associated with immobility instead of transnational movements. As a result of restriction on their mobility, these migrants have adopted different forms of survival strategies such as repatriation, returnees, and recyclers. Through a historical account and a case study of Burundian refugees in camps in western Tanzania, I provide narratives of the refugees both on the causes of their movements, and also on the changes and challenges in their participation in different forms of survival strategies. I argue that the dynamics in the causes of movements of the refugees in camps and the new patterns of movement challenge our understanding of the category "refugee" in Africa and call for new ways of theorizing and studying about as well as caring for the refugees. The paper provides both theoretical and methodological contributions to studies on refugees in Africa.

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“How do you describe a refugee who chooses to repatriate because of worse economic conditions in the host country?”

Introduction

The quote above was a question asked to me when I was in Tanzania in 2003 conducting pre-dissertation fieldwork. The question exemplifies the dilemma that refugee-caring agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, are facing today as a result of the changing nature of the refugees. Although the definition of a “refugee” has never changed, the individuals defined as refugees have constantly been changing, in terms of the causes of movements, and there are differences even within the same group of refugees. Understanding factors behind these changes allows us to rethink the way we study, theorize and propose measures for caring for refugees.

For the past four decades refugee movements have dominated the international migration arena in Africa. Tanzania has been the main host country in this region receiving about 900,000. As Brahim (1999:3) recalled, over 250,000 Burundians arrived in 1992 fleeing the assassination of the first democratically elected president, the late Melkior Ndadaye. In 1994, following the genocide in Rwanda, approximately 700,000 refugees were hosted in Tanzania. In 1997, Zairians refugees arrived from the Democratic Republic of Congo following the ousting of the late President Mobutu. The attempt by rebels to remove President Laurent Kabila has, however, prolonged the influx of Congolese, with 95,424 refugees moved between August 1998 and July 31, 1999. A number of studies have pointed at the abuse of human rights and tribal conflicts as the causes of refugee movements in the continent, but economic and political transformations

in the late 1980s were the major cause of refugees' movement in Rwanda. For example, Andersen (2000) and Storey (2001) have argued that the World Bank and IMF policies triggered the genocide in Rwanda by lending both material and discursive support through a benign interpretation of state actions throughout the adjustment period (1990-94). The economic liberalization in the continent led to an increased number of refugees and displaced populations in the continent.

Despite these changes in the category "refugee," theorizing an international migration has mainly concentrated on international labor migration. The new transnational migration theory, for example, assumes porous borders and assumes that all migrants are capable of accessing resources in the places to which they migrate. The theory has been criticized for it has overlooked groups of international migrants such as refugees and similar groups such as those with temporary visa status who are not able to move freely across borders (Hyndman 1997, Bailey 2002). Bailey studied a group of Salvadorians who were given temporary status and are not able to move freely between the country of origin and host. As Hyndman (1997) argues, borders are more porous to people with capital such as financiers of humanitarian assistance than to poor migrants such as refugees (Hyndman 1997). Adding on to this theory, I argue, on the contrary, that in the era of structural adjustment programs in Africa, migrants such as refugees who are pushed by both economic and political factors are associated with immobility instead of transnationalism in the host countries.

Scholars have found that political and economic changes in Africa have led to the change in the category "refugee" and have impacted the refugee policy leading to new forms of movements. As a result of these changes in the global economy there are also

changes in the refugee policy to restrict them in camps (Daley 1992, Chaulia 2003). In the course of their struggle to survive these refugees have changed their status to what I call new forms of mobility namely “repatriating,” “returnee,” “new arrivals,” and “recyclers” or “migrant refugees” – those who are migrating temporarily to urban areas and small towns or to villages and then return to the camps. Studies have documented the existence of these new forms of movement of individuals who were initially granted the status of a refugees but their status has been reduced to “illegal” migrants. It’s time we see these new forms of movements challenge to our understanding of the category “refugee” and open new ways of looking at refugees that will broaden the gap between international labor migration and refugees.

My paper is based on findings from a PhD dissertation fieldwork that I conducted in Tanzania in the year 2004-2005. I chose Tanzania because of its long history of hosting refugees in large numbers, and Burundian refugees because it is the largest group of refugees in Tanzania. The paper provides both theoretical and methodological contributions to studies of refugees in Africa. Before discussing the findings, I will first provide a literature review on the changing category of refugee over time and offer critiques of the definition of a “refugee” as it is understood from the 1951 UN Convention.

Who is a Refugee?

Changes in the understanding of the category “refugee” over time and place put into doubt the practicality of the 1951 UN Convention definition of a refugee.

Nevertheless, the 1951 UN Convention was the first to put in practice a legally binding treaty for vulnerable groups. It defines refugees as:

...people who as a result of the events occurring before 1st of January 1951 and owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who do not have a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear is unwilling to return to it (1951 Convention Related to the Status of Refugees).

Realizing the inapplicability of the 1951 UN Convention to specific refugee issues in Africa and Latin American countries, the regions established their own treaties, the 1969 OAU Convention and the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees respectively. These two treaties broadened the refugee definition to suit the categories of refugees in their regions. The Organization of African Unit (OAU now the African Union or the AU) definition of a refugee is:

Every person who due to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order, in either part or whole of his country or origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his or nationality.

This definition includes: a person who is compelled to flee but does not contain any requirement of persecution based on “race, religion, nationality membership of political group or political opinion” as stated in the 1951 UN Convention (Juss 2006). The definition also covers all man-made disasters, embraces a broad class of displaced people, and translates the core meaning of a refugee status to the reality of the developing world (Juss 2006). The OAU definition also takes into consideration region-specific issues such as colonialism. Thus, broadening of the definition has allowed for the

accommodation of freedom fighters from Mozambique, Angola, and South Africa countries like Tanzania as “refugees.”

The 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees by ten Latin America countries also addresses the inadequacy of the 1951 UN Convention in explaining mass influxes. Unlike the OAU definition, the Cartagena Declaration’s definition requires people to demonstrate that they are at risk due to generalized disturbances in their countries. The Cartagena Declaration bridges the gap between the OAU Convention and the 1951 UN Convention. The Declaration defined refugees as:

Persons who had fled their country because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights (Juss 2006).

Although the 1969 Protocol extended the mandate of the UNHCR to other parts of the world and there are regional Conventions still today, some of the refugee movements in developing countries are complicated and cannot be understood using the conventional definition. Geographers have criticized studies that work with narrow definition of a “refugee” that is contained in the UN 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees arguing that it is spatially and temporally limited (Hyndman 2000, Black and Robinson 1993, Daley 1993). Black and Robinson (1993) argue for the flexibility in the definition at least in research terms. The definition has been found to be inapplicable to many cases of African refugees who were forced to flee due to colonial oppression. It has also been inapplicable over time as the category “refugee” changes with the changing social economic and political situations of the world. Therefore, geographers have called for a revision of the definition over time and space.

The above three definitions of a refugee all look at those who have crossed borders. Some scholars have argued for the recognition of internally displaced people (IDPs), arguing that they qualify for a refugee status even if they are found within their national border (Bascom 1993). In an attempt to include displaced people, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights defined internally displaced people as:

[Those] who have been forced or obliged to leave their homes or places of habitual residence in particular, as a result of , or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an international recognized state border. (United National Guiding Principles on Integral Displaced, E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2).

Humanitarian agencies have warned that broadening the definition of a refugee would have a danger of making them ineligible for humanitarian assistance. However, I argue that with the decline in humanitarian aid, a narrow definition of refugees jeopardizes their chances of accessing resources in the host country as well. Furthermore, recent studies have shown that refugees draw most of their resources from the host communities (Landau 2002, Whittaker 1999, CSFM 2003), and humanitarian aid is only used as a form of security. Recent increasing cuts in food ration in camps also justify this argument. Today with the implementation of SAP there are a number of IDPs who are not recognized under these definitions. These include local miners who have been alienated for investment and land reform.

Wood (1994) criticizes the legalistic distinction between “economic migrants” and “political refugees” and argues that all migrants are forcibly displaced due to both socio-economic and political forces that impel them. In his model of forced migration, he shows that war, political instability, persecution, ecological crisis, or ethnic, religion and

tribal conflicts are all forces that produce different types of migrants. These migrants can be refugees or asylum seekers, legal immigrants such as guest workers, and illegal immigrants. His model is useful to understand the root causes of various types of migration but does not explain how an individual's status can change over time from legal to illegal.

Historically, refugees are constantly redefined with changes in the global economy and political and economic conditions of the hosts (Daley 1993, Hyndman 2000, Bascom 1993). The history of Burundians moving to Western Tanzania goes as far back as the colonial rule, when they moved as migrants from Rwanda-Urundi (today's Rwanda and Burundi) to work in plantations in Western Tanzania (Daley 1993). As such, the economy of Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania were integrated in that the former two countries produced laborers who worked in the plantations in the latter. However, these migrants when moved after independence were called "refugees." These "refugees" initially were also settled in designated villages where their treatments were different from that of the locals. Refugees who moved in the 1960s and 1970s from Rwanda and Burundi were referred to as "wageni wakazi" (resident guests). Daley (1993) called them "refugee farmers." These refugees were settled in settlement villages and provided with land for cultivation, those who qualified were allowed to work and the majorities were granted citizenship.

Daley (1993) argues that similarities exist in the incorporation of refugees and migrants into the host economy. Similarities also exist between refugees and migrants in the repatriation and reintegration process as noted by Bakewell (1999). However, recent studies show that as a result of changes in the refugee policy, refugees who migrate to

urban areas to look for jobs are considered “illegal” (Hyndman 2000 and Sommer 2001) and in their struggle for survival they also invoke new forms of movements.

Studies on the change in the refugee policy in Africa in the 1990s argue that the change was caused by the introduction of structural adjustment programs (SAP), economic restructuring policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the 1980s (Chaulia 2003, Daley 1992). SAP has been associated with increased conflict in the continent. As Anderson (2000) explains, Rwanda had begun implementation of economic restructuring at the same time it was pursuing its peace process, with the WB setting the restoration of peace as a provision for further loans (Andersen 2000). As the peace process entered a period of stalemate, the WB announced that it would halt its assistance, and several other donors reduced or suspended their financial agreements (Andersen 2000, Storey 2001). At the same time, the population of Rwanda was already suffering economic hardships. He added that the IMF also recommended the devaluation of currency which contributed to inflation and reduced subsidies to the producers in the country and triggered conflicts. As he pointed out, these cuts in subsidies in the social services contributed to social tensions and fears and increased the number of refugees.

Looking at the impact of economic changes on the agrarian sector Bascom (1993) examined the plight of spontaneously settled Eritrean refugees in Sudan. He showed that with increased commercialization of land Eritrean refugees, who initially could fall into the category of “refugee farmers” because they could obtain land, became “refugee laborers.” In Tanzania changes in agrarian economy as a result of economic reforms has

led to restriction on movement and new forms of movements of refugees are practiced as survival strategies.

SAP has increased the number of refugees in the continent and added to the challenges the host countries experienced in hosting large numbers of refugees while conducting economic restructuring. Literature on causes of movement of refugees has documented dictatorship regime, human rights abuse, and civil wars as the main causes of the movement of refugees. Today increasing economic hardship caused by introduction of SAP and the weakening of the state in provision of services, has added to the refugee movements in the continent. Therefore, the individuals who cross borders have both fear of livelihood insecurity and persecution. Daley (2001), for example, found out that transformations such as structural adjustment programs have intensified the struggle over resources and have aggravated social inequalities and displacement. In her study of Burundian refugees who have been mobile for more than four decades, she criticized the current stand of host states in Africa who want to increase control of the movement of refugees while these refugees who have a history of mobility.

Narratives of Refugees in Camps on Causes of Their Movements

A total of 80 respondents were interviewed: 20 each from Mtendeli, Nduta, Mtabila I and II, and Muyowosi refugee camps in Kigoma region in western Tanzania. Respondents were chosen purposively with the aim of including refugees of age 18 and above, with different genders and economic status in the group of respondents. Narratives of the respondents reveal different causes for their movement. Many refugees began with their history of fleeing from Burundi, others talked about their problems in the camps,

and some only mentioned one incident that they remembered in their life, for example, being raped.

Reasons for flight differed from one individual to another. Some respondents openly said they fled because they heard/saw people being killed. Others said they left because they could not continue with cultivation. Another group (after staying in the forest for some time) said they decided to flee because they fell sick in the forest and did not have access to medicine. Some of the respondents in the last category often went back to Burundi, stayed for some time, and then returned to the camps. Below is a narrative of a 28 year old female Burundian refugee:

I was at school when I came back home. My parents were not there with my fellow students so we ran to the forest. We stayed in the forest for 2 months starving and sometimes eating roots. One day, a group of people came with guns so we ran again and I went my own way. I got into a house of 4 people (parents and their two boys); they stayed with me. One day I left to look for my parents in the mountains in the morning. When we came back, we found that the two children (*boys*) were killed. Another day they left to look for food and five men came and raped me. We thought of where to go, and we ran to Tanzania (Female 28, interview 27).

Another response comes from those whose parents had moved in 1972, then had repatriated to Burundi in 1992, but fled to Tanzania again. This group reported that their main reason for movement was failure to continue with cultivation due to insecurity. The quote below exemplified some of their responses:

When I completed school, my parents repatriated back to Burundi. We found out that my father's farm was taken by the army. During the farming season, we asked for a place to farm but we were working on the farm with a lot of fear due to sounds of guns. We decided to go back (*to Tanzania*). (Interview 60, male 42).

Apart from the narrative history of their movement, refugees also talked about their experiences in the camps, their concern about the shift in policy and its impact on

their survival. As one male participant in focus group discussion told me “Food is not enough but refugees live *kwa ujanja* (strategically).” Pointing to changes in the refugee policy, the respondent also questioned the meaning of the phrase “human beings are equal” in the light of his experiences. To the refugees, equality includes access to land, employment and education and freedom of movement, but with the change in the policy, they are denied access to these resources. The participant sees that the rights of refugees are being minimized with the restriction on their movement. For example, they are not even given the opportunity to go to school, which according to him, the refugees’ futures depend on getting an education. Similar results were found by Felleson (2003) on education as a form of survival strategy but as the participant argues is a tool that will liberate the Hutus from the Tutsi upon their return.

Studies on refugees in camps show that they engage in different activities of livelihood including sharecropping, casual labor and common markets (between Tanzanians and the refugees) in which they exchange their food rations for fresh locally manufactured staples. Jacobsen (2001) refers to this integration of refugees in camps as “informal integration.” However, agriculture, land, and local government reform processes of structural adjustment program, have altered the labor market, increased land value, and changed the social relations of production leading to challenges in livelihood strategies of refugees. Challenges to achieving livelihood security are also caused by increased cuts in food rations in the camps since 2000 as a result of the increasing refugee population worldwide and the shift in donor’s attention to the refugees in the Middle East and Dar fur region, unfulfilled pledges by donors, and rising costs of transportation of food. As a result of these changes, refugees resort to different means of survival.

Survival Strategies of the Refugees: Challenges

Table 5.4 shows survival strategies of refugees in camps. The table shows that the most common activity is farming in the plot (100%). About 85.7% have formed small groups of income-generating activities, and 78.2% are employed in different organizations in camps, and only 34.8% are doing farming and casual labor in the villages due to restriction on movement. Before restriction on movement, respondents were engaged in casual labor and farming in the villages, and at the time this study was conducted, most of the respondents reported that they engaged in multiple survival strategies. As the quotes below show, some refugees do not go out now for fear of being robbed, beaten, caught, sent to jail, raped or having their items like hoes or crops being taken or being asked to pay a bribe instead.

Table 1: Refugees' Survival Strategies of Refugees in Camps in Percentages

Type of survival strategies	Farming or casual labor in villages	Plot farming	Livestock keeping	Business/ retail services	Production/ Income generating Activities	Employment in organization working in camps
%	34.8	100	36.5	56.5	85.7	78.2

Source: Author's fieldwork 2004-3005

However, some of the respondents reported that they do not go out because they have no money to rent a farm. Respondents reported that, before the restriction on movement, they could get a half an acre for no rent or for a rent as low as T.Shs. 500 (\$0.50). As reported, same size plot at the time I conducted this study could be accessed for T.Shs. 10,000 to 30,000 (\$10-30). In addition, respondents strongly reported that they do not have conflicts with Tanzanians but with the government that restricts their movement.

The assistance is there but there are not enough maize and beans and the food ends only after 5 days. I depend on looking for places to work in the villages or a small business. I was depending on casual labor in the villages. I was paid 200 T.Shs. (\$0.25 cents). Now we are not allowed and I do not even go to Kasanda. In our relationship with Tanzanians we have no problems. It is normal if you are looking for a farm, you have to pay a certain amount. We used to cultivate and plant, but then conflicts came so we left our harvests. The government said they do not want to see a refugee in the villages. (Interview 6 female 37).

(i) Casual Labor

Casual farm labor is practiced as a form of employment, or payment in kind to access land for cultivation in the villages. Respondents reported being paid an average of T.Shs. 250 (\$ 0.25) per day or per yard cultivating a farm from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Respondents who participate in casual labor are sometimes paid in kind, (e.g., given food such as a bag of cassava).

I borrow or go to the villages to do casual labor. I am paid 600 per yard which is 15 x 3 ft length and 15 x 2 ft width or an acre for 8,000 (\$8). We cultivate with three people for 6 days. I was doing this together with working for SAEU. So I go there during vacation. I did this last year (2002). Life here is casual labor. We do not have any other means. We look for the farms from the villages and this is what everybody does.

Although casual labor and farming in the villages is not allowed, some refugees still manage to sneak out of the camps and go to the villages because the food rations are not enough. However, they are not always able to go to the camps, as reported, so they sometimes depend on borrowing or eating one meal to keep from starving if they do not have food and cannot go out.

(ii) Cultivation in plots

As a result of restriction on movement and cuts in food rations, there are increased numbers of refugees practicing farming in plots. This is a common type of

cultivation especially in the Mtabila and Muyowosi camps. These plots range from 300 to 1250 sq meters. These plots are located in the same places where they have built their houses. This type of cultivation involves multi-cropping and tree planting. In these plots refugees have planted vegetables, banana, fruits, maize and beans. As the quotes below show:

I work as a carpenter... Life was better in Katumba because we had farms for cultivation but here we have only plots... Before I used to plant vegetables in the plots, but now we have trees (Interview 42, Male 40).

Food is not enough. I go to the village and farm -- they pay me T.Shs. 500 per day if I farm from morning to 3 pm. My plot size is 10m by 10m but it is not enough for trees and crops. (Interview 48, Male 32).

In Mtendeli and Nduta, however, it is difficult to use the plots because of the forest environment, which does not allow crops to grow. In these camps only 12 respondents reported conducting farming on the plots as compared to 30 in the Mtabila and Muyowosi. Farming in a plot has become increasingly difficult in Mtabila and Muyowosi because of efforts to plant trees. This indicates competing priorities between livelihood security and environmental management. However, those who are participating in plot cultivation are likely to engage in multiple economic activities. Some of them are providing casual labor in villages when they manage to go out of the camps, but they are less likely to hire a farm because they can not afford it.

(iii) Livestock keeping in the camps

Livestock keeping in the camps involves small animals such as ducks and hens. Those who had cows found it difficult to find grazing ground especially after enforcement of restriction on movement so they slaughtered the cows, and others have moved to Burundi to continue grazing there:

When they gave the order on restriction of movement, they also gave an order that refugees should not graze on Tanzanian land. Police are guarding and take the livestock if you are found grazing outside the camps. As a result, some even went back to Burundi where they could access grazing land. (Interview 66, Male 60).

(iv) Retail services of food in the market and small shops

Business in the camps is mainly small scale retail activities of selling food and clothes in the market and day-to-day needs from shops. Most of the businesses are owned by men, while women mostly sell food items in the markets such as sardines and *marowe* (cassava). There are numerous “hotels” (food businesses) in all the camps owned by groups of women as part of their income generating activities. Most of these groups have received loans from organizations working in the camps.

I do run a hotel business. I buy food from the market. We do not get much money so we depend on food orders. When there are visitors in the camps we get food orders and that is when we get money. On average, we get 1,000 (\$1) per day each. I do not have any other job (Interview 11, female 35).

Respondents doing business complained about the lack of permission to go out of the camps to buy items for selling in the camps.

I do business of selling clothes I go by permit, otherwise it is not easy. When we ask for permission, they said we need an escort but we are not escorted. My friends were caught and paid 350,000 (\$350). We are not allowed to go out to cultivate. That is the main problem. Even to buy items for the shop it is difficult. I have paid 100, 000 T.Shs (\$ 100) as a bribe before all my profit ended there. At one time, we were taken to Kibondo and asked to show our permits (Interview 31, male 26).

The quotes above exemplify types of businesses in which the refugees engage. These include cooking and selling food in restaurants (hotels), shops, selling clothes in the market, and food and alcohol at home and in bars. Most of the refugees who have established large-scale businesses are those who managed to arrive with some money

from Burundi, or had access to loans from organizations such as the TCRS Africare and SAEU.

(v) Small Production Activities

Small production activities include basketry projects, bed sheet decorations, furniture making, and pot making. Most of these groups make items which need to be sold outside the camps to get cash. They also require some materials from outside the camps. The restriction on movement, therefore, makes it difficult for the refugees to get materials and find markets for their hand-made goods. For example, those who work in pottery making need to go to specific locations where they can get the clay soil for making pots.

I make pot and sell them... The main problems now is to get the soil and grasses because we are not allowed to go out of the camps... We do not go out because we are scared of being raped but we also depend on getting clay from outside and selling our pots in the villages (Interview 34, female 50).

In the past, groups of women doing basket making have received orders from churches, the TCRS, or some other organizations from outside the camps as far as Dar es Salaam. For example, some groups told me that they once sold about 500 baskets for T.Shs. 4,200 (\$42) per basket.

With the basket making, we have problems selling. We get money when we have an order but we have a problem of customers. Most of the orders are from outside the camps TCRS is helping get customers. At one time, we got an order from Save the Children Organization to make 500 baskets and we got 4,200 (\$ 40.02) for each basket. (Interview 9, female 42).

Some of these women have also participated in Saba Saba (July 7th), the National Trade Fair in Dar es Salaam. However, because of the current restriction on movement, these

women are finding it difficult to sell their items. In addition, those who make baskets buy the sisal from people who have farms. Sometimes they go by themselves or ask their children to go or sometimes they pay men to bring the materials from the villages as explained by the respondent in the quote below:

Since I arrived here we have never got permission to go out to cultivate but people used to go out anyway and ask villagers for farms. We used to go out to buy sisal for the baskets that we make but now it is unsafe so we ask men to go for us or we send our children (Interview 9, female 42).

(vi) Employed in refugee organizations

Some respondents who are employed in different organizations that provide for their welfare needs in the camps complained about the small salary and few working opportunities. Refugees work as social workers, guards, nurses in hospitals, or they serve on food committees, gender and sexual based violence projects, youth projects, and education. These refugee workers are not paid a salary but are given an incentive ranging from T.Shs. 10,000 -30,000 (\$10-30) per month. Social workers are given T.Shs. 16,000 (\$16) teachers T.Shs. 20,000, (\$20) and guards T.Shs. 10,000 (\$ 10). However, UNHCR justifies the incentive payment on the principle that refugees are not supposed to receive a salary because they are assisted.

I work with REDESO. They pay me 18,000 (\$18) a month, but it is not enough. Now here, because of the shortage of food, there is a problem. I use my salary to buy food. Now because my health is not good, when I work I get tired. I need a bicycle so that I can work (Interview 45, male 52).

The refugees' narratives of survival strategies discussed above indicate that there are changes over time. The trend shows that the majority of refugees have changed from practicing sharecropping and casual labor on the farms to more recent strategies based on

mobility. Survival strategies also face challenges due to restriction on the movement of refugees. However, as a result of the growing impoverishment of their lives in camps they have adopted new forms of survival strategies that involve new forms of movements.

New Forms of Movements as Survival Strategies

Table 2 shows a modified summary of the results of a World Food program (2004) study on the effect of closing common markets (markets between Tanzanians and the refugees). I have modified it by rearranging the activities and adding the ranks based on findings from my research. The table shows different types of survival strategies and the percentage of households practicing them. The ranks portray two trends: one is a movement toward practicing forms of survival strategies that are limited to camps and second, survival strategies that indicate new forms of movements. The most common household survival strategies include limiting sizes of meals, reducing the number of meals consumed per day, borrowing food or money, and restricting consumption of adults in order to feed small children activities practiced by more than 70% of the households. The second types of activities are practiced by 20-40% of the households and can be inside or outside the camps. These activities include exchanging labor for food, selling high-value preferred goods so they can purchase larger quantities of food, or selling household assets. The last group of activities includes sending household members to eat somewhere or to beg, having some members migrate elsewhere /repatriate, and prostitution or illegal activities all of which are new forms of survival strategies practiced when cannot go out and cannot find anything to do in the camps (8-

24%). This is what I call new forms of survival strategies that indicate new forms of movement.

Table 2: Percentage Households Practicing Different Types of Survival Strategies

Rank	Survival strategy	% Households practicing this type of survival strategy
1	Reduce the number of meals eaten in a day	81%
2	Limit portion size at meal times	81%
3	Borrow food or money	75%
4	Restrict consumption of adults so small children can eat	70%
5	Purchase food on credit/borrow	52%
6	Exchange labor for food (work for food) in camps	45%
7	Skip eating for entire days	44%
8	Sell high value, preferred foods to purchase larger quantity of less expensive foods	37%
9	Sell household assets	31%
10	Send household members to beg	24%
11	Send household members to eat elsewhere	20%
12	Have some members migrate elsewhere/repatriate	12%
13	Prostitution and illegal activities	8%

Source: Modified from WFP 2004:6

Repatriation, Returnees, New Arrivals and Recyclers as Survival Strategies

Due to increase restricted on their movement and pressure to repatriate, refugees practice repatriation and return. Some report to the same camps and some to different camps or they migrate to the villages or nearby city and stay for some weeks or months.

These practices are becoming new forms of survival strategy. As the quotes below exemplifies:

When they gave the order on restriction on movement, they also gave an order that refugees should not graze on Tanzanian land. Police are guarding and take the livestock if you are found grazing outside the camps. As a result, some even went back to Burundi where they could access grazing land. (Interview 66, Male 60).

I go to the village to find a plot to cultivate. I stay for a week and get 4,000 or 5,000. I do not even have a bicycle because they take it (Interview 75, male 49).

I go to Mwanza, Kigoma and stay for six months fishing along the lakes and come back. (Interviews 49, Male 30).

Crisp (2003) pointed out that many refugees involve themselves in moving to a town to look for job. They might even move to another country. He gave an example of Burundian refugees moving to Uganda because of better conditions of life and favorable policies in Uganda.

Table 3: Mobility of the Refugees in Camps Percentages

Mobility	Mtendeli	Nduta	Mtabila	Muyowosi
Yes	60	50	15	27
No	40	50	85	75

Source: Author's fieldwork 2004-2005

Table 3 shows the percentage of refugees in camps practicing mobility. Mobility as discussed in this paper includes movement outside the camps in search of means of survival as opposed to normal mobility of refugees to towns where they are allowed to go to the post office, bank or hospital. In Mtendeli where about 60% said they are mobile is because they are still allowed to go to a common market (market between refugees and the Tanzanians) in Kasanda village. In Nduta the majority of refugees who said they are mobile are mainly going to nearby farms where they practiced sharecropping or provide casual labor for local farmers. In Mtabila and Muyowosi most of the refugees who responded to be mobile go to far places in towns such as Mwanza and Kigoma for fishing. Some of them go to the villages and stay for a number of days either cultivating their farms or local farmers' farms for cash payment. A number of refugees in these two

camps also reported to move between Burundi and Tanzania where some relatives have remained or repatriated earlier. These relatives are also likely to return. Some of the respondents also told me that they have their children in other countries such as Zambia. For example one parent told me that his children are in Zambia where they are able to access education and it is paid for by the UNHCR. These new forms of movement of refugees necessary for their survival are not theorized and have been generalized as “illegal”, as a result lead to a narrow understanding of dynamics of refugee movement in the continent.

Conclusion

Although studies have differentiated refugees from economic migrants, in Africa refugee movements is caused by both economic and political factors and the same factors determine their incorporation into the host economy. Adding to Daley (1993) and Bakewell (1999) I argue that similarities between refugees and international labor migration exist both in terms of causes of their movements as a result of introduction of SAP and in terms of how they seek their means of survival. Understanding the changing nature of the refugees in Africa and their pressing needs reveals that a new set of durable solutions is required, that take into account multiple causes of their movement and changes over time. Crisp (2003), urging for an alternative solution in caring for refugees, argues that it is unlikely for the African refugees to be resettled but there is potential for local integration. This means recognizing mobility as a means of access to networks of survival for refugees.

In the era of the structural adjustment program, as I argue, we need to re-examine concepts such “resident guests” and approaches such as those of Nyerere’s era where he

assumed borderless Africa for a successful solution for refugee movement or caring. In

assuming borderless Africa, Nyerere argues:

African unity is essential to the continent as a whole and to every part of it. Politically we have inherited boundaries which are either unclear or such ethnological and geographical non-sense that they are fruitful of disagreements... There is only one way in which Africa can stay outside irrelevant world conflicts and in which she can hope to deal with oppressive economic and social problems which now beset her people. The present boundaries must lose their significance and become merely a demarcation of administrative areas within a larger unit. It becomes more difficult everyday as existing nation states fight tribalism by building nationalism... In the strictly economic sense without any political undertones, Africa has been exploited; its land opened up for single crops plantations, its minerals taken out without these wasting (wasted) assets being replaced by the build-up of alternative sources of wealth. ...Our competition in this respect again is to make it easy for one of us to be played up against the other, and the need of each African state taken individually makes that state vulnerable to offers of assistance which have explicit or implicit conditions attached. ...there are many developments which would only be possible if Africa could be considered as a single market and a single economic unit (Nyerere 1966: 212).

With globalization and regionalization, neoliberal ideology promotes free trade but not free movement of people. The regionalization process is the only forum where such movements of refugees can be recognized. It does not make sense for Burundi and Rwanda to be included in the East African Federation, while there are some who are restricted in camps as refugees. It is time to rethink the new forms of movements of refugees. One possible alternative solution, for example, is to think of refugees as “investors.” The British-Zimbabweans who fled to Zambia, for example, are not regarded as “refugees” but “investors.” In the meantime, Tanzania is setting aside land banks for foreign investors while adjacent to these idle lands there are refugees starving and the government complaining about insecurity in areas where these refugees are hosted. In addition, in other areas like the Kigoma region where most of the refugees are hosted in

camps, there are investors who are motivated to invest in the region due to other problems such as lack of infrastructure like electricity, roads etc. A substitution of “investors” for “resident guests” could be one possible solution, for example. This will not only favor the refugees but also Africa as a region.

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