

The Effects of Closure of Refugee Camps on Livelihood Activities to the Surrounding Villages: A Case of Mtabila Camp in Tanzania.

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Abstract

Although refugee camps have been negatively perceived as places where migrating population get settled and access basic requirements from the host population, this notion seems to be different when viewed from livelihood perspective. In other contexts, Refugee Camps have played a key role as stimulants of livelihood activities. The fact that refugee camps have been supported nationally and internationally, they have attracted investment in services including; schools, health centres, markets, recreational services and artisanal skills training. Such services have been used by other communities surrounding refugee camps. Apart from providing labour to the surrounding communities, the camps have been also centres of trade between the host population and refugees. This positive element of refugee camps has not been captured the attention of many researchers as well as policy makers. This paper examines the effects of closure of refugee camps on livelihoods of surrounding villages using a case of Mtabila Camp located in western Tanzania. Three Villages of Mugombe, Buhoro and Nyachenda were selected for detailed examination. A sample size of 66 households from each village was chosen for detailed interviews. These interviews were complemented with observations studies in each village and interview with Kasulu District and sub-ward Officials. Findings indicate that the closure of a refugee camp had negative effects on peoples' livelihoods in terms of retrenchment of unskilled labour force, decline in agribusiness, trade and lumbering. The closure of the refugee camp led to the closure of some social services such as health centre, schools, water supply and routine maintenance of the road. These services were also being used by host population. The closure of the camp culminated in decline of agricultural production that was dependent on unskilled labour from refugees. It is recommended that alternative livelihood activities ought to be developed if communities surrounding refugee camps are to sustain their living.

Key words: *Refugee camps, livelihood activities, surrounding villages, Mtabila Refugee Camp.*

INTRODUCTION

Refugees are people who have been forced to migrate from their home or country in order to escape from calamities such as war, persecution and man-made or natural disasters. Refugee camps are temporary settlements built to receive refugees (Kigadye, 2001). Hosting refugees in camps started way back during the Second World War, whereby the large population was forced to live in the concentrated or refugee camps. The flowing of refugees in 1980's resulted in the growth of large camps and other kind of organized settlements in the host countries (UNHCR, 1999). In the same period, the establishment of Refugee Camps began to replace the previous practice which was allowing refugees to settle amongst the local population in Africa. Although the decade 1990-2000 observed a massive exodus of refugees from Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda to Tanzania due to political unrest in this region, in the recent years (from 2014), there has emerged a wave of movement of people migrating from North Africa and Eastern Europe to Southern and Western Europe respectively. Despite the fact that considerable efforts have been made by the EU states, this wave seems to continue pressing the world especially economic migrants who move from one state to another in search of employment and better livelihood opportunities. Many countries have been hesitant to receive refugees apparently because of the associated social, economic, cultural and environmental consequences.

Tanzania has been host to the largest refugee population in Africa and is an important transit country for migrants heading to South Africa. Conflicts in the Great Lakes region that ensued in the 1990s dramatically increased the number of refugees in Tanzania. While in 1992 the number of registered refugees stood at 292,100, this figure increased to 883,300 in 1994. This figure dropped in the decades to follow to 680,862 in 2000; a total of 548,824 in 2005; 118,731 in January 2010; and by January 2011, there were 113,180 registered refugees (UNHCR 2011, Betts and Milner 2006).

Refugee camps in Tanzania have existed in the regions of Kigoma, Kagera, Rukwa, Tanga and Ruvuma. The key factors that were taken into consideration in designating refugee camps included the; easy accessibility from the country of asylum seekers and minimization of cost of repatriation when the situation is calm in home countries. Most of these refugees were resettled in the western regions of Tanzania. Refugee camps became the major centres of business, trade and services to the surrounding villages because they were provided with various services including; dispensaries, nursery schools, primary schools and piped water supply. There has

been growth of trade due to the interaction of the host and refugee population. While refugees were offering unskilled labour for productive activities, the local people were food stuff including maize, rice and beans. The link between refugees and host population and the effects of closure of refugee camps to established livelihoods and links have not constituted a policy agenda in Tanzania and other countries in the region.

Kigadye, (2001) observes that the establishment of refugee camps influenced many people to shift towards the camps due to the presence of services and contacts between native people and refugees. The internal migration of host population towards refugee camps not only led to the increase of livelihood activities but also to establishment or growth of settlements. Citing Tabora Region, Kigadye (2001) notes that; the establishment of Uliankuru Refugee Camp in Tabora led to the growth of nearby settlements and villages. However, the recent repatriation of refugees to their home countries culminated into closure of many refugee camps in Tanzania. These included Mtabila, Kanembwa and Nyarugusu in Kigoma region; Uliankuru in Tabora region; Mishamo in Rukwa region and Kwisu in Kagera region. After the closure of these refugee camps, the Government converted these centres into other functions including; secondary schools and military Camps. This closure has affected the livelihood activities of the surrounding communities such as agriculture, trade and access to services namely; water supply, health services and education. Mtabila Camp was closed in December 2012 following the orderly return movement of more than 34,000 Burundian former refugees. However, nearly 3,000 persons were transferred to Nyarugusu Camp because they were found to be in need of continued international protection. UNHCR formally handed over Mtabila Camp to the Government of Tanzania in July 2013. The infrastructure investment that was handed over to the Tanzania Government was worth over 1 million US dollars (UNHCR, 2013).



Figure1: Location of Mtabila and other Refugee camps in Western Tanzania

Table 1: Refugee Population and Camps Established in Tanzania

Refugee Nationality	Regions	Camps Established	Year	Population	Area Covered
Burundi	Tabora	Ulyankuru	1972	41,602 +	1200 km ²
Burundi	Rukwa	Katumba	1972	85,866+	2500 km ²
Burundi	Rukwa	Mishamo	1978	44,630+	2050 km ²
DRC	Kigoma	Lugufu	1997	46,649	90 km ²
Burundi	Kigoma	Mtabila	1994	53,206	12 km ²
DRC	Kigoma	Nyarugusu	1996	52,806	30 km ²
Burundi	Kigoma	Mtendeli	1994	47,790	12 km ²
Burundi & Rwanda	Kigoma	Mkugwa	1993	1,285+	2.5 km ²
Burundi	Kigoma	Muyovosi	1996	36,709	4.5 km ²
Burundi	Kigoma	Kanembwa	1993	17,406	18 km ²
Burundi	Kigoma	Nduta	1996	48,982	5 km ²
Burundi	Kigoma	Karago	1999	24,142	14 km ²
Burundi & Rwanda	Kagera	Lukole	1993	109,783	14.64 km ²
Burundi, Rwanda and DRC	Kagera	Kwisa	1996	12,000	21900 km ²
Somalia	Tanga	Mkuyu	1992	3,948	100km ²
Grand total				614,816	

Source: (Kigadye, 2001)

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual variables of peoples’ livelihoods have been well discussed by the Department for International Development, (DFID, 1999) popularly referred to as the Sustainable Livelihood Framework. The concept has been linked to five key variables of capital assets that include social, physical, natural, human and financial. If these assets are affected by either natural or manmade effects then the livelihood of communities are threatened. The DFID-Sustainable Livelihood Framework identifies the vulnerability context to include trends, shocks and culture which act upon the capital assets. If the transforming structures interact well with capital assets the emerging livelihood strategies will lead to increased income, well-being, reduced vulnerability, improved food security and more sustainable use of resource base (Figure 2).

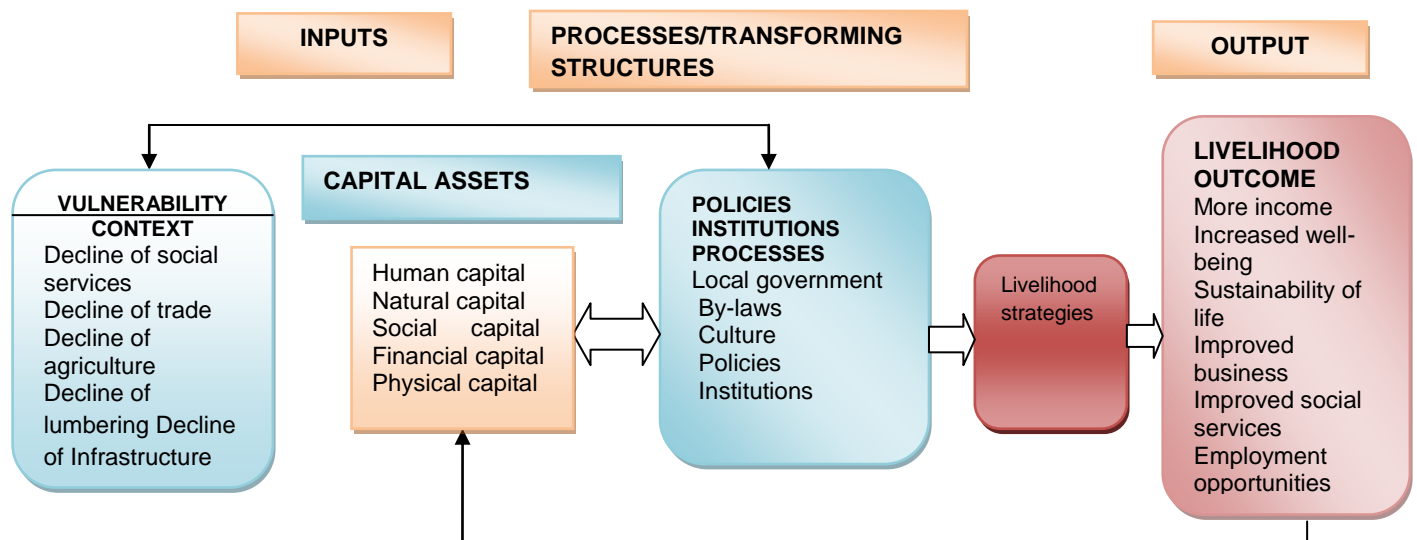


Figure 2: The sustainable livelihood framework

Natural capital refers to natural resources such as land, forests, water, air quality and pastures from which people derive all or part of their livelihoods. These are natural resources at the poor's disposal from which certain services and resource exchanges are derived. Unfortunately it is natural capital that is most vulnerable to shocks and seasonal shifts. Physical capital assets refer to both privately-owned producer goods such as farm animals, tools, machinery, buildings and equipment that can be used to increase labour and land productivity. Others include public goods that make up the economic infrastructure of a country namely; roads, market places, electricity supply clinics, schools, hospitals. Physical capital is divided into basic infrastructure and producer goods. While basic infrastructure refers to the ways that the physical environment can be modified in order to help the poor meet their needs and improve their modes of production (housing, services and location all become assets once used as physical capital); producer goods are the "tools and equipment" that people use to meet their needs and improve their production. Financial capital refers to the economic resources that people use in order to pursue their livelihood strategies. These can take the form of savings or 'stores', monetary flows or capital that is invested. Financial Capital can be liquidated in times of need. Also the financial assets refers to people's access to cash, both in the form of income and in the form of cash savings and stocks of liquid assets that can be converted into cash in times of need. Human capital is the inherent, often intangible strengths that people possess. Human capital includes investment assets such as skills, knowledge, good health and ability. It is from these abilities that allow people to pursue certain livelihood strategies. Human assets refer to both the health and nutritional levels necessary for sustained labour input and the educational standards and skill levels that make this labour productive. Social capital expresses the quality of the relationships that the individual or household has with the greater community. The more inter-connected the individual or family is with the community or society, the better or stronger their informal safety net and support system is. Social assets are the social relationships which people can draw upon in order to expand their livelihood horizons. They include kinship and friendship ties, patron-client and other feudalistic relations, membership of formal groups, various types of reciprocal arrangements and relations built up through trust, for example those between buyers and sellers (DFID 1999).

METHODS

Empirical evidence used in this paper comes from interviews and observation studies that were carried out in the three Villages of Mugombe, Buhoro and Nyachenda. Prior to conducting studies, a sample size comprising of 66 households from each village was established based on the total population from each village and an estimated confidence level of 10 percent. The sample size was estimated from a mathematical model developed by Yamane, (1967) after getting the total population from each Village. Household interviews were conducted so as to collect data about livelihood activities and services which were accessed by the surrounding villagers during and after the closure of the camp. Physical observations were carried out in each village to complement data from interviews but also explore and document the current situation. Observation studies were facilitated by photographic registration. Data analysis was carried out using spread sheet and tabulation of findings from the three sampled villages. Cross-case analysis was used to analyze data comparing livelihood situation in the three villages employing the key variables from the Sustainable Livelihood Framework.

RESULTS

Overview of Mtabila refugee camp and the surrounding villages

Mtabila camp was established in 1994 by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) with the assistance from the government of Tanzania. This followed a political unrest and inter-tribal wars in Burundi and Rwanda which led to mass population exodus. While the government provided land for establishment of the refugee camp, provision of security and monitoring of status of refugees: UNHCR with support from the United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK), Australia, Canada and German provided the various services including; health, schools, piped water supply and sanitation, food, non-food items (blankets, sheets, cooking pots, stoves, fuel woods and light solar). The latter were also responsible for

settling up the refugee shelters; whereby the refugees were allowed to erect the structures (houses) using temporary building materials (Lukando, 2015). Mtabila Refugee Camp is located in Buhoro ward, Kasulu District, Kigoma Region in Tanzania. It is surrounded by the villages of Mugombe with a total population of 8,915; Buhoro Shunga village with a population of 20,189 people and Nyachenda with a total population of 7,865 people. The Camp could be reached via an earth road, 25 Kilometres from Kasulu Township. Therefore the Camp had a catchment population of 36,969 people residing in the surrounding villages. During the operational period, the camp accommodated a total of 38000 refugees. It was closed in 2013 and the premises were converted for re-used as a military training centre.

Livelihood condition before and after closure of the camp

In order to streamline discussion on livelihood condition before and after closure of the refugee camp, the key variables from the sustainable livelihood framework are emulated. These entail capital assets in terms of human, natural, social, financial and physical elements.

Human capital and employment pattern

Employability and productivity of human capital depends on assets such as skills, knowledge, good health and ability. These abilities allow people to pursue certain livelihood strategies. Both the health and nutritional levels are key elements necessary for sustained labour input and productivity but also educational standards and skill levels are necessary to make the labour more productive. Even though the education levels for villages surrounding Mtabila camp were not high, it was possible for some of the people to get employment in some of the camp activities. In most cases, the majority; about 69 percent of people in Mugombe Village, 46 percent in Muhoro Village and 76 percent in Nyachenda Village had education levels limited to primary school (Table 2). Yet, empirical evidence shows that 60 percent of the interviewed households which were unskilled were employed in some of the camp activities. This proportion dropped to 5 percent after closure of the camp (Table 3). Although this pattern is uncommon in many other settings, it was possible in this area contributed by the closure of the refugee camp.

Table 2: Households’ level of education

Village	Non educated		Primary		Secondary		Tertiary level	
	Number of respondents	%	Number of respondents	%	Number of respondents	%	Number of respondents	%
Mugombe	5	7	45	69	4	6	12	18
Buhoro	20	30	30	46	6	9	10	15
Nyachenda	1	2	50	76	12	18	3	4

Source: Household interviews, April 2015

Table 3: Employment before and after closure of the camp

Villages	During the camp period				After closure of the camp			
	Unskilled		Skilled		Unskilled		Skilled	
	People	%	People	%	People	%	People	%
Mugombe	17	25	12	18	1	1	2	2
Buhoro	13	20	9	13	1	1	2	2
Nyachenda	10	15	6	9	1	1	1	1
Total	40	60	27	40	3	3	5	5

Source: Household interviews, April 2015

Changing pattern of livelihood activities

Although agriculture was, and continue to be the major livelihood activity for the majority of the villagers surrounding Mtabila Camp before and after closure of the camp, other livelihoods activities diminished to that effect. For example, the number of households engaged in trading decreased from 45 to 38 before and after closure of the camp for the three villages. Households engaged in lumbering also diminished from 25 to 6.

There was a notable increase in households engaged in agriculture increasing from 128 to 154. More household had to engage in agriculture because some employment and trading activities could not be sustained following the closure of the camp (Table 4).

Table 4: Changing pattern in engagement in livelihood activities

Villages	During the camp						After closure of the camp					
	Agriculture		Trade		Lumbering		Agriculture		Trade		Lumbering	
	people	%	people	%	people	%	people	%	people	%	people	%
Mugombe	37	56	23	35	6	9	43	65	22	33	1	2
Buhoro	40	61	12	18	14	21	52	78	9	14	5	8
Nyachenda	51	77	10	15	5	8	59	89	7	11	0	0
TOTAL	128		45		25		154		38		6	
AVERAGE		65	0	23	0	13	0	77	0	19	0	3

Source: Household interviews, April 2015

The number of respondents who were engaged in trading and the trade items also diminished after closure of the camp. For example, while the number of respondents engaged in trading agricultural products increased from 55 to 84 percent, for non-food items diminished from 18 to 10 percent, furniture decreased from 14 to 4 and timber decreased from 13 to 2 percent. The decrease in trade in non-agricultural items is linked to the closure of the camp because some of the customers of these items were refugees or employees in the refugee camps (Table 5).

Table 5: Decrease in trade of non-agricultural items

Trade products	During the camp		After closure of the camp	
	Respondents	Percentage	Respondents	Percentage
Agriculture products	109	55	168	84
Non food items	36	18	19	10
Furniture	28	14	7	4
Timber	25	13	4	2
Total	198	100	198	100

Source: Household Interviews April, 2015.

Use of natural assets for livelihood activities

Land is one of the major natural resource found in Mugombe, Buhoro and Nyachenda villages. People in these villages were utilizing land for agricultural activities, trade and establishment of their settlements. The majority of the villagers were land owners in the order of 70 percent in Mugombe, 74 percent in Buhoro and 79 percent in Nyachenda Village respectively. In terms of land size ownership, it was also established that the majority of the households owned parcels of land larger than 5 acres in the tune of 66 percent in Mugombe, 93 percent in Buhoro and 92 percent in Nyachenda. This pattern of land ownership provided a guarantee for the households as the natural resource base to depend upon even after closure of the refugee camp. This is further illustrated in Table 6 where more people got engaged in agricultural activities after closure of the camp. Forest as one of the natural resource found in Mugombe, Buhoro and Nyachenda villages was being used for extracting timber (lumbering activities during the camp) and as a source of energy such as charcoal and firewood. While forest products such as timber was being used for making furniture, other products including poles and thatch grass were used for construction of temporary shelter by both villagers and refugees (Photo 1). Although this use benefited both villagers and refugees, it had negative environmental impacts due to cutting of many trees for house construction to the many refugees of the camp. The construction sector also benefited from use of soil as a natural resource for brick making. The majority of the buildings that were constructed at Mtabila Refugee Camp were built with burnt bricks (Photo 2).



Photo 1: Use of poles and thatch grass in construction of temporary houses for refugees (Photo by Lukando, April 2015).



Photo 2: Use of burnt bricks in building construction (Photo by Lukando, April 2015).

Closure of social services (physical assets) and its impact on livelihoods

Before its closure, Mtabila Refugee Camp accommodated several facilities including nine (9) primary schools, two (2) secondary schools, three health centres, two warehouses and six water tanks. The water tanks that were connected to running piped water supply system. There were also three police posts and two institutional buildings that were being used as departments for the UNCHR staff and other implementing agencies (Table 6). Most these facilities have been closed and their functions replaced with military training. The change from multiple to single functional camp has not only affected livelihood activities but also removed access to social services that were being provided by the camp to the surrounding villages.

Table 6: Facilities in Mtabila Refugee Camp before its closure

S/N	Available facilities	Number	Capacity
1	Primary schools	9	117 classrooms and several offices
2	Secondary schools	2	55 class rooms and several offices
3	Health centre facilities	3	16 row building facilities
4	Go downs facilities	2	There were 2 warehouses and other small supporting facilities
5	Tanks to supply water	6	6 Water tanks with supporting water supply systems
6	Police posts	3	3 police post buildings
7	Institutional buildings	2	4 buildings partitioned in departments in which UNHCR and its implementing agencies work. 15 departmental offices were available.

Source: Field observation, April 2015



Photo 3: Mtabila Primary School that has been closed (Photo by Lukando, April 2015).

During the camp period at Mtabila, Health services were being provided at various levels; Hospital that included the AB Hospital, Health Center located at Muyovozi and Mtabila Dispensary. These services were provided under UNHCR, and provided health services to refugees and the people living in the surrounding villages of Mtabila camp. The AB Hospital was relatively large hospital with the capacity of attending 100 outpatients per day. The Hospital had modern instruments which facilitated the provision of hospital level health services beyond the surrounding villages to the catchment of the whole Kasulu District. After repatriation of the refugees, the AB Hospital was closed and the hospital building has been converted into a dormitory for the training camp. When respondents were asked on the impacts on social services after closure of the camp, many attributed to the decline in health services, decline in education services and poor water supply (Table 7).

Table 7: Impact of closure of the camp on social services

Effects	Mugombe		Buhoro		Nyachenda	
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Decline of health services	30	46	29	44	30	46
Decline of education services	20	30	20	30	16	24
Poor water supply	16	24	17	26	20	30

Source: Household interviews, April 2015.

Another component of physical asset nature that impacted negatively residents of the surrounding villages following the closure of the refugee camp was road and water supply system maintenance. When the camp was operational at Mtabila, the water reticulation system with its source from the highlands of Buhoro village was extended to the surrounding villages of Buhoro, Mugombe and Nyachenda. The project was constructed by CARE and TWESA; the as co-implementing agencies of the Mtabila Camp. After closure of the camp, these villages are still using the same water supply services but there is no regular maintenance which was provided by the implementing agencies. During camp operations, the maintenance costs for village water supply were met by TWESA under UNHCR for 80 percent, 15 percent was met by the Government and villages contributed only 5 percent. It was also reported by Village Executive Officers that the 25 Kilometres earth road that connects Mtabila and Kasulu Township was being maintained by UNCHR four to six times a year. Following the closure of the camp, the level of maintenance for the road has declined from six or four times to once a year. The lack of maintenance of these two infrastructure components has culminated into poor water supply system and road passability to people living in the surrounding villages of the former Mtabila Camp (Table 8).

Table 8: Impact of camp closure on infrastructure and social services maintenance

Type of infrastructure	Level of provision	Level of maintenance	Remarks
Road	Earth road	1 per year	Service have decline from 4-6 times performance
Education	Primary and secondary schools	No provision of books, desks, construction of toilets and classrooms by UNHCR	Decline of education services to the surrounding villages
Health	Dispensaries, health centres and hospital	Closure of three health services	Decline of health services
Water supply	Water tanks, kiosks, community taps	no maintenance from UNHCR	Shortage of water supply due to breaking of taps

Source: Interview with Village Executive Officers, April 2015

Decline in market for agricultural products for financial assets

Agriculture was the major livelihood activity conducted by the majority of Mtabila Camp surrounding villages. Most of the crops cultivated were food crops for consumption and commercial at small scale. Such crops are maize, beans and cassava. When the Refugee Camp was operational, the trend in agricultural production increased due to the presence of cheap labour of refugees because they were employed as cheap labour in agricultural activities in the surrounding villages. The presence of about 38,000 refugees also provided a market base for agricultural produce. The food provided by UNHCR like maize meal, cane, soya beans and peas, was at times insufficient to feed the population increasing the demand for local agricultural products. In addition to the large refugee population the presence of many organizations such as TWESA, CARE, World Vision, the Red Cross with their supporting staff also contributed to increased customer base for the agricultural products. The closure of the Refugee Camp affected the market of agricultural products villagers were taking advantage of.

Decline in social asset capital

During the Refugee Camp period, there was a playground known as Mwalimu Nyerere playground with a total area of 7000 square metres. This playground was used by both, the native people from the surrounding villages and the refugees for games and other sports activities. Various community meetings by the villagers were conducted on this playground. There were also several churches including the Pentecost churches and Seventh Day Adventists Church (SDA); and Mosques in which people used to worship. Apart from the church, SDA had established an organization known as Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) that was established to provide individual and community disaster relief including food security, economic development, primary health and basic education. The presence of the worshipping areas to the camp helped the neighbouring villages to conduct various worshipping activities and religious ceremonies in the camp. In addition to the above social assets, there were several community halls which were used in conducting various activities such as meetings, seminars, traditional ceremonies and entertainments. These activities enhanced the social capital between residents of the surrounding villages and refugees but also among individuals groups. Following the closure of the refugee camp, these services have been changed to other functions.

DISCUSSION

As highlighted in the foregoing section, the closure of Mtabila Camp had several negative effects to the livelihoods of about 74,969 people who were residing in the surrounding villages of Mugombe, Buhoro and Nyanhenda. In terms of livelihood activities, these effects have been manifest in the decline of employment of skilled population from about 40 percent during the camp operations to only 5 percent after closure of the camp. There was also a dramatic decline in employment especially for unskilled people from 60 to 3 percent. As a consequence of closure of the camp, there was also decline in non-agricultural activities and more people were compelled to engage in agriculture as a coping strategy and for their survival. This has been revealed by the increase in the proportion of population engaged in agriculture from 65 to 77 percent. In other words, more

people were compelled to continue farming despite the decline the market of the agricultural products. This has been further revealed by the decline in trading activities from 23 percent to 19, decline in lumbering from 13 to 3 percent, trade of non-food items from 18 to 10 percent, sale of furniture drooped from 14 to 4 percent and sale of timber that declined from 13 to 2 percent (Table 9).

The same trend seems to prevail for services and infrastructure. While the number of schools declined from 14 to 5 and secondary schools from 3 to 1, health services also declined from 4 to 1 following the closure of health services that were targeting refugees. The closure of a refugee camp was also accompanied with the conversion of the community halls, churches and mosques into new functions. Previously, before closure of the Refugee Camp, these services were used by both refugees and the surrounding community. Although the produce market was vibrant during the camp operations, the repatriation of refugee population has culminated into low market sales due to limited number of customers. In terms of infrastructure, the maintenance of Mtabila-Kasulu road has been affected by the departure of UNCHR. The latter was routinely maintaining the road four to six times a year to make it passable throughout the year. The frequency of maintenance has decline to one time a year. On the part of water supply, UNCHR was also maintaining the larger part of the system to the tune of 80 percent of the maintenance costs. The surrounding communities were contributing only 5 percent and 15 percent by the government. The closure of the Camp has increased the burden to communities to maintain the system.

Table 9: Livelihood condition before and after closure of the camp

SN	Item	Frequency	
		Before closure	After closure
A	LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES		
1.	Employment to skilled population (%)	40	5
2.	Employment to unskilled population (%)	60	3
3.	Engagement in agriculture (%)	65	77
4.	Engagement in trading activities (%)	23	19
5.	Engagement in lumbering activities (%)	13	3
6.	Trade of non-food items (%)	18	10
7.	Sale of furniture (%)	14	4
8.	Sale of timber (%)	13	2
B	SERVICES		
1.	Primary schools	14	5
2.	Secondary schools	3	1
3.	Health centre facilities	4	1
4.	Tanks to supply water	6	6
5.	Community halls, churches and mosques	3	0
6.	Playground	1	0
7.	Produce market	1	1
	INFRASTRUCTURE		
1.	Contribution to maintenance of water supply (%) by villages	5	85
2.	Road maintenance (frequency per year)	4	1
3.	Go downs facilities	3	1

Source: Summarized from tables above.

Reflecting these findings in National Policies, the Health Policy of 2003 for example has established a long term objective of having one dispensary for each village as a strategy of expanding the scope of primary health care services (URT, 2003). The villages surrounding Mtabila Camp (Mugombe and Buhoro) do not have dispensaries. The closure of the Refugee Camp has not only halted access to health care services but also contributed to increased distance for accessing similar services from other villages. The closure of the Camp; apart from jeopardizing the realization of the of Health Policy objectives, it leads to diminishing livelihoods in terms of physical capital. On the same footing, Sections 2(v) and (vi) of the National Water Policy of 2002

provides for effective and sustainable strategies to address natural and man-made water resources problems; and that; the longest distance to the water tap should be 400 metres (URT, 2002). Although the closure of the camp has not affected the water supply system, un-sustainability of the maintenance system is likely to result into the collapse of the established water reticulation infrastructure and accessibility of the same services to the surrounding villages.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although Refugee Camps have been invariably viewed as ‘parasites’ to host population, this paper has empirically shown that there is a close link between refugee camps and improved livelihood opportunities the surrounding communities. This has been demonstrated by the closure of Mtabila Refugee Camp which culminated into negative effects on livelihood activities and social services to the surrounding villages. These include; decline in employment for both skilled and unskilled population, decline in social and maintenance of infrastructure services. Some villagers were employed as teachers in schools; nurses, doctors and health workers in clinics, hospitals and dispensaries. Apart from providing a readily market for the both agricultural produce and non-agricultural items, the refugee population was also providing labour to the surrounding villages. Schools, health services, recreational and religious facilities were shared by both refugees and the host population. Although the closure of the Camp and repatriation of refugees could be interpreted as a relief to the country at macro level, the same action has culminated into increased distance and costs to services, decreasing access to infrastructure services and more generally declining livelihood opportunities to the local community at micro level. In view of these effects, it is recommended that; in event of closure of refugee camps, the government in collaboration with stakeholders should develop strategies that will provide continued livelihood opportunities to the host population with a view of reducing risks and shocks to the local communities. These may include; improved access to markets for agricultural products that were otherwise being consumed by the refugee population. This should however, be preceded by a systematic analysis or research to establish the level of symbiotic relationship that used to exist between refugees and host population. These relations ought to be analyzed, physical and socio-economic plans made and implemented for the new functions for sustained livelihood opportunities and development of the surrounding communities.

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