

**BURUNDI REFUGEES' INFLUX: A THREAT OR A BLESSING TO UGANDA'S SOCIAL
SERVICE DELIVERY.**

**A CASE OF BURUNDIAN REFUGEES IN NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT,
ISINGIRO DISTRICT**

BY

MUHENDA JULIUS

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APPROVAL

This work has been under my supervision and it is submitted with my approval.

Dr. Cleophas Karooma-Kansiime, Ph.D

University Supervisor

ABSTRACT

Back Ground: Social Service delivery to refugees is part of the human rights promotion interventions and in Uganda, it is enshrined¹ in the Refugees Act 2006 and Refugees Regulations 2010, which are part of the global refugee protection instruments² that enable them enjoy their full rights as nationals in the country of asylum.

Wars across the Great Lakes Region continue to be the main triggers of refugees in Uganda³ as there is instability in their home countries. There has been incessant influx of Burundian Refugee population in Uganda due to its relative stability. During colonial times, refugees were usually welcomed and well treated in exile and returned willingly at the end of conflict. However, conflicts in Africa and the refugee inflow have become more complex. At the same time, pressures on host nations and communities have increased due to the huge numbers of refugee population making refugees much less welcome in exile.

Due to fear of straining the few available resources, refugees are given chance to return to their home countries at free will when peace prevails, this is all at the expense of UNHCR and other agencies. This research aims to find out whether the Burundian refugees Influx is a threat or a blessing to Uganda's social services delivery by looking at what social services have been offered to Burundian refugees by government of Uganda and the implementing partners, analyzing how the Burundian refugee influx has affected Uganda's Social services delivery, analyzing the challenges that Uganda is facing in providing social services in Nakivale refugees settlement, and to explore the measures put in place to solve the challenges faced by Uganda in providing social services delivery.

¹An Act to make new provision for matters relating to refugees, in line with the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees and other international obligations of Uganda relating to the status of refugees; to establish an Office of Refugees; to repeal the Control of Alien Refugees Act, Cap. 62; and to provide for other related matters.

²The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol are the core of the international protection system, complemented by regional treaties and declarations that also address the rights of refugees

Shyaka Anastase (2008) "understanding the conflicts in the Great Lakes Region": An overview, journal of African conflicts and Peace studies: Vol.1 Iss, 5-12.

Methodology: A qualitative descriptive research design was used in this study. 53 respondents were selected and interviewed through use of purposive sampling because they are affected or impact on the social services.

Data collection: undertaken using observation and note taking method of the happening events, in-depth Structured interviews were conducted for agency staff, refugees religious leaders with the help of a questionnaire guide, Focus group discussions were held Burundian refugees, asylum seekers, Refugee' Welfare Council leaders and members from the host community. In-depth interviews were conducted with 12 different agency staffs and 02 religious leaders in Nakivale refugees' settlement and 06 Focus group discussions were conducted with the help of Focus group discussion guide to 20 Burundian refugees, 06 asylum seekers, 09 Refugee' Welfare Council leaders and 04 members from the host community both residents in Nakivale Refugee settlement in Isingiro District.

Data analysis. This research analyzed qualitative data by content analysis which is a method of creating a structure to organize open-ended information. Data collected was systematically analysed, synthesized, and collated using the themes generated during data collection and specific data analysis tools were used to categorize code and interpret data in accordance with the objective of the study. The Miles and Huberman model (1994) was used as a guide where by data was a collected using different method, displayed according to content and due to its voluminous nature; data reduction was done but ensured that no important data was lost in the process of reduction.

Findings: This research revealed that the Burundian influx was both a threat and a blessing as far as social service delivery by Uganda is concerned. It is not disputable that the Burundian influx threatened Uganda's social service delivery as evidenced in increased enrolments in schools; congestion at health centers, increase in demand for water and sanitation services, encroachment and degradation of the environment in search for construction of shelter, high demand for wood fuel and new roads opening up to allow access to the communities where refugees are settled, peri-urban centre development among others. The government entirely relies on the donors for their financial support and implementation of social services by taking an oversight role to recruit human resource to deliver services, construct and renovate infrastructure's in schools and health center's', procurement of learning materials, medicines and

medical supplies, procurement of water, Sanitation and Hygiene requirements and ensured that refugees live safe and in dignity. This was evident during the influx on how national and international aid agencies responded bringing on board additional budgets that complemented on the district budgets to extend social services in Nakivale refugees' settlement.

The findings in the final chapter of this research show that the Government of Uganda with support from UNHCR & other humanitarian agencies have got much to offer to the refugees in Uganda in terms of social service delivery as they have multiple needs. These international Aid agencies also should consider extending the delivery of social services beyond the settlement boundaries to the hosting communities through integrated service delivery in harmony with Isingiro District line sectors.