SETTLEMENT, COPING STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES FACING SELF-SETTLED REFUGEES IN RUIRU SUBCOUNTY IN KIAMBU COUNTY, 1990-2013

BY

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for any other programme in any other university.

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ABREVIATIONS

A.U       African Union
D.R.C     Democratic Republic of Congo
G.O.K.    Government of Kenya
H.P G     Humanitarian Policy Group
I. R. C   International Rescue Committee
O.A.U     Organization of African Unity
R.C.K     Refugee Consortium of Kenya
SPLA      Sudanese People Liberation Army
SPLM      Sudanese People Liberation Movement
UNHCR     United Nations Higher Commissioner
USA       United States of America
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ABSTRACT

Sudanese women refugees self-settled in most urban centres have become a common phenomenon. This necessitated the study of the extent to which they get integrated into the communities in which they self-settle, and the set-backs they encounter outside the encampment facilities, and how they pull through life nevertheless. A number of studies have shown that many refugees have been hosted in Kenya’s Kakuma and Daadab refugee camps where their needs are not effectively met. However, there is little evidence about the circumstances and challenges that these Sudanese refugee women encounter when they leave these camps and self-settle among the local community. The main objective of the study was, to explore the challenges and circumstances that the women encounter and highlight strategies refugee women devise in order to rebuild their lives and carve a niche for themselves in Ruiru sub-county. The theoretical frameworks that was be employed in the study are the gender theory as well as resilience theory. The literature review discussed the situation of Sudanese in Africa, challenges for women in the resettlement process, challenging conceptions of gender roles, the history of refugee population in Kenya, among other related areas. The study was a qualitative research, which was largely descriptive. It took place in Ruiru sub-county. Sudanese refugee women, their community leaders and the locals who live in the areas occupied by the Sudanese refugees were involved in the study. Purposive sampling method was used in the study. The research findings revealed that Sudanese refugee women in Kenya faced many challenges. These challenges necessitate them to employ mechanisms, economic religious and social support structures. The research recommended various intervention plans for action by the Government of Kenya and other organizations concerned with refugee status.
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES AND KEY CONCEPTS

**Coping Mechanisms:** This is the total number of ways in which we deal with minor to major stress and trauma. Some of these processes are unconscious, others are learned behaviour, while others are skills we consciously master in order to reduce stress, or other intense emotions like depression. In this study, coping mechanisms will be taken to mean use of skills to survive in exile.

**Gender:** Socially constructed differences between men and women, and in particular, regarding how power is allocated and used between them, and in the differences between men and women, spelt out in terms of their roles and needs.

**Refugee:** This is a person who is outside the country of birth and is not able to avail himself to be protected by the foreign nation state (UNHCR, 1951). This owes to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.

**Urban Refugee:** A refugee who is living outside the designated camps of Kakuma and Dadaab, with or without the permission from Ministry of Immigration or UNHCR.

**Integration:** The process by which the refugee is assimilated into the social and economic life of a new national community.
| Assimilation: | Abandonment of refugees’ own cultural identities and adoption of host populations’ culture and submersion or absorption into host communities to the extent that refugees become indistinguishable from local populations. |
| Self-settling: | When refugees choose to settle themselves or live in an established settlement among the locals forfeiting their rights to formal assistance and find their own housing and employment. |
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The traditional image of life in tented, sprawling camps no longer tells the full refugee story (UNHCR, 2010). As the world urbanizes, refugees too are increasingly moving to built-up areas including large towns and cities. Today, almost half of the world’s 10.5 million refugees reside in urban areas, with only one-third in camps (UNHCR, 2009). Refugees move in the cities in the hope of finding a sense of community, safety and economic independence. However, in reality, what many actually find is harassment, physical assault and poverty. Yet there has been scant research into their situation and funding and resources available to assist urban refugees are limited (Sara et al 2010).

The UN refugee agency emerged in the wake of World War II to help Europeans displaced by that conflict. Optimistically, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was established on December 14, 1950 by the United Nations General assembly with a three-year mandate to complete its work and then disband. The following year, on July 28, the United Nations Convention relating to the status of refugees—the legal foundation of helping refugees and the basic statute guiding UNHCR’s work—was adopted (Rick, 2008).

By 1956, UNHCR was facing its first major emergency, the outpouring of refugees when Soviet forces crushed the Hungarian Revolution. Any expectation that UNHCR would become unnecessary has never resurfaced. In the 1960s, the decolonization of Africa produced the first of this continent’s numerous refugee crises needing UNHCR intervention. Over the following two
decades, UNHCR had to help with displacement crises in Asia and Latin America. Refugees today generally flee local, ethnic, tribal and religious conflicts. (Dix, 2006)

All of Africa’s refugee problem is not the result of political conflicts within these countries’ borders. Natural disasters, population pressure and economic recession have contributed to the total number of refugees. Sophisticated arms, which take many lives in tribal conflicts is another cause for increased violence leading to increasing number of refugees. In Sudan, forced displacement is not merely a consequence of armed conflicts; it has repeatedly been used as a deliberate weapon of war (Jaji, 2009).

For instance, between 1955 and 2005, armed conflicts between successive governments in northern Sudan and Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) in the south produced over 4.5 million refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). The armed conflicts in southern Sudan stemmed from deeply entrenched forms of oppression, inequality and exclusion. Gender, social, economic and political inequalities have exacerbated the conflict in 1983, the government of Sudan (GOS) used scorched-earth strategies to forcibly displace the Dinka and the Nuer communities from their territories in southern Sudan. For instance, the northern government targeted the burned villages in order to secure territories around the oil fields, which intensified the displacement of millions of south Sudanese refugees (Munene, 2000).

The displaced women, men and children have survived long and extremely dangerous experiences of displacement. They have all endured the violent experiences of political upheaval, have suffered the death of loved ones, and have experienced social, economic and cultural exclusions. However, Sudanese women and girls who have already been marginalized by the
structural inequalities of the male dominated Sudanese society have been more adversely impacted by displacement as well as by ensuing protracted refugee situations (Martin, 2004).

In July 1992, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) established the Kakuma refugee camp in northwest Kenya to host 16,000 so-called “lost boys” fleeing militarized violence in southern Sudan. While about 3,000 young women and girls accompanied the boys on their traumatic journeys, their refugee experiences have barely been documented within the Kakuma camp and beyond (Kimathi, 2001).

Women and young girls in Kakuma had to assume more gendered responsibilities, such as caring for younger siblings and the elderly, along with the burdens of other domestic work. These added responsibilities have both short-term and long-term impacts on the welfare and future of female household members. Furthermore, the gender roles that women and girls were forced to take often exposed them to gender-based violence and even death. Many of the women and girls were raped only because they were performing the traditional gendered duty of collecting firewood (UNHCR, 2009).

The largest groups of refugees in Kenya are of Somali origin. Somali populations have had a lengthy history of migration to Kenya, and have long-established important trade networks (Campbell, 2005). According to UNHCR, there are 20,111 registered refugees and asylum seekers of Somali origin in Nairobi, the great majority in Eastleigh district (UNHCR, 2009b). This figure does not include many thousands of unregistered refugees. Some estimates put the number of Somali refugees in Eastleigh at 60,000 (Lindley, 2007). Ethiopians are the second largest nationality. According to UNHCR, 12,252 refugees and asylum seekers of Ethiopian origin have taken up residence in Eastleigh in Nairobi (UNHCR, 2009b). Eastleigh has also
attracted refugees from Eritrea and Sudan, as well as from countries in the Horn of Africa and central and southern Africa (Campbell, 2006).

Other population groups include thousands of refugees from the Great lakes region. Nairobi officially hosts 4,598 Congolese, 2,266 Rwandan and 1,202 Burundian refugees and asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2009b). In contrast to Somalis and Ethiopians, who tend to concentrate in Eastleigh, these groups are spread out across several neighbourhoods, including Satelite, Kawangware and Kangemi, and are often dispersed among Kenyan nationals. Likewise, Sudanese tend to be found scattered in several locations, including Githurai, Ruiru and Juja in Kiambu county.

The UNHCR has attempted to find “durable solutions” for southern Sudanese refugees. According to the UNHCR, durable solutions include local integration in the receiving countries, voluntary repatriation to their countries of origin if these countries become secure, or resettlement to another country (Dix, S 2006).

With regard to encampment, UNHCR has revisited the 1997 policy statement on refugees and has developed a global “Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas (UNHCR, 2009)”. This recognizes the trend towards urbanization and the increasing number of refugees living in towns and cities, and seeks to ensure that urban areas are recognized as legitimate places for refugees to reside and exercise their rights. It also commits UNHCR to maximizing the “protection space” available to refugees and the humanitarian agencies supporting them (UNHCR, 2009). The policy recognizes the need for adaptation to the specific circumstances of particular countries and cities. In terms of implementation, UNHCR has developed an urban refugee programme for Ruiru, in discussion with civil society organizations.
In Kenya, a country that today is home to 374,000 refugees (UNHCR 2010), there has been significant attention to the plight of refugees living in overcrowded camps such as Daadab in the east of the country. Yet there has been little focus on the growing number of refugees living in the urban centres (HPG, 2010). According to UNHCR (2009), apart from refugees living at the camps, there are others referred to as 'urban refugees' who for varied reasons are unable or unwilling to live at designated camps; instead they have integrated with the local populations living in various towns’ across Kenya. Examples of such areas where self-settled refugees are found include Eastleigh where many Somalis and Ethiopians are settled, Satellite, Kawangware, Kayole, Ruiru, Githurai, Juja and Kangemi. Apart from Somalis, Sudanese and Ethiopians, other refugees self-settled in Kenya include Congolese, Ugandans as well as refugees from Eritrea and Burundi (HPG, 2010). They have also opted for settlement in Umoja and Dagoretti.

There are around 6,280 Sudanese women, 5,173 men and 4,845 youths self-settled in Ruiru sub-county. Life in Ruiru sub-county for refugees is completely challenging. However, the majority of Ruiru’s refugees are indeed unable to return home due to ongoing insecurity in their countries of origin and resettlement options to a third country are limited and unattainable for most refugees. Protection and support must be provided to vulnerable refugees, irrespective of where they are located (Thika District Development plan 2008-2012).

It is in this context that this research sought to undertake a survey for a clearer understanding of situation, coping mechanisms, implications of displacement on women’s performance of gender roles, challenges and circumstances of urban refugee Sudanese women living in Ruiru sub-county.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

While the challenges of encamped refugee women have been widely documented (Jaji, 2009), (RCK,2005), (Horst, 2006b), (UNHCR, 2010), scanty and elusive data exists on what informs refugee women’s choice to self-settle in Ruiru sub-county and what the challenges this self-settlement entails. The number of the self-settled refugees has been increasing tremendously as they are invited by their kith and kin in areas they deem secure economically and politically. Yet despite such alarming figures, scanty information exists on self-settled refugees in Ruiru and in particular on women self-settled between 1990-2013

This study sought to investigate the nature of self-settlement of women refugees in Ruiru sub-county and how Kenyan encampment regime impacted on refugee women who defy it and self-settle in Ruiru sub-county. The study also sought to interrogate the challenges of self-settled refugee women in relation to local integration, and suggest possible ways in which women refugees can be assisted either to integrate in Ruiru sub-county or resettle in the countries of origin. Forced migration entails social and economic dislocation in the form of disruption of family relationships, networks and livelihoods. This research sought to analyse the implications of this dislocation on women’s ability to fulfill their gender roles.

This study also sought to investigate how the refugee women negotiate the difficult experiences of physical, social and economic dislocation that displacement from their countries of nationality entailed, and the strategies that the refugee women devised in order to adjust to new circumstances in Ruiru.

1.3 Research Questions
• What are the conditions of self-settled Sudanese refugee women in Ruiru sub-county?

• What are the implications of displacement on women’s performance of their gender roles?

• How have the challenges and circumstances of refugee women self-settled in Ruiru sub-county impacted on integration?

• Which are the strategies that the refugee women devise in order to rebuild their lives and carve a niche for themselves?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

• To profile and explore conditions of self-settled refugee women in Ruiru sub-county between 1990-2013.

• To investigate the implications of displacement on women’s performance of gender roles between 1990-2013.

• To document the challenges facing refugee women self-settled in Ruiru sub-county and their implications on integration between 1990-2013.

• To explore strategies refugee women devise in order to rebuild their lives and carve a niche for themselves in Ruiru sub-county between 1990-2013.

1.5 Premises

• The conditions of the Sudanese women self-settled in Ruiru sub-county have impacted negatively on their integration.

• Displacement has hindered Sudanese refugee women to performing their gender roles.
• Challenges and circumstances of refugee women self-settled in Ruiru sub-county have various implications on their integration.

• Sudanese refugee women devise various strategies, such as knitting, painting, attending classes and others in order to rebuild their lives and carve a niche for themselves in Ruiru sub-county.

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

Studies on refugees living in Kenyan camps abound. Kimathi (2001) for instance has studied the role of the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees in dealing with refugees in Kenya. Munene (2010) has embarked on human rights in protracted Somali refugees of Daadab camp Kenya. The challenges faced by such refugees have also been explained. Mwangi (2011), has studied the human rights violation of women refugees in Kakuma camp in north-west Kenya, while Cindy (2006) has looked into how Somalis cope with refugee life in the Daadab camps of Kenya. Scanty research has however been done in Kenya, and particularly in Ruiru sub-county on self-settled refugee women especially between 1990-2013 yet women usually constitute the majority among refugees and in the same way, women's experiences and challenges they face in the event of a conflict are different from men's. The experiences of local integration are also gendered and a study on the same is therefore urgent. It is this gap that the study sought to fill.

With many studies having focused on refugee camps in Kenya exempting refugees who live in settings where local integration can take place, it was still difficult to understand the dynamics of local integration in Ruiru sub-county. Local integration has largely existed in theory in contemporary African contexts to the extent that it was not clear whether its implementation can indeed provide a solution to refugees in Africa. This warranted the need for a study which sought
to understand the experiences of refugee women who have self-settled in Ruiru in relation to local integration.

The study takes the period between 1990 to 2013 since war intensified in Sudan in 1991 and 1992 between two SPLA factions resulting in the first notable influx of Sudanese refugees in Kenya. Women suffered most during this war, for they were subjected to degrading violence such as rape, slavery, forced and early marriages, wife inheritance and other various forms of domestic violence (Deng, 1995). In 2013 Kenya tried to repatriate all refugees including women and it is thus interesting to interrogate how self-settlement impacts on attempts at repatriation.

Ruiru sub-county was significant because it has attracted many Sudanese refugee women who self-settle here since it is relatively near Nairobi. Due to the fact that most of their relatives had already settled in Nairobi, they have exploited these networks, and the easy communication to Nairobi city from Ruiru sub-county, coupled with the expansive livelihood opportunities available here, as opposed to other counties in the interior.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

While various categories of refugees have self-settled in urban areas, such as men, the youth and children, the study was confined to Sudanese women refugees, who are self-settled in Ruiru sub-county, and not those in camps. Only circumstances of women self-settled in Ruiru sub-county were interrogated. It also involved the locals that lived among them and their community leaders.

Refugees are settled at other places in Ruiru sub-county, but due to vastness of the area under study, limited time and money constraints, only Ruiru and Githurai divisions of Ruiru sub-county were studied.
1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study utilized two theories, the gender theory and resilience theory. However, there are other theories which could still be applicable in this study, for example E.F Kunz’s Kinetic model of Refugee Theory, which provides many insights on refugee behavior and experience. Relative deprivation theory is also applicable since it focuses on inequality. Box-steffens Meir et al (2005) asserts that if people perceive that there is a gap between what they are currently getting and what they deserve to get, it creates discontentment, anger and conflict, like was the case between southern and northern Sudan resulting to refugees. These two theories have however faced high criticism by many scholars and governments, who have held different standpoints. In this context, this research considered the resilience and gender theories as the most appropriate.

Resilience Theory

Resilience is primarily defined as the capacity to maintain competent functioning in the face of major life stressors (Kaplan, et al, 1996). Resilience is defined in terms of the presence of protective factors (personal, social, familial and institutional safety nets) which enable individuals to resist life stress (Kaplan et al 1996). An important component of resilience however, is the hazardous, adverse and threatening life circumstances that result in individual vulnerability. An individual's resilience at any moment is calculated by the ratio between the presence of protective factors and the presence of hazardous circumstances. Polk (1997) has synthesized four patterns of resilience from the individual resilience literature:

• Dispositional Pattern. This pattern relates to physical and ego-related psychosocial attributes that promote resilience. These entail those aspects of an individual that promote
a resilient disposition towards life stressors, and can include a sense of autonomy or self-reliance, a sense of basic self-worth, good physical health and good physical appearance.

• Relational Pattern. The relational pattern concerns an individual's roles in society and his or her relationships with others. These roles and relationships can range from close and intimate relationships to those with the broader societal systems.

• Situational Pattern. The situational pattern addresses those aspects involving a linking between an individual and a stressful situation. This can include an individual's problem solving ability, the ability to evaluate situations and responses, and the capacity to take action in response to a situation.

• Philosophical Pattern. The philosophical pattern refers to an individual's worldview of life paradigm. This can include various beliefs that promote resilience, such as belief that positive meaning can be found in all experiences, the belief that self-development is important, the belief that life is purposeful.

The capacity of an individual to cope during difficulty is central to their resilience. Pearlin and Schooler (1982) defined coping as "the thing that people do to avoid being harmed by life strain". These authors conducted 2300 interviews in the urbanized Chicago area and through content analysis of these interviews identified three main types of coping that serve distinct functions, that is;

• Responses that change the situation out of which strainful experience arises.

People must first recognize the situation which is causing the stress; something which is not always possible. People may know how to change the situation directly. Acting on a situation to
change it may result in even more stressors, which in turn inhibits further action. Some situations are not amenable to change efforts.

It is interesting to note that much of resilience theory and research has revolved around situations which are impervious to change efforts, such as being in a concentration camp, having a terminal illness, being in a war, growing up in poverty, etc. In such circumstances, little can be done to directly change the situation causing the stress. Rather, other forms of coping are required.

- Responses that control the meaning of the strainful experience after it occurs but before the emergence of stress.

Pearlin and Schooler found this to be the most common coping type. This coping can entail making positive comparisons which reduce the perceived severity of the stressful situation, selectively ignoring parts of the situation so as to concentrate on some less stressful aspects of the situation, and reducing the relative importance of the stress situation in relation to one's overall life situation.

- Responses that function more for the control of stress itself after it has emerged.

This coping does not attack the situation itself, either directly or through meaning or perception. Rather, the focus of the coping is on the resultant stress itself and entails basic stress management responses. Out of the benefits and values in the culture people are able to create a strategy for manageable suffering, a strategy that can convert the endurance of unavoidable hardships into a moral virtue.

The concept of resilience provides a useful lens for looking into established objectives and to review literature. This theory will be useful in explaining Sudanese women experiences in Ruiru
and how they have been able to manouvre the tough times to cope and make meaning out of their lives through resilience.

**Gender Theory**

This research will use the Gender theory to explain how the Sudanese women have had to go through gender related challenges and how they have coped eventually. Simeone de Beauvoir (1949) views women as an oppressed group, who, like other oppressed peoples, must struggle for their liberation against their oppressors, who in this case are men.

Women are defined and differentiated with reference to men and not he with reference to her; she is incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the absolute, she is the 'Other'. Simeone links woman's identity as other and her fundamental alienation to her body—especially her reproductive capacity. Childbearing, childbirth and menstruation are draining physical events that tie women to their bodies and to emmanence. The male however, is not tied down by such inherently physical events.

Simeone argues that a woman has always been man's dependant, if not his slave; the two sexes have never shared a world in equality. And even today's woman is heavily handicapped, though her situation is beginning to change. Almost nowhere is her legal status the same as man's, and frequently it is much to her disadvantage. The former hold the better jobs, get higher wages, and have more opportunity for success than their new competitors. In industry and politics, men have a great many more positions and they monopolise the most important posts. At the present times, when women are beginning to take part in the affairs of the world, it is still a world that belongs to men.
The family is a source of women's oppression today. "The institution of the family confers power on men", (Summers 1977). The argument goes that, because men supposedly wanted to have women service them in the home, they organized to keep women out of the best jobs. A conspiracy of all men was responsible for women being driven into the role of wife and mother, working in the worst paid jobs and least skilled jobs - if they were able to work at all.

Women have been oppressed since the division of society into classes, (Engels, 1981). The capitalist family was established as the result of the particular development of capitalism. The effect of the industrial revolution on the working class family was devastating. Fredrich Engels (1977) painted a horrifying picture in The Conditions of the Working Class In England. Whole industries were built on the basis of cheap female and child labour during the industrial revolution in Britain. Engels gives figures for the 1840s: of 419,560 factory operatives in the British Empire, 242,296 were female, of whom almost half were under eighteen.

Diseases such as typhus raged in industrial slums, drunkenness was widespread and there was a "general enfeeblement of the frame of the working class, (Engels, 1977). In Manchester, more than 57% of the working class children died before the age of five. These statistics disturbed the more far-sighted sections of the capitalist class.

The solution they came up with was the nuclear family. It was accepted without question that women should be responsible for children and most domestic duties. It was backed up by attempts to ameliorate at least the worst aspects of working class life, especially those that endangered women and their ability to produce healthy children. This ensured that women were confined to the home, in order for men to stamp their authority on the new colony, and women disappeared into domesticity in the age of bourgeois ascendancy (Connell, 1982).
Hartmann, (1981) argues, "the development of family wages secured the maternal base for male
domination in two ways. First, men have the better jobs in the labour market and earn higher
wages than women. This encourages women to choose wifery as a career. Second, women do
housework, childcare and perform other services at home which benefit men directly. Women's
home responsibilities, in turn reinforce their inferior labour market position."

The argument that men benefit from women's oppression is a powerful one, because it describes
what seems a reality in everyday life. Men can often lounge around drinking with their mates
while their wives are housebound with irritable and demanding children.

In times of conflict therefore, women suffer most since as caretakers, the burden of children, the
old, the sickly and the wounded are left on their shoulders. Men might free but women must
carry and struggle with the burden to the country of refuge.

Sudanese women are no exception. They have already been marginalized by structural
inequalities of a male dominated Sudanese society, have experienced social, economic and
cultural exclusion, and have therefore been more adversely impacted by displacement as well as
ensuing protracted refugee situation. Women in every culture experience sexism although in
vastly different ways and at different levels. The common experience of a disadvantaged social
position in a patriarchal society often weaves women's perspectives into into a tapestry that
reflects a common pattern of concerns and responses.

Advanced capitalism has made dramatic changes in women’s lives over the last century. Today,
most women hold jobs outside the home. In the United States, women make up more than half of
the workforce. Moreover, technology has advanced so that the time spent on the household
chores, like laundry has reduced to a fraction of what it was during Engel’s time.
Yet, despite all these changes, women are still oppressed. Women’s wages are substantially lower than men’s throughout the world. Sexual harassment is a problem for women workers. Substantial number of women still suffers from rape and domestic violence. Massive profits are made each year, not only from pornography, but through the sexual objectification of women in advertising and through the mass media. And, although most women hold jobs outside the home, society still holds them responsible for the bulk of childrearing and housework.

This theory helps us to understand that women may become refugees because they are victims of severe discrimination on the basis of their gender. They may be victims of acts of violence perpetrated by the state and public authorities or by private citizens or they may become victims of human rights violations for transgressing or refusing to comply with their society’s religious or customary laws and practices.

These two theories compliment each other in that despite the suffering that women are subjected to in the male dominated Sudanese society, these women prove their worth, they strongly pull through amid the challenges. Women, the majority in the civilian population, are targets of war and violent conflict, (for example, through the use of rape as a weapon of war), hence women are oppressed. However, they are able to adapt to the traumatic event, they have learnt to face their fears and embrace optimism.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, literature that contains relevant and pertinent information was reviewed. This literature includes journals, dissertation abstracts and books. A number of studies have been carried out on the topics of refugees in Kenya. Most of these studies however apply to refugees in camps.

The literature review in this chapter is organized in such a way that related studies are grouped under suitable sub-headings and discussed together. This makes the review easier to read and follow.

2.2 The Situation of Refugee Women in Africa

For several decades Africa has witnessed many armed violent conflicts which have forced millions of people out of their homelands into neighbouring countries and beyond. For the greater part many African governments have opted to treat refugees as transient and exceptional phenomenon and accordingly devised encampment as the appropriate regime or strategy of managing and containing refugees as they seemingly wait for repatriation. The encampment regime is the chosen way of managing refugees because i) it confines refugees to designated areas thus reducing competition for resources between refugees and locals. ii) it facilitates control and containment of refugees who are viewed not only as victims but also as agents of insecurity, and iii) it facilitates easy identification of refugees for repatriation which host governments consider the solution on their part, humanitarian organizations that assist refugees,
particularly the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), have argued that encampment enhances refugee visibility to donors thus enabling them to understand the magnitude of the crisis and need besides facilitating easier administration, counting of the refugees and the distribution of aid (Harrell-Bond 1986; Harrell-Bond et al 1992). Displaced people are expected to stay in refugee camps as temporary solutions to a presumably ephemeral situation but have instead become a permanent feature of the African landscape in what can be termed as routinization of the exceptional (Jaji, 2009).

The continued existence of refugees in Africa is aggravated by a combination of new conflicts erupting and generating new refugee influxes and failure to find lasting solutions to old conflicts. As a result, conflicts such as those in Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan and Somalia have been characterized by intermittent escalation and de-escalation of hostilities and violence such that peace that could prompt refugees to repatriate has remained elusive for decades. The protracted nature of these conflicts has rendered specific nationalities refugees for generations. The longer the conflicts have prevailed in the African geopolitical space, the more complex the conflicts and the refugee crises have become. The complexities and protracted nature of the refugee phenomenon in contemporary Africa has prompted increasing numbers of refugees to self-settle in both rural and urban areas as they seek to forestall the unsavoury prospect of spending decades or even a lifetime in refugee camps. As refugees self-settle among local populations, this centres possibilities of integration which remains aschewed as a durable solution to the plight of refugees in Africa (Jaji, 2009). This study endeavours to investigate the livelihoods and experiences of refugee women self-settled in Ruiru District, Kenya.

The study takes a gender perspective which specifically focuses on refugee women self-settled in Kiambu county. Gender refers to “social construction of masculinity and feminity, in which
culture elaborates on the sexed body” (Dover 2005). The study of women is not new. The 1960s and 1970s were marked by growing awareness of women’s rights. In the social sciences, there was an outcry on the male bias and exclusion of women or their presentation as a silent “other”. Since then, gender has become a buzzword in both the social sciences and policy issues. Preoccupied with the agenda to make women visible in the sphere of knowledge production, much of the early work on women has been described rather skeptically as constituting an “add-women-and-stir” approach (Boxer 1982:258 cited in Henrietta Moore 1988:3) which does not address the male bias in disciplinary theory and conceptual tools (Moore 1988).

In the same way that the study of the broader category of women has been peacemeal, the incorporation of refugee women into refugee studies and refugee policies has been slow and hampered by structural obstacles (Callamard 2003). However, there has been increasing attention to refugee women since the 1990s, with the UNHCR publishing Guidelines on Sexual Violence 1995. These gender-specific policies have been accompanied and influenced by increasing scholarly attention to gender and refugee women notable examples being the works by Kibraeb (1995), Crawly (2001) and Forbes Martin (2004). Considering the circumstances of the majority of refugee women in many conflict-ridden parts of Africa, asserting that gender remains a salient feature of the experiences that come with displacement and exile cannot be dismissed as overgeneralization.

In so far as exile entails transformation of refugees’ lives in economic and socio-cultural terms, its impact is felt by both men and women but in different ways and with different consequences. In choosing to focus on refugee women, this study does not intend to confute the challenge that refugee men face. Rather, it is premised on recognition of the gendered nature of refugee experiences and argues that refugee women face unique circumstances because of their status
and responsibilities as women in African contexts. The gender division of labour in Africa generally translates into the woman playing the significant roles of providing food for the family and caring for its members. It is usually the women who flee with the children and take the responsibility for the elderly, infirm and incapacitated because of the traditional feminisation of child-rearing and care-giving roles in many parts of the continent. As refugees, women have to cope with the task of ensuring that the consumption needs of their children and, where they flee together, of their husbands and relatives are met at a time when their normal livelihoods have been disrupted and destroyed (Jaji, 2009). Against this backdrop, the study will interrogate the implications of exile on African Woman with regard to fulfillment of their gender roles within the household and family. It will describe and analyse the challenges the refugee women encounter in the process of re-establishing livelihoods and the opportunities exile present to them.

**2.3 Challenges for Women in the Resettlement Process**

Research has found that refugees, having survived adversity and conflict, are resilient and resourceful (Mathews, 2008; Papadopoulos, 2007), yet, the resettlement process is a “complex, multifaceted process” and is likely “characterized by a variety of problems” (Haines, 1996,p.37). As refugees navigate the process of resettlement and move from dislocation to relocation, they have a multitude of needs (Papadopoulos, 2007). They have a range of migration experiences and bring with them a myriad of cultural and social histories (Sossou, Craig, Ogre &Schnak, 2008). This is an important consideration because although individuals acquire refugee status as a consequence of socio-political circumstances, these circumstances vary. Refugees are not a homogenous group and treating them as such “tend to erase the different histories, politics and
experiences as the refugee population, a treatment that will eventually structure the process of their resettlement” (Edward, 2007p.3).

As such it can be expected that refugees have varying needs and challenges during the resettlement process. Yet despite the different social and cultural backgrounds of refugees settled in Ruiru District, there are some commonalities of the refugee resettlement process.

Challenges for refugees include the need to learn the language and the customs and norms for social interaction in the country of resettlement (Shakespeare-Finch & Wickham, 2009). When considering the needs and challenges the refugees face during resettlement, it is essential to consider that refugee women have unique needs that may differ from the needs of refugee populations in general. Women encounter numerous challenges during the resettlement process including limited transferable occupational skills, conflicting gender expectations and roles, language barriers which put them at an increased risk for marginalization within the refugee community (Goodkind& Deacon, 2004; Mango, 2008; Martin, 2004; Sossou et al 2008).

2.3.1 Establishing Relationships and Achieving Social Acceptance

Establishing relationships and achieving social acceptance within the country of resettlement is linked to positive psychosocial adjustment. Shakespeare-Finch & Wickham (2009) conducted a qualitative study of the adaptation of Sudanese refugees in Australia. They sought to understand those factors which had a positive implication in the resettlement process and reported that all participants described a common theme of social support. “intimate social support was viewed as extremely important to positive adaptation” Shakespeare- Finch & Wickham, 2009 p.37). One participant described a sense of belonging arising from social support, “making a friend…..thats whereby you feel like you’re, you’re really in, in this country” (p.37). Likewise, Kovacev&
Shute (2004) in a quantitative study of refugees resettled in Australia found a positive relationship between social support and psychosocial adjustment.

For refugees unable to establish a sense of belonging and social acceptance in the country of resettlement, there are negative psychosocial consequences. In a study of Bosnian women resettled in the US, Keys and Kane (2004) found that refugees who were not able to form associations with people in their new homes “had problems in accepting the losses from their pasts, as well as in dealing with painful memories of betrayal in their old homes” (p. 821). Finding a sense of belonging was an important factor in preventing negative psychosocial consequences such as “loneliness, shock, humiliation, inferiority and dejection” (p. 827). Keyes and Kane (2004) concluded that community programs which enable refugees during the resettlement process to develop a stronger sense of belonging may “promote positive health and successful adaptation among refugees” (p. 287).

2.3.2 Challenging Conceptions of Gender Roles

Displacement and resettlement greatly impacts family and community structures. For refugee women, these changes may have consequences (Martin 2004). Traditional family structures are often disrupted due to death or separation during flight from the country of origin.

In southern Sudan, men often found themselves forced to volunteer as soldiers in the SPLA/M to defend their families, property and cultures (Essien & Falola, 2009). Therefore, women may find themselves as single heads of households and must learn to cope with changes in family structure and shifts in gender roles (Martin, 2004, p. 15).

Gender roles are cultural constructs and as such, each culture has conceptions of masculinity, femininity and appropriate gender roles (Hatoss & Huijser, 2010; Krulfeld, 1994). For refugees,
the process of being uprooted from their home countries and resettling into a new country often requires them to negotiate and redefine gender roles (Krulfeld, 1994). Often, the gender expectations within countries of resettlement are markedly different. “with women now often having greater daily freedoms than they or their families are accustomed to” (Deacons & Sullivan, 2009). Thus, refugee women often find themselves struggling with conflicting cultural expectations about their roles within the society in which “men control every aspect of its social and political structures” (Essien & Falola, 2009, p.137). Sudanese culture ascribes to strict expectations of appropriate gender roles and social relations of men and women. It is a culture in which “gender relations are based on the subordination of women as well as on respect and obedience of women to men-whether father, brother, uncle or husband” (Edward, 2001 p.273). In Sudan, the father is considered “the eye of the family because he watches over everyone, and as a husband he is the one who makes final decisions for the family” (Essien & Falola, 2009, p. 137).

In many societies, appropriate gender roles and social relations “prescribe that men are the key participants in the public arena, whereas women are found in the private spheres” (Boyd, 1999, p.9). This is also true of Sudanese culture where women are traditionally responsible for domestic duties such as child care and food preparations, where “men are always regarded as heads of households” (Edward, 2001, p. 275). These prescribed roles, such as the role of wife and mother, may cause women to remain “confined within their homes and thus be set off from experiences that would help them acculturate to the new society” (Haines, 1996, p.29).

Edward (2001), in her research with Sudanese refugee women, found that within countries of resettlement, the negotiation of gender roles often leads to a shift in power relations between men and women. As the Sudanese women in her study assumed greater roles outside the home, they
also asserted “greater involvement in decision-making, particularly on financial issues, an area which has been the sole domain of men in the past” (Edward, 2001,p.282). The shift in gender relationships and accepted gender roles created tension between the men and women, as the male refugees in her study viewed the shift in gender roles with contempt (Edward, 2001). Gender-role negotiations may contribute to increased instances of domestic violence within refugee households (Martin, 2004; James, 2010). Because of the cultural expectation that men are the heads of households, James (2010), found that some men reported feeling undermined by women and would use violence in an “effort to make their wives and children obey and show respect (p.280).

2.4 Refugee Women and Integration

Quality of life is central to integration; employment is therefore the most prominent feature of the integration process in that it is directly linked to living standards besides that it fosters active participation in other societal spheres through contacts established in the workplace (Valtonen, 1998). Refugee women highlight unemployment as a priority; it gives refugees a sense of economic security and self-respect (Ager and Strang 2004). Notwithstanding its accession to the Geneva Convention which provides for refugee employment, Kenya pursues a restrictive employment policy which in practice deters refugees from entering the formal labour market. Most of the refugee women have been in Kenya for more than three years yet they are still unable to join the formal employment sector (Jaji, 2009).

The refugees, particularly those with professional skills, do not see Kenya’s employment policy as restrictive, but as discriminatory and exclusionary. They stated that prospective employers in Kenya ask for identity documents and when the refugees produce protection letters which are
legal identity/protection documents issued by the UNHCR, the employers do not recognize UNHCR documents as valid for purposes of employment. Where refugees are unable to access jobs because of their refugee status rather than lack of requisite qualifications, economic integration cannot be said to have taken place (Jaji, 2009).

Majority of refugee women live among local population in poor neighbourhoods characterized by overcrowding, high levels of crime and insecurity (Human Rights Watch 2002). According to Kuhlman (1994), integration has taken place where refugees “attain a standard of living which satisfies culturally determined minimum requirements.”

Again, the circumstances of refugee women are compounded by deliberate exploitation and victimization of refugees by locals, including state apparatus such as police. While Kenyan citizens are equally vulnerable to crime, refugees are sometimes victims of targeted crime as when law enforcement agents extort from them. Even when they are discriminated against by Kenyan police, they are unable to seek assistance from their countries’ embassies in Kenya because of the very status of being refugees. Integration entails acceptance of refugees as part of the society rather than manipulation of their precarious circumstances (Jaji, 2009).

Paying rent for accommodation is a challenge next to obtaining food. Even though refugees reside in relatively cheaper neighbourhoods, many struggle to raise the amount. Access to secure housing is one of the makers of integration; refugee women cite their inability to pay for secure houses such as those they owned or rented before flight as indicating their outsider status and that “Kenya is not home” (Jaji, 2009).

Where unmarried refugee women, widows, single mothers and their daughters do not have male relatives around to protect them, they suffer a kind of vulnerability that their married
counterparts rarely experience in the form of targeted sexual harassment and rape. They are vulnerable to sexual abuse by security personnel in Kenya, individuals in positions of authority, members of local communities as well as male refugees (Forbes Martin, 2004).

Although refugee women in general describe their relations with Kenyans as peaceful, they cannot freely exercise their rights in their everyday interaction with Kenyans as neighbors or landlords/ladies. This is particularly the case where there is contestation for resources such as water (Jaji, 2009).

2.5 Overview of Refugee Population in Kenya

Kenya’s history of relative political stability in a largely volatile region (Barkan and Cooke, 2001) enables the country to host refugees from the Great Lakes Region countries namely Burundi, the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda; Horn of Africa countries of Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea as well as from Sudan. Thus, the refugee population in Kenya is mainly from eight countries and Kenya shares borders with four namely Ethiopia Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. Some of the refugees have been in Kenya for decades as in the case with Ugandan refugees who fled the war in the 1970s, and the Somali and Sudanese refugees who came in the 1990s.

In line with the Government of Kenya (GOK) encampment regulation and restrictive employment policies, it requires refugees to reside in camps. Refugees have to reside in Kakuma or Daadab refugee camps. Both camps are situated in Northern Kenya which is semi-arid and under populated thus providing the GOK with little incentive to invest in the region.

Kakuma refugee camp is situated in Turkana District, which is about 1000 kilometres from Nairobi and 95 kilometres from Kenya-Sudan border (UNHCR 2006). The camp has four sites namely Kakuma 1 (mixed nationalities), Kakuma ii (predominantly Sudanese refugees), Kakuma
iii (mixed nationalities) and Kakuma iv (predominantly Sudanese refugees). By February 2007, the UNHCR put the figures of refugees at 84,000. Daadab refugee camp is located in Garrissa District in North Eastern Kenya, which is around 500 kilometres from Nairobi and 80 kilometres from the Kenya-Somalia border. While the camp was originally meant to host 90,000 refugees, there were 136,019 refugees in Daadab camp as at 31st August 2006 (Jaji, 2009).

Although the GOK follows an encampment regulation, not all refugees abide by this regulation as some have moved to urban centres such as in Ruiru District. In addition, the GOK does not strictly enforce the encampment regulation except in situations where foreigners are deemed a threat to national security as happened during the terrorists attacks in Nairobi in 1998 (Jaji, 2009).

The conflict of Southern Sudan, which is largely responsible for the presence of refugees in Kenya, is a case of regional domination; the North dominating the South. It had its roots in the colonial era when the British government established a condominium in Sudan and asserted that the North and South were culturally different, and thus employed the policy of complete separation (Sikainga, 1997). Under this policy, the South, which was made a closed area, was supposed to develop separately under strong Christian influence until 1946 when this policy was completely reversed. At independence in 1956 therefore, Sudan was a political puzzle. Although a lot of its inhabitants were black and non-Muslims, the Arab Northerners who during the colonial era had been made to feel superior to the Southern population were given the reigns of power. This was a betrayal of the greater Southern population who had hoped that with independence, it would not only mean the overthrow of the Anglo-Egyptian rule but also that of their Arab overlords (Munene, 2000).
The civil war had its beginnings before independence when in 1955, the garrison at Torit made up of South Sudanese soldiers mutinied against their Northern officers. When General Ibrahim Abboud ascended to power through a coup in 1958, he worsened an already fragile situation in the South by opting for a military solution against the Anya-nya rebels. A conference was held in 1964 to determine the fate of the South where the Southerners were divided between those who favoured a federation and those seeking full independence. As the government became increasingly rightwing, rebel activities increased in the South where large numbers of Southerners were killed or displaced in the course of reprisals by the government troops. It was during this time that over a 1000 Sudanese refugees crossed over into Kenya and the Kenyan Government requested for international assistance in caring for them making the official entry of the UNHCR in Kenya (Kimathi 2001).

Upon ascending to power in a bloodless coup, president Gaafar Muhammad Nimeiri introduced some corrective measures. The government declared its commitment to regional administrative autonomy for the South and set up a ministry of Southern affairs. In 1972, the Addis Ababa agreement was signed between the government and the Anya-nya rebels, which laid a basis for a settlement and the civil war was temporarily ended. The agreement gave the South regional autonomy within a unified Sudan (Wood Ward, 1997). Repatriation of refugees from neighbouring countries including Kenya and of displacees within the South began almost immediately and went on for the following ten years.

However, the early 1980s witnessed deterioration in the state of affairs in Sudan. The Southerners opposed an integration charter signed between Sudan and Egypt. Internally, the country suffered from deteriorating economy compounded by inflation and corruption. Meanwhile, relations with the South were deteriorating. A decision to export the newly
discovered crude oil in the South to port Sudan for refining, the fear that the Jonglec canal would benefit Northerners and Egypt but adversely affect the South and the adoption of certain aspects of the Sharia law in 1984 led to an armed insurrection of the Southern rebel group who were organized into a political and military wing, the Sudanese People Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Sudanese People Liberation Army (SPLA) respectively. This resumption of the civil war also marked the return of Sudanese refugees to Kenya after the successive repatriation in the 1970s.

The government’s failure to deal with the effects of prolonged drought and problems created by the influx of refugees from Ethiopia, Chad and Uganda, coupled with president Nmeiri’s economic policies that did not augur well with the public, led to a coup.

As the government continued to support Muslim fundamentalism, the SPLA split into two rival factions. Three of its field commanders, RiekSmashar, Lam Akol and Gordon Koangchol of the Nuel nationality accused John Garang the leader of SPLA of dictatorship and set their base at Nasir in the east. These breakaway commanders favoured secession for the south while Garang, a Dinka, based at Kapoeta advocated for a united secular state (Zartman 1985). Fighting between the two SPLA factions intensified in 1991 and 1992 against a background of government attacks resulting in the massacre of thousands of civilians in the southern towns of Bor and Kongor. These hostilities also resulted in the first notable influx of Sudanese refugees in Kenya who were settled in Kakuma in 1991 (UNHCR, 1999).

This study is very informative to my research in tracing the circumstances of self-settled Sudanese women refugees.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology that was used in the study. It deals with the description of the design of the study, target population, locale, sampling and sampling procedures, development of research instruments, methods of data collection and analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative research method. This system of inquiry sought to build a holistic, largely narrative description that informs the research on the profile, implications, challenges and strategies that Sudanese women go through. Interviews and internet guides were used in a bid to help the researcher get intricate details of Sudanese refugee women in Ruiru District.

3.3 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Ruiru sub-county; Kiambu county, in the republic of Kenya, precisely, in Githurai and Ruiru divisions. Ruiru sub-county borders Gatundu south and Kiambu sub-counties to the west, Thika West to the north and Kasarani sub-county to the south. The district covers an area of 292 square kilometres. It is a rich agricultural area that enjoys close proximity to Nairobi city, popularly known for its high production of agricultural products such as milk, tea and coffee.

The choice of the sub-county was necessitated by several reasons: The sub-county has many self-settled Sudanese refugee women and it was interesting to know whether they are fully integrated
into the local community. In addition, it was also interesting to know the circumstances that led to their settling in the sub-county.

3.4 Target Population

The study covered a population of five hundred and sixty two respondents.

The target population consisted of Sudanese women refugees in Ruiru sub-county, community leaders of the Sudanese Refugees and a sample of Kenyan citizens who lived in the Urban Ruiru sub-county.

Sudanese community leaders were used in this study because without their consent, no information could have been gathered from this community.

Kenyan citizens who lived in the areas occupied by the refugees has been chosen since they also played a role in the integration of the refugee community in the area. The way they had been able to relate or fail to relate, and their opinions regarding the presence of the Sudanese women refugees was very important for this study.

3.5 Sampling Technique

Ruiru sub-county was purposively selected because of the high number of self-settled Sudanese refugee women living in the area, in comparison to the neighbouring sub-counties. For the purpose of this study, both purposive and stratified sampling techniques were used to identify sixty respondents, both refugees, their community leaders and locals from Ruiru sub-county.

Using stratified sampling, the researcher was able to get representatives from each group of participants in proportion to their number in the population. The researcher used the proportional allocation method to calculate the number that each group contributes to the sample that is
proportional to its size in the population. In calculating the number, the researcher used sampling fraction technique. For example, the population of the refugee women, their community leaders and Kenyans living amongst them is 562, and the researcher requires 60 across the three groups. To get the actual figure in regard to the population of each category, the researcher calculated the sampling fraction. The sample fraction was defined by dividing sample size by number of the population. Thus 60 divided by 562, 60 being the sample size used in the research and 562 is the total number of the sample population. The result was a fraction 0.10676157. The sampling fraction (f) equals the probability of any member of the population being selected for the sample. Therefore, each category of the population had to be multiplied by this figure (0.10676157) to obtain the corresponding category of the sample.

To get the final sample size for each category, the researcher multiplied sample fraction (0.10676157) by total number for each category of respondents. For example the women refugees, (282 x 0.10676157=30), their community leaders (20 x 0.10676157=2), Kenyan citizens living amongst them (260 x 0.10676157=28). Then the sub-samples were added to get the final sample size (60) participants.

3.5.1 Sample Size

Due to vastness of the area under study, limited finance and time, sixty people were interviewed. 30 refugee women, 2 community leaders and 28 locals were used in the study. The sample size of sixty was a viable number taking into account that the method of data was the interview method which was comprehensive in terms of data collection yet also time consuming.
3.6 Data Collection

For the purpose of this study, both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected through interviews and internet guides. While conducting the interviews, it was necessary for a research assistant who was trained to help with translation of some words so that respondents could understand. The research assistant, a Sudanese, was also instrumental in helping the women respondents feel comfortable while answering the questions.

Secondary data was synthesized from books, articles and journals available at the Kenyatta University Post Modern Library, University of Nairobi, community libraries, census reports and other refugee related reports from UNHCR etc.

3.7 Research Instruments

3.7.1 Internet Guides

These internet guides sought to generate information on the challenges and circumstances on integration of Sudanese women in Ruiru sub-county. One Community leaders and one church leaders were interviewed from each Division. Internet guides were used because high confidentiality was upheld.

3.7.2 Structured Interviews

Structured interviews were used with the aim of getting reliability of the information gathered, since informants were subjected to similar questions. Open-ended questions were preferred since they allowed flexibility and high response.
3.8 Data Analysis

The study generated qualitative data.

Qualitative analysis was carried out simultaneous to data collection, and entailed the inferences that were made from the opinions of the respondents. Primary data from interviews and interview guides were edited immediately after collection for accuracy, validity and uniformity. All collected information was carefully scrutinized. In the event that respondents did not understand English, interpreters were provided. The qualitative analysis was presented in a narrative form.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

There were several ethical issues that the researcher took into consideration during the study. First, due to the psychological turmoil that respondents must have gone through during exile, the researcher used her counseling skills to counsel any respondents whose emotions may be awakened. The researcher avoided asking questions which would make them recall unpleasant occurrences that would cause them psychological harm. The researcher also avoided digressing and getting involved in issues that were not relevant to the study. She was also sensitive to the feelings of respondents. Collection of data only commenced after the researcher has secured a research permit from the relevant authorities.

Secondly, the researcher ensured confidentiality of the study participants by making sure that the names of the respondents did not appear anywhere. This ensured that their identities were not revealed. For this reason, the researcher did not attach a list of respondents in the appendices.
Thirdly, the inclusion of the respondents in the research study was only done through informed consent. Those who were not comfortable to participate were not forced to; consequently those who wished to pull out in the process of the study were not be prevented from doing so. The researcher sent an advance letter to the sample participants explaining the general nature, purpose and intention of the study. The researcher carried herself professionally. She did not force or induce respondents to answer questions. The researcher however portrayed friendliness.

Lastly, the participants were assured that any benefits accruing from the research would reach them as the research would expose their challenges and circumstances, which may foster assistance from NGOs and the government.

Utmost care was taken to ensure that the research was original and involved no plagiarism. The research tenets of validity and reliability were upheld. The researcher showed respect to informants and ensured that she did not abuse the privileges accorded.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis and interpretation was done in four categories guided by the research objectives. A historical analysis of the situation of refugee women in Africa was done in a bid to establish how exile impacts on the lives of the refugee women. The refugee women migratory patterns were also studied in order to find out how they got to Kenya. Their experiences while in Kenya were also studied in this section. The study then analysed the conditions of self-settled Sudanese refugee women in Ruiru district.

The family dynamics of Sudanese refugee women in Ruiru were also studied. This section mainly looked at the changes that came with family structures that have been disrupted due to death or separation during flight from Sudan, and how the single ladies have to learn to cope with their gender roles.

The third section of the analysis was on the challenges and circumstances of refugee women self-settled in Ruiru sub-county, and their impact on integration. In this section, a critical analysis of the relations that refugees have with the locals was looked at. The extent of social as well as economic integration was discussed in this section.

Primary components of coping mechanisms are economic and social in nature. It is important for the Sudanese women refugees to be in a position to sustain themselves economically, as well as be in a position to form social networks in exile. This study looked at the engagement of Sudanese women in economic activities to fend for their families, and how they were able to establish networks amongst themselves and the local community to be in a position to get integrated in Ruiru sub-county.
4.1 THE CONDITIONS OF SELF-SETTLED REFUGEE WOMEN IN RUIRU KENYA.

Sudanese women arrived at different times, some as early as 1990 while they were young girls. Others arrived in the late nineties, their first destinations being Kakuma and Dadaab camps. Their stay at the camps did not last long, owing to the various challenges they encountered. Some of their husbands however have gone back, though they visit, but have advised their wives and children to remain in Kenya and wait for the situation to improve back in their country.

Sudanese women highly attributed their presence in Ruiru sub-county, to availability of security and affordable housing. When asked why they left the camps for Ruiru sub-county, they cited rampant insecurity that surrounded the camps at Dadaab and also in Kakuma due to the presence of bandits in the area. Therefore, the women going out unaccompanied by men to fetch firewood would often be raped. They also cited overcrowding and lack of lighting in the camps which made lives in the camps extremely difficult for them. Shoddy tents and shelter mean that women and girls are not adequately protected from rapists and bandits. Inadequate sanitation infrastructure causes water to be polluted, and in overcrowded areas, water-borne diseases spread fast. Absence of women's health services also means pregnant and breastfeeding women cannot access necessary care.

The self-settled Sudanese women in Ruiru try to sustain their livelihoods through business, petty trade, simply subsisting on transfer earnings through various sources including remittances from relatives from home or in rare instances, being supported by charitable, civil society and faith based organizations. In fact, the majority of them are economically self-sufficient with different levels of income.
These refugees largely exist without legal protection or material support from the Government of Kenya and the UNHCR. This means that they lack the proper documentation and therefore suffer harassment from the police concerning their status. Yet, recognition and regularization of their status may enable them to engage freely in wage earning activities or to engage in viable business that can contribute positively to Kenya's economy. As a consequence, the Kenyan Government is denied a revenue that could emanate from business investments undertaken by refugees.

Since refugees living in urban areas do so unaided by government and UNHCR support, those in the lower income group are largely unable to access basic welfare services. Indeed the majority in low income bracket face more hurdles compared with their fellow refugees at high and middle income levels. Conditions relating to the Government's style of addressing refugee affairs make it impossible for them to register their businesses or even acquire properties to improve their economic status. This leaves the lower income group vulnerable to all kinds of abuse. Women, generally falling within the lower income bracket, are particularly hardworking and creative in their efforts to earn a living. Many Sudanese women are engaged in selling their traditional food from their living quarters, sewing and selling their traditional clothes and other artefacts.

There are cases where the NGOs assist some women after turning away others equally deserving. Even when NGOs have valid reasons for their actions, failure to understand the criteria used to determine who get the assistance raises charges that the NGOs are biased. The organization of assistance to refugees and other needy populations is such that there are no mechanisms put in place to enable refugees to evaluate the assistance programs that are meant to benefit them. Evaluation of these projects is usually the prerogative of the organizations themselves. Refugees
are expected to appreciate whatever is offered in the name of aid and those who complain are reprimanded for ingratitude (Harrell-Bond, 1999).

When asked why they have not returned to their mother country, they said they fear restarting all over again, as much of their property was destroyed in Southern Sudan during the civil war. They also fear that those left behind or other clans might have taken over their land, and again those who used to farm are afraid of the landmines. 20% however said they would return if they were assured of livelihood opportunities, and since they were not quite sure, they would rather stay. The recent conflicts in Southern Sudan have instilled fear in the women, who insisted that there is still no peace in Southern Sudan.

Refugee women with medical problems cite access to medical care as one of the reasons they opt to stay at Ruiru, where they do not have to go through the UNHCR bureaucracy as the refugees in the camps do which sometimes leads to loss of life. All the same, with the low and unstable incomes, the women struggle to raise money for medical services and burial in the event of death.

Contrary to the public perception and the views of many studies, refugees in Ruiru felt strongly that their relationship with their Kenyan neighbours was good. 64% of the women reported that the relationship was good, while 36% said that their relationship was fair. On the other hand, their relationship with the government authorities appeared to be strained. This is evident in the harrassing manner in which identification and regulation of refugees' stay in the country is done.

Many refugee women stated that upon arrival in Kenya they had to move in with the refugees from their country or ethnic groups until they had enough money to live on their own. The majority of the women live among local populations in poor neighbourhoods characterized by
overcrowding, high levels of crime and insecurity (Human Rights Watch, 2002). Integration has taken place where refugees "attain a standard of living which satisfies culturally determined minimum requirements".

In terms of housing and shelter, 90% women refugees live in permanent houses while 6% live in temporary houses. Only 4% live in temporary quarters. Only 3% owned houses while 97% did not. They also did not own any other form of property.

4.2 IMPLICATIONS OF DISPLACEMENT ON WOMEN'S PERFORMANCE OF GENDER ROLES

Although both refugee men and women experience challenges in exile, experiences emanating from these challenges are gendered. The gendered nature of the refugee status and the challenges that it entails is rationalized by reference to biological facts that place men and women in different circumstances (jaji, 2009). Exile poses unique challenges for women in terms of both biology and gender. Loss of livelihoods in exile have repercussions for refugee women regarding the performance of roles and fulfillment of responsibilities that define womanhood in the African context. Lack of income premised by the refugee status places the very essence of womanhood, femininity and motherhood on unstable ground thus illustrating how economic circumstances impinge on social and cultural integration in Ruiru.

In 1986, the UNHCR created a special gender sensitive program for women at risk which was aimed at meeting two goals: overcoming eligibility obstacles and providing adequate repatriation and integration support with specialized care when needed to foster eventual self-sufficiency. According to the UNHCR, within the context of resettlement, women at risk are those who face protection problems and resettlement in admissability under regular program criteria. Protection
problems may arise in their countries of origin, during flight or in the countries of first asylum. The trauma of having been uprooted, deprived of normal family and community support or cultural ties, the abrupt change in rules and status in addition to the absence of an adult male head of the family render some women under certain circumstances, like camp life, more vulnerable than others. They may also suffer from a wide range of problems ranging from the risk of expulsion, refoulment and other security threats to sexual harassment, violence, torture and different forms of exploitation. This necessitates refugee women to be considered for resettlement irrespective of whether the refugee population to which they belong is being promoted for the purpose (UNHCR, 1995). However, despite these commitments, there has been no systematic implementation of that program for the Sudanese women self-settled in Ruiru.

Historically, southern Sudanese men and boys have often been priviledged over women and girls through differential rights and resources. In southern Sudan, boys are generally given preference over girls. From early childhood, girls and boys are socialized to perform strictly defined gendered behaviours and roles. For instance, a famous Nuer saying frequently repeated by people I interviewed is that "the man should be the ruler of the home and his wife should unquestioningly act according to his will". That explains why in the Dinka and Nuer communities male children are given preference over females (Jack, 2003).

As the above quotation illustrates, patriarchal notions of femininity and masculinity are central in shaping such gendered meanings, identities and institutions. Children are taught to respect and obey their parents and the elderly, particularly male figures. Females are obliged to obey their male relatives when they are young, and such obedience is automatically transferred to their husbands and male in laws upon marriage. A key traditional practice in these marriages is the bridewealth payment by the groom's family, in cattle as well as in cash. Marriage means that the
bride's family relinquishes control over her reproductive and productive ability and grants it to her husband and his family in return for bridewealth. The concept of bridewealth allows men the right to control the labour and productivity of women and children and renders the women invisible (Jack, 2003).

It is the Sudanese women who play the child-rearing role and where they cannot provide for the children even in the presence of their husbands, this becomes a case of failed motherhood leading to emotional and psychological stress (Oyewumi, 2001). Womanhood and motherhood are a source of pride and dignity where the obligations they entail can be fulfilled and become a source of embarrassment and humiliation where circumstances do not permit the women to perform their gender roles to cultural expectations.

On the other hand, refugee men as husbands and fathers play culturally-defined roles that enable them to distance themselves "from the children's cries for food" (Moser 1993). As men seek refuge outside the homes, it is the women who have to fill in the permanent or temporary void besides fulfilling the obligations that motherhood and womanhood entail. This means that the refugee women have to bear the burden of sustaining the family without respite. Lack of employment being a major setback in exile, it also translates into making integration quite a task for these refugee women in Ruiru.

The difficulties of integration are also experienced by single refugee mothers who fled their countries after their husbands were abducted by their political adversaries, or for those whose husbands lost lives. While back at home, their husbands earned income while they stayed at home. It becomes difficult for them to take up roles that were initially their husbands. The women's main challenge is how to fill the economic and social void created by the loss of their
husbands, especially because opportunities for gainful employment or regular income are severely constrained.

Even though some women realize that their husbands cannot perform the economic roles that come with household headship as they used to before flight, and that they can provide for themselves and their children, they feel compelled to stay in the marriage as long as they are in Kenya where they fear cultural censorship and vulnerability for being single mothers. Women refugees do not strip themselves of their cultures at the border besides that they flee to neighbouring countries that, in a broader patriarchal context, usually share the same structures of social organizations. Even if the women realize that they can provide for their children and themselves and render their husbands expendable in economic terms, as long as they are in Kenya, the husbands remain indispensable and relevant in socio-cultural terms; they provide security whether in name only or in real terms.

4.3 CHALLENGES FACING REFUGEE WOMEN SELF-SETTLED IN RUIRU SUB-COUNTY AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS ON INTEGRATION

The sudden and involuntary nature of flight in conflict situations means abandonment of established and familiar livelihoods and supportive economic, social and cultural structures in the country of origin. As a result, arrival in the country of asylum signals the beginning of challenges that would have been overshadowed by quest for security during flight (Jaji, 2009).

Lack of education is a major setback for these refugee women. this leads to lack of employment opportunities as well as lack of involvement in decision making in their communities. Most of these women have therefore to be provided for by their husbands, and sometimes this money is not enough to cater even for their personal needs. This, coupled with language barrier, (as few
can speak Kiswahili which is the popular language with most of the locals in Ruiru sub-county), has prevented these women to freely interact with the locals, hence slowing social integration. Sudanese Women Association in Nairobi (SWAN), which initially ran a program of educating Sudanese women no longer, does it, and the women have therefore to make their own arrangements to learn.

Most of the Sudanese men do not want to live in Ruiru with their wives. They prefer to stay back in Southern Sudan and work there, while their women and children live in Kenya, behind the argument that in Kenya their children will acquire better education, and also for security reasons. The husbands will take long to come, and while back in their mother country, engage in extramarital affairs and get infected with HIV/AIDS. Their culture does not allow the use of condoms, and women again have to contend with this challenge.

There are a few cases of Sudanese women, who came to Kenya with their husbands, but the latter abandoned the family because of the hardships that life in Ruiru sub-county entails, and the husbands cannot be located. Such women face the challenge of raising children as single mothers. The widowed women traditionally are expected to be inherited by the brother of the deceased, but this does not happen in all cases. Many widowed women have the fear of contracting the HIV/AIDS virus, as has happened previously to other women, and several have therefore opted to remain single. The cultural definitions of gender roles in many parts of Africa are such that child rearing and nurturing roles are feminised while fatherhood and masculinity are distanced from the children (Mwanza, 2003). While that enables African men in general to evade nurturing of children, in Ruiru refugee men go on to subvert the same cultures that confer on them the same status of household heads; the privileges that patriarchy bestows on them entails obligations and refugee men forgo the former to evade the later. Refugee men who cannot
live up to the cultural expectations resort to abandonment as a way of soothing masculinities bruised by the hardships and uncertainty of life in Ruiru.

Refugee women's major obstacle to integration is unemployment and financial constraints. Kenya prioritises its own citizens in the formal employment sector especially considering that it has a high unemployment rate. Most of the refugee women have been in Kenya for more than five years yet they are still unable to join formal employment sector. Unemployment is both a cause and a result of a feeling of isolation and social exclusion to the Sudanese refugee women in Ruiru district. According to the data collected, 6% of the women were employed while 49% were self-employed. 33% depended on remittances from relatives. Only 8% receive support from various agencies while 4% were assisted in the church. For example the aged in Ruiru baptist church get assisted by the members as they are too old to fend for themselves. This also reveals the dilemma of these self-settled refugees in securing employment. It is impossible for the majority of them to be employed as they lack proper identification papers. Those who do get employed often have odd jobs. These self-settled refugees are a forgotten group as far as international attention is concerned. This may explain why the majority seek a means of survival in petty trade to sustain them in their host country.

There are no incentives for employers to invest in refugees when many of them have skills that can easily be found among Kenyans. Exclusion from formal employment is a recurrent theme which refugee women cite as the dividing line between their lives back in their countries of nationality and life in Kenya. In this regard, the absence of economic integration can be understood in terms of discontinuity or a break between circumstances in the country of origin and in Kenya. Integration is lacking where there are discrepancies between goals and actual, unsatisfactory conditions and life quality (Valtonen,1998).
Payment of rentals required a constant source of income every month and for women who are self-employed, incomes are unstable and keep fluctuating depending on whether the women obtain jobs such as doing laundry or have regular customers for their wares. In some cases, Kenyans prey on refugees’ desperation for accommodation and hike rentals to exorbitant amounts because of a pervasive belief that "foreigners have money" (Bukuru, 2002).

The Sudanese women in Ruiru sub-county have resorted to pooling together their income in order to afford the expensive housing. Three to four families live together in one house and share the house rent among themselves, and any other bills like electricity uniformly to ease the burden.

Police harassment is another challenge faced by these Sudanese refugees. The police carry out regular raids in refugee-dominated areas during which they have been known to search refugee homes, abuse, assault, intimidate and wrongfully arrest refugees. Many refugees are detained in police cells for days without being charged while others are forced to pay bribes to police officers to secure their release. The police blatantly disregard UNHCR documents indicating that the refugee is known to the agency.

The discourse on democracy, good governance and human rights prevailing in Kenya, notwithstanding, human rights are envisaged in a hierarchical order whereby refugees' rights are way below the citizens' rights and can only be enjoyed after citizens-who also come in a hierarchical order- have been satisfied, a situation which seems unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. Considering that many citizens lack access to health care, employment, housing and tertiary education among others, it is improbable that refugees would enjoy such
rights (Veney, 2005). In addition, refugees' rights are largely construed as an act of charity by asylum countries (Feller, 2001).

Implicit in Kenya's treatment of refugees is the expectation that refugees appreciate that they are allowed to stay instead of being turned away. The exclusionary refugee regime is sustained by notions of belonging which tether refugees to their countries of origin and accordingly treats them as not having the right to claim territorial space in Kenya, where they are foreigners. Conceptualization of refugee hosting as a temporary favour is vocalised by politicians who engage in anti-refugee rhetoric. Predictably, the history of refugee hosting in post-colonial Africa is marked by manipulation and abuse in the form of sexual and gender based violence and Kenya is no exception to violation of refugees' rights (Martin, 1999); (Human Rights Watch, 2002).

From the women interviewed, the women explained that they were easy targets of police because they part with money easily since they do not want to be taken to court where they fear deportation for lack of protection documents.

Some refugee women have to deal with domestic violence. Frustrations provide a fertile ground for violence. Refugee men whose circumstances in exile render them incapable of fulfilling the obligations that come with cultural definitions of masculinity often experience an identity crisis, since exile ironically opens up opportunities for women that place them in positions of comparative advantage over their male counterparts. Consequently men feel that this women's relative empowerment disempowers men. The consequent contestation for power and legitimate authority within refugee households often leads to domestic violence.

Unmarried refugee women, widows, single mothers and their daughters are vulnerable to sexual abuse by members of the local community as well as male refugees. Even where the women are
not targeted for rape, they still suffer harassment because of the combined effect of being a refugee and being unattached to a man. For single refugee women, the main challenge is the pervasive patriarchal belief that a woman cannot be secure unless she places herself under the protection of a man. Being unmarried for women in many African contexts is still associated with indecency and unmarried Sudanese women refugees have to contend with labels such as prostitutes and home-breakers.

Having been forced out of their own country, these refugee women find themselves in a disadvantaged position from which they cannot challenge discrimination by locals. Hospitality is granted to refugees if they refrain from contesting discrimination regardless of the women's keen awareness of their rights being trampled on by locals with impunity. Integration is characterized by access to services without facing discrimination, feeling of belonging and respect regardless of women's refugee status (Ager and Strang, 2004). Women refugees hosting in Ruiru is characterized by divergent expectations between refugee women and locals. Refugee women expect hospitality while locals expect them to reside in refugee camps. Locals generally argue that refugees should not integrate into Kenya because they have to eventually repatriate to their country of origin where they belong. Most of the locals who are landlords have complained that these women are too dirty in the apartments where they have rented, and invite so many of their relatives to live in the same house, leading to congestion in the plots, yet the women feel they are a family and feel at peace when they live together.

The financial challenge and the concomitant struggle to meet the refugee families' immediate needs intersect with lack of land as an economic asset. In agrarian economies such as those that characterize many parts of Africa, land is a valuable economic asset with a socio-cultural meaning as it also defines notions of belonging. For refugee women from rural backgrounds,
exile entails loss of ownership and access to land leading to loss of heritage for their children. In this case, inability to own land in Kenya thwarts efforts at economic integration in addition to its socio-cultural ramifications for refugee children in the absence of legal provisions that facilitate their naturalization in Kenya. Land ownership is a marker of belonging which is the ultimate marker of integration (Ager and Strang, 2004).

4.4 STRATEGIES REFUGEE WOMEN DEVISE TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES AND CARVE A NICHE FOR THEMSELVES IN RUIRU, KENYA

The spatial confinement in camps settings rarely provides circumstances in which refugees can use their professional skills. They do not provide conditions that are conducive for refugee women from rural/agrarian and urban/professional backgrounds to re-establish their pre-flight means of livelihoods or even aspire for better socio-economic standards (Jaji, 2009). Ruiru as opposed to the camps provides refugee women with the space in which to manoeuvre and find alternative ways of earning a life and transform their circumstances.

A study done by Musyemi (2004) found that urban refugees run businesses, live off remittances, or earn enough money through casual labour in order to survive. While discussing sovereignty as a practice in African cities, Landau and Monson (2008) argue that, in order for immigrants to survive and thrive, they do not only move ostensibly through the state regulated space, but also transform it through strategies of accumulation, coupled with tactics that aid them elude danger and regulation (Landau and Monson, 2008).

The inability to find formal employment coupled with the other challenges aforementioned have left the women in Ruiru sub-county without many options but to devise strategies to survive. Refugee women in Ruiru district have been receiving assistance from NGOs, that is economic
social and legal. The Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) provides legal advocacy and legal aid for them, as well as counseling and protection. The women seek assistance from RCK especially when they have been raped or have experienced trauma or domestic violence. The organization provides counseling and sends the rape victims to hospitals. Newly arrived refugees in Ruiru sub-county who need advice on how to cope with life in the new environment are also assisted by RCK. Consequently, these refugee women do not want to be looked at as entirely dependent and helpless. They would like to work and look after themselves. However, such challenges as; lack of protection documents, limited availability of small business loans really hamper their efforts.

Evans (1989) found that immigrant survive on market niches. He stated that there are two types of market niche: the ethnic market niche and non-ethnic market niche. The ethnic niche market refers to co-ethnic consumers of the immigrant entrepreneurs. In general, this market is targeted with an ethnic product such as ethnic food, ethnic newspapers and ethnic clothes. He found that ethnic market is a critical factor in the survival of the necessity immigrant entrepreneur because of its competitive advantages. Immigrant entrepreneur has critical skills that the local entrepreneur does not have and cannot imitate.

Even with the exclusion that these women face, they have become innovative and resilient. Some engage in doing laundry in Kenyan households and earn between Ksh 200 and 300 per laundry pile. Others have exemplary skills in bakery, basketry, hairdressing, painting tie and dye as well as making interior decorations. Other income generating projects they engage in are making peanut butter and soap which they sell and meet some of their needs. However, most of them harbor the fear of exploring the wider market and therefore make very little money as opposed to the much they would earn if they were assured of security, and again most have lost their self-
esteem and are not quite sure of their products fetching market. Over time, they have also
developed a thriving carpet and jewelry-making industry, using the skills and knowledge they
brought from Southern Sudan.

The women have also sought education as a way of empowering themselves and raising their
self-esteem. Humanitarian Graca Machel (1996) best summarizes the optimism surrounding the
role of education in the lives of refugees when she writes," when everything around is chaos,
schools can be a haven of security that is vital to the well-being of war-affected children and
their communities". Schools provide consistency and stability in the unsettled and transient lives
of refugees (Mathews, 2008). For refugees, "education ultimately acts as a vital coping
mechanism as they adapt to their new trajectories"(Mosselson, 2006). Sinclair (2001), in her
study of emergency education found that the structure provided by schools can normalize the
lives of displaced populations, restore an element of hope and contribute to successful
resettlement of refugees by meeting psychological and social needs. Additionally, education is an
important tool in building social capital and gaining employment. Therefore, the ability of
refugee women to access education opportunities has a strong impact on their ability to
successfully navigate the integration process. Marginalized women such as female refugees, who
are able to "establish friendships, find confidants and exchange emotional and material support
through non-formal education are more likely to experience multiple psychological and material
benefits than those who are not part of such networks" (Prins et al 2009).

Collinson (1970) deals with provision of education to refugees in Kenya. He specifically
addresses the various hurdles a refugee undergoes in the Kenyan education system. He highlights
the bureaucratic red tapes in securing a scholarship and a place in schools, different education
systems, subjects, and different language of instruction among others. He concludes that a refugee takes two to three years more than a Kenyan citizen to complete a given course of study.

Self-settled women refugees in Ruiru opt to attend classes where they are taught for free by Sudanese young men and women who have been able to go through the Kenyan education system. They argue that Kenyan school fees is unaffordable for them. However, they have been able to make tremendous improvement in their education. They study sewing, Maths, Kiswahili, English, Science and mother tongue. They hope that education will improve their lives' situation. The women mentioned their counterparts in the past whose education secured them jobs in America. They also felt that education improved their self-worth and respect within the Sudanese refugee community.

Some of the Sudanese women acquire their livelihoods through remittances, which usually come from family, relatives and friends who are abroad. Jacobsen (2005) in his study reiterates this by stating that social networks help refugees find employment, housing and sources of credit. Friends and relatives from the Diaspora send them cash.

Lindley (2007) says in his study that on a global scale, remittances are a significant source of income for developing countries: officially recorded flows totaled $160 billion in 2004, compared with $166 billion foreign direct investment and $79 billion official development assistance. Remittances have played a major role in the lives of refugees in Ruiru because they have been invested in their informal businesses like cooking their traditional food and selling to their people and the locals, making and decorating bed sheets, making mats, wall paintings and other interior decorations which help in ascertaining the refugees' self-sufficiency. Remittances
have also been used to meet urgent needs like paying rent, food, medical care, school fees for children and other needs.

These Sudanese women have also formed close ties with the church, which is their source of consolation. Religion plays an important role in maintaining the women's self-esteem. God is a central being in the refugee women's life world in; they refer more to the presence of God in their lives than they do to that of humanitarian organizations. They generally invoke God to make sense out of their suffering, account for their survival in the face of difficulties as well as to sustain hope for a better future. In the face of so many shortcomings and hurdles, faith in God is their only hope.

Religion besides providing spiritual nourishment also plays the vital role of uniting them as members of specific national and regional communities and bringing them together with Kenyans as fellow congregants as it happens at Ruiru Baptist church where these women attend their Sunday services. Refugees forge friendships among themselves as well as with the locals, and this involvement in places of worship is an indicator of social integration. These Kenyans who worship with the Sudanese women feel that the women should be embraced totally in all circles of life.

At Ruiru Baptist church, they have also had an opportunity to learn from an education program that offers training in needlework, English, Kiswahili, Science and mother tongue to the members of the Nuer and Anyuak communities.

Partial integration can be said to have taken place. Some indicators of this middle level integration are as follows:

- Sudanese women are not restricted in their movement.
70% of the women interviewed reported that they are able to move to various places, for example to the Ruiru market, supermarkets, the church and other places without restrictions.

- Sudanese women participate in the local economy.

The Sudanese women felt proud that through their small scale businesses, they are able to participate in growing the economy. They felt that they too are doing a lot in building the nation, though in a small way.

- They are moving in the direction of self-sufficiency.

After recounting their experiences, and due to the fact that for over ten years most of them have survived the tough times, they have hope that within a few years they will be financially independent.

- They are able to utilize local services such as health facilities.

50% of the women interviewed pointed out that they were able to get access to health facilities, where they get equal treatment with the locals. They felt that their treatment had improved over the years.

- Their children can attend public schools.

Quite a number of women had enrolled their children in public schools. They pointed out that the schools had opened doors for them, only that it was difficult for the children to fully interact with the local children, a situation they hoped would improve with time.

Ruiru refugees have found ways of integrating. They are dispersed among the local populations and participate informally in the economy. These refugees might therefore be said to be in the
medium levels of integration. They are almost entirely outside the legal system, but have managed to integrate despite this. Their illegal status gives them some opportunities at the same time that it takes others away.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 CONCLUSION

The research discovered that most of the Sudanese refugee women face a number of challenges that necessiates them to engage in a variety of coping mechanisms. They must adjust to a new culture and language, and work hard to establish themselves financially and socially. Families must also learn to cope with intergenerational conflicts which may arise due to the ofted different pace of acculturation and adjustment between parents and their children.

As conflict continues to rage in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, the end of the refugee problem in Kenya is far from over. Kenyan government should embark on finding some form of lasting solutions to the problems of refugees through implementation of durable solutions. Integration and third country resettlement constitute the durable solutions for the Sudanese refugees.

Refugees' lack of proper documentation leads to harassment from the police over their status. Yet, recognition and regularization of their status enable them to engage in wage-earning activities or invest in viable business that contributes positively to Kenya's economy as the host country.

The research discovered that relocation to rural organized settlements may be acceptable for some of the refugees of rural origin, but for those of urban origin, such solutions are untenable. The professionals and better educated are usually the ones with the best access to permanent resettlement in the western world whereas for the majority, local integration is the only realistic option. This can be jeopardized when the Kenyan government does not provide employment authorization or issue licenses for small businesses. The net effect is that refugees move into the
informal sector economy, work illegally usually at highly depressed wages or turn to illicit activities out of sheer need to survive.

Although repatriation has also been considered a durable solution for the Sudanese women in Ruiru, it has also been coupled by more than enough difficulties. Repatriation means that refugees' lives are disrupted socially, economically and culturally. The process of economic readjustment is dependent on a number of variables; length of time in exile, level of self-sufficiency or dependency while in exile, skills or knowledge acquired while in exile, income generating opportunities or means of production available in home areas, individual or zonal integration assistance provided, degree of voluntarism in returning and individual commitment to re-establishment (UNHCR, 1995). This research discovered that the Sudanese women are more willing to stay in Kenya than to repatriate. They felt that they had invested much in Kenya, that they would rather be allowed to stay, especially since most of their children are attending school here in Kenya.

It is important therefore that refugees be integrated first before they get repatriated, since refugees learn to be self-reliant and get rid of the welfare syndrome they had learnt in the camps. They learn to generate their own day to day needs thereby reducing the dependence upon local hosts and the international community. They also realize the economic goals set up by the host governments.

Refugee levels of self-sufficiency or dependency while in exile have a direct bearing upon the subsequent pace of economic integration. For those with a certain level of self-sufficiency while in exile, when they repatriate and especially if they are allowed to carry their wealth and also necessary conditions for re-establishment provided at home, they reintegrate faster than those
who were highly dependent. If the time in exile for the latter category was long, it takes a very long time to wean them off the welfare syndrome (Rogge 1988).

Socially, time in exile affects the extent of cultural assimilation with the host community. New languages are acquired, children are educated in alien curriculum, and second generation refugees have few if any direct attachment to their home areas. For some, repatriation to their parents’ country of origin does not necessarily mean going home. (Kimathi, 2001). Some Sudanese women have been born in Kenya, and they are not therefore keen to go to Southern Sudan. To them, Kenya is home. Repatriation may not be the best option for them.

Politically, the question of whether refugees are really wanted at home and whether amnesties given by home governments are genuine are crucial for repatriation. Further, they may not be welcomed any more by their hosts, who make veiled threats making their repatriation less voluntary. This is also closely related to information dissemination channels and its authenticity, especially with regard to the state of affairs in their home countries prior to repatriation (Allen and norsink, 1995).

Third country resettlement, although considered as one of the durable solutions, is often taken as the least satisfactory to refugee’s problems because of the difficult cultural adaptations involved. It is only turned to as a last resort when there is no way to guarantee protection and safeguard fundamental human rights (UNHCR, 1995).

The research also showed that Kenya, like many other host countries in Africa, resists local integration on the assumption that integrated refugees will not be willing to repatriate latter and accordingly confines refugees in refugee camps. The study however suggests that, integration, instead of being deterrent is a prerequisite for repatriation.
Integration in the intermediate term remains a hope for millions of refugees who would prefer to sustain themselves rather than relying entirely on aid from outside sources. Refugees can be agents of development, but only if government policy allows for their integration.

This study suggests that Sudanese refugee women, who have evidently undergone trauma and discrimination, be allowed to integrate into our society by all means possible. Studies have shown that refugees who have been integrated are in a better position to repatriate than their counterparts in the camps. Encamped refugees find themselves in a more difficult situation to repatriate because years spent confined in the camps lead to problems of adjusting to life outside the camps in the absence of resources to facilitate reintegration in the country of origin. The international community, donors and the government of Kenya today hold both the ability and, to an increasing extent, the will to pursue this durable solution for the benefit of millions across the globe.
5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the aforementioned findings, recommendations in this report are as below

- One of the major devices for improving the refugee situation is sensitization. The key players in refugee protection- the police, the government and the judiciary- must be informed of and encouraged to accept their responsibility of refugee protection. Advocacy must be undertaken to get the judiciary to be more active in refugee protection. Civil society must also be sensitized through the media and civil education to eliminate xenophobia and promote adherence to human rights principals.

- The donor community must recognize the shifting of refugees from a predominately camp setting to urban areas. They must develop policies and provide funding to address this reality. In particular, initiatives could facilitate refugee access to financial capital and microenterprise development.

- A policy and legal framework needs to be put in place for the regulation and management of self-settled refugees in Kenya. This would provide a basis of those agencies willing to assist refugees do so. It would also regularize the stay and businesses of refugees and in turn earn the government much needed revenue.

- Vulnerable single mothers should be identified and handled with care. They have often been referred to as the "illegal urban case load" yet many suffer serious psychological and emotional fears from their experiences.

- Many refugees possess professional skills and talents that can contribute significantly to the local society and economy. They should therefore be encouraged and motivated
through provision of opportunities like soft loans facilities that will enhance further exploration in their skills.

- Humanitarian and development organizations need to use innovative strategies to bring together urban refugees and the surrounding Kenyan communities to increase dialogue and cultural exchanges, all leading to mutual understanding and respect.

- Refugees' economic contributions have the potential to increase overtime as they gain experience and earn higher wages. Such increases translate into revenue collection and consumer spending. However, in order to realize these benefits, the study recommends that employers and state officials ensure that refugees have the necessary skills and training in order to advance and effectively run their businesses in the state.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: COMMUNITY LEADERS’ INTERNET GUIDES

Dear sir/madam,

The purpose of this internet guide is to investigate the level of integration of Sudanese refugee women in Ruiru. You as a community leader have been chosen to voluntarily participate in the study. Please feel free to express yourself as honestly as possible, in order to facilitate the completion of the study. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidence. Please don’t write your name anywhere.

1. Designation

2. Gender

3. Nationality

4. What roles do you play as a leader in the Sudanese community?

5. Do you feel part of the local community in your service?

   (i) If no, why not?

6. What role do the Sudanese refugee women play in the community service?

7. Are they available in the community meetings or gatherings?

   (i) If no, why not?

8. How do they meet their basic needs?
9. What kind of assistance do you offer the women?

10. How do they relate with locals who are Kenyan citizens?

11. Are women allowed to participate in community leadership?
   
   (i) If yes, how do they?

   (ii) If no, why not?

12. Do they express desire to return to their mother country?

13. Have they reported to you, as the community leaders, any violation of their rights by the locals?
   
   (i) If yes, what was the nature of the violation?

14. In your opinion, how can you describe the experiences of these refugee women?
APPENDIX II: REFUGEE WOMEN INTERVIEWS.

Dear Madam,

The purpose of this study is to investigate the level of integration of Sudanese refugee women in Ruiru sub-county. You have been chosen to voluntarily participate in the study. Please feel free to express yourself as honestly as possible to facilitate the completion of this study. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidence.

1. Age

2. Marital status.

3. Number of children

4. Nationality

5. When did you come to Kenya?

6. Why did you leave your country?

7. Where was the first place you stayed after you left your country?

8. If you stayed elsewhere, why did you leave to stay in Ruiru sub-county?

9. What were you doing in your country before you came to Ruiru sub-county?

10. What do you do to settle to life in Ruiru sub-county?

11) What are the changes that have taken place in your life since your arrival in Ruiru sub-count?

12) What roles did you play in your family before you left your country?
13. How do you meet your basic needs at the present moment?

14. Do you receive help from any organizations, for example the UNHCR?
   i) If yes, which ones
   ii) What kind of assistance?
   iii) If not, explain why.

15. Why did you choose to stay in Ruiru instead of staying in a camp?

16. How do you relate with the locals who are Kenyans

17. Do you think you can fit into life in your country? If not, why?

18. Do you intend to return to your country?
   i) When?
   ii) If not, why?

19) What kind of experiences do you go through as a refugee woman?

20. Have you ever experienced violation of your rights in Kenya?
   i) If yes, who violated your rights
   ii) How were your rights violated?
APPENDIX III: LOCAL POPULATION OF RUIRU SUB-COUNTY STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS.

Dear sir/madam,

The purpose of this study is to investigate the level of integration of Sudanese refugee women in Ruiru sub-county. You have been chosen to voluntarily participate in the study. Please feel free to express yourself as honestly as possible to facilitate the completion of this study. Your response will be treated with utmost confidence.

1. Who do you think is a refugee?

2. Have you met Sudanese women refugee in Ruiru sub-county?

3. What do you think of the presence of refugees in Kenya?

4. Do you think refugees should stay outside the camps and among Kenyans here in Ruiru sub-county?
   i) If yes, why
   ii) If no, why not?

5. Do you get to relate with refugees?
   i) If yes, where and how?
   ii) If no, why not?

6. In your experience, are you in support of their presence in Kenya?

7. Are there refugees you would not like to live in your neighbourhood?
i) If yes, which ones and why?

8) Would you want refugees to be part of Kenya, to work and live among you?
   i) If yes, why
   ii) If no, why not

9. Are there things refugees do that you do not like, or people around you complain about?

10. If you had the means, would you offer the Sudanese refugee women refugees employment?
    i) If not, why?

11) Do refugees have something to offer Kenya/
    i) If yes, what is it?
    ii) If not, why not?