CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES

REFUGE

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SPECIAL ISSUE ON MOZAMBICAN REFUGEES

Mozambican Refugees and International Assistance

This issue of *Refuge* focuses on one of the largest and most tragic and complex refugee populations in Africa, the Mozambicans. Over a year ago, the Centre for Refugee Studies, together with the Government of Malawi, organized one of its most ambitious conferences to date to discuss durable solutions to the Mozambican refugee crisis in Malawi and the other asylum states. The conference, *First Country of Asylum and Development Aid*, was held in Blantyre, Malawi from June 8-12, 1992. It attracted a diverse delegation of academics and practitioners from the surrounding region, as well as Canada, the USA and Europe. As a forum for those concerned and working with Mozambican refugees in the various countries of first asylum, the meeting was highly successful. However, the complexity and magnitude of the issues discussed were such that there were clearly no easy solutions. In the end, many left feeling frustrated from the process, and impotent to address the enormous and seemingly impossible challenges of pursuing a developmental approach to refugee assistance, ameliorating the burden to host countries, preparing for the return of 1.5 million refugees and 3.5 million internally displaced (see Table 1a), and re-integrating the displaced and the former military elements into a country destroyed by over a decade of civil war.

The following year brought a number of events which gave room for unprecedented optimism. Interna-

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tional assistance was able to avert the major famine that had been predicted following the failed 1991-92 rainy season of southern Africa. South Africa continued along its shaky road towards dismantling apartheid. Angola held elections (although peace was short-lived). Perhaps most amazingly, the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) and the ruling Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) signed a Peace Accord in Rome on October 4, 1992, ending a 16 year civil war which took up to a million lives and reduced Mozambique to its present status as the poorest nation in the world.

On December 16, 1992, the UN Security Council pledged 7,500 UN troops and over US $300 million to assist the peace process in Mozambique. It was an encouraging start. However, the United Nations Operations in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) has met with a number of delays and problems in the implementation of the peace process. The main delay was in the deployment of UN troops, which did not reach their current number of 6,505 until June of this year. Demobilization has been fraught with difficulties, mainly due to the continued stalling tactics of RENAMO's leader, Afonso Dhlakama, as he attempts to extract the maximum material wealth from the peace process and at the same time redefine RENAMO's new role as a legitimate member of the emerging Mozambican polity. Elections have already been postponed by a full year to October 1994 and the continued inability of FRELIMO, RENAMO and the so-called "group of eight unarmed political parties" to agree on the new electoral laws threatens to lead to further delays. The training of former RENAMO and FRELIMO army officers who will serve as the core officers for a new unified army to be in place by September 1994, however, has finally begun in the British training centre of Nyanga, Zimbabwe.

The next two years will be the most difficult test of the resolve and commitment of the UN and the international community towards peace and democracy in Mozambique and indeed all of southern Africa. The continued success of ONUMOZ depends on an unwavering commitment of troops and development funds in order to oversee the transition to a peaceful and demilitarized Mozambique. The alternative is another Angola or Somalia. Unlike Somalia, Mozambique still has a functioning government with popular support. It is imperative to preserve and nourish this fragile political infrastructure.

Repatriation, Re-integration and Reconstruction

With tentative peace in place and less than one year remaining before the elections, refugees have begun returning to Mozambique. It is expected that the greatest return will have occurred by the end of this month, as September/October marks the beginning of another agricultural season. However, Mozambicans have been returning in significant numbers since the signing of the Peace Accord on October 4, 1992. The whole repatriation process has been characterized by a lack of current and reliable information, a situation in which the UNHCR in particular finds it difficult to operate. As of July of this year, 234,000 returnees had been registered by the UNHCR in Mozambique, most of them leaving Malawi and returning to Angonia district in Tete. Demining has already begun in Tete, and in Manica province roads are being repaired and agriculture re-established.

In this special issue, Malawian researcher Lewis Dzimbiri raises some important issues concerning the sovereignty and obligations of politically and economically weak host countries who have to shoulder heavy burdens in hosting a refugee population. Dzimbiri discusses the political and economic costs and benefits of hosting a large refugee population.

In my article, I have attempted to explain the integration or marginalization of refugees into host societies as a function of their access rights to land and natural resources of the host country. It is argued that refugee camps

work against integration and sustainable management of the host environment by segregating the host and refugee population and thereby creating conflict and competition over land and forest resources. The alternative of fostering integration by supporting indigenous relief efforts and facilitating more equitable access to the host population's resources has not been attempted.

Violet Bonga argues that in countries of asylum with limited resources like Malawi, refugee aid should be combined with developmental approaches aimed at increasing the long term agricultural potential of the host country. While meeting local refugee needs, such an approach could also provide the resources and impetus for mobilizing international support for economic development within the host country.

Agnès Callamard analyses the food assistance program, underlining the current problems facing the repatriation and reconstruction program for Mozambicans. She highlights some of the inherent imbalances at the local, regional and international levels which foster abuse within the food distribution system and, in the face of spontaneous unplanned repatriation, create tremendous volatility.

J.A.R. Wembah-Rashid discusses the cultural problems faced by returning Mozambican refugees in the 1970s. For Wamakonde refugees in Tanzania, living with the host population eroded traditional values and resulted in the loss of female dominance in their formerly matrilineal society. Initiation rites were commercialized by men to "assert economic dominance." The fundamental social changes that occurred in Wamakonde culture while in exile made reintegration into Mozambique a very painful process, particularly for children.

As Olaf Tataryn Jeurgensen writes in his article, the international community has been extremely slow to respond to the reality of returning refugees. The inability of agencies to shift resources and operations from asylum countries to Mozambique has greatly undermined the efforts of Mozambicans to rebuild their lives.

Véronique Lassailly-Jacob discusses the preliminary findings of her field research conducted in the Ukwimi Refugee Settlement. In a unique approach she has investigated the relationship between host and refugees in this remote part of rural Zambia. Commonly heralded as one of the success stories of UNHCR sponsored refugee settlements, Ukwimi has received attention from numerous refugee scholars. However, Lassailly-Jacob points out that the settlement has reduced the availability of valuable wild resources to the local population and has generated considerable conflict over scarce land. She points out that the host population is not only resentful of the degree of assistance and subsidized or free agricultural inputs provided to the refugee population, but this conflict has been fostered by the refugee-centred policies of the assisting agencies themselves.

The special issue highlights the fact that refugee assistance remains an ad hoc international response to local emergencies. Intervenors in emergencies remain poorly informed and this results in inappropriate and counterproductive responses. In the end it is perhaps unfair to be too critical of the relief process. Instead we should be working to develop more proactive responses to refugee flight, and increasing the flexibility of intervention, both on the ground and at an international level. All of these articles emphasize that something has gone terribly wrong in the implementation of humanitarian assistance. It is important to learn from the Mozambique experience and to continue striving to respond to the rapidly changing situation, while at the same time looking ahead towards durable peace, reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Mozambican people and state. ■

Ian Smith, Guest Editor

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The continued success of ONUMOZ depends on an unwavering commitment of troops and development funds in order to oversee the transition to a peaceful and demilitarized Mozambique. The alternative is another Angola or Somalia.

Table 1
Refugees in Southern Africa*

Table 1a: Mozambican Refugees in Surrounding Asylum Countries

Malawi	905,500 **
Zimbabwe	264,000
South Africa	250,000
Tanzania	72,000
Swaziland	45,000
Total outside Mozambique	1,536,500
Internally displaced	3,500,000
Total	5,036,500

Table 1b: Angolan Refugees in Surrounding Asylum Countries

Zaire	280,000
Zambia	118,000
Congo	6,000
Botswana	200
Total outside Angola	404,200
Internally displaced	900,000
Total	1,304,200

Table 1c: South African Refugees in Surrounding Countries

Swaziland	7,000
Tanzania	3,000
Botswana	200
Lesotho	200
Total	10,400

* *For various reasons these numbers are highly disputed. Source, World Refugee Survey 1993.*

** *as of August 1993.*

Political and Economic Impacts of Refugees: Some Observations on Mozambican Refugees in Malawi

Lewis B. Dzimbiri

Introduction

In recent years, numbers of refugees and migrants have reached crisis levels as the causes of flight have multiplied: wars, infringements of civil liberties, economic problems, environmental catastrophes, and increasing population pressures, to name a few. Whatever the cause of flight, the hosting of large influxes of refugees by a country of first asylum raises deep-rooted political and economical issues related to the obligations and the capacities of poor asylum countries. This paper attempts to examine some of the issues that emerge as both positive and negative impacts in a host country based on the experience of Malawi—a country that has managed to host nearly a million Mozambican refugees over the past six years or so.

The refugee phenomenon is an enormous international problem. Since the end of the second world war, the world has never seen a single day of peace. Wars, human rights violations, civil conflicts, tribal and religious repression, frontier disputes, interstate conflicts, and economic crises, to name a few, are viewed as some of the causes of flight from homeland (Meier-Braun 1992). The International Labour Organisation estimates that, worldwide, more than 100 million individuals have left their native land and now earn a living in a foreign country. About 35 million Africans no longer live in the country of their birth.

The Context of the Refugees in Malawi

Refugees from Mozambique have been entering Malawi since 1985, however, the main influx started in 1986. In early 1988 the refugee flow averaged 20,000 a month. To date, the refugee population is estimated at almost one million. The vast majority of the refugees live in the densely populated southern region in Malawi. Twelve out of the twenty-four districts of Malawi host refugees, either in camps or self-settled areas. Table 1 shows the population of refugees in Malawi, and represents 12 percent of the population of the whole country.

Refugee assistance is administered as a collaborative effort between the Government of Malawi (GOM), various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the UNHCR—United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In brief, Malawi has adopted a policy of integrating the administration of humanitarian assistance into existing government ministries, rather than creating a parallel bureaucratic structure which would compete for resources and duplicate government activities. At the camp or settlement level, there exists an informal structure for refugee representation alongside the formal government structure. The ensuing superstructure is complex and its *modus operandi* is the dynamic interaction between the formal and informal administrative structures. An elaborate procedure exists, from reception, registration and allocation of plots, to the distribution of relief, problem management and the involvement of refugees in various income-generating activities.

Positive Economic and Political Impacts

In any discussion of refugee-related impacts on host countries, one expects both positive and negative aspects. Four positive impacts will be discussed here: employment creation, accrual of benefits to the local population, the stimulation of local commerce and an improved international image.

Creation of Employment

Creation of employment opportunities for the Malawian nationals amid alarming unemployment figures is a significant outcome of humanitarian assistance. At the national level, we are referring to the many temporary employees recruited to staff our overstretched national bureaucracy to reach the refugee population. Local Malawians are hired as medical assistants, camp administrators, relief administrators, watchmen, project supervisors, extension staff, drivers, etc. In a study conducted by the writer on organization and management of the refugee regime in Malawi, it was estimated that over 600 individuals were employed full time by the relief program in Nsanje district alone (Dzimbiri 1992).

Involvement of nationals in government ministries and non-government organizations, not only provides direct economic benefits, it is also conducive to developing human resources and strengthening the national and local capacity to administer relief programs and respond to national crises. Furthermore, employment benefits need to be looked at from the perspective of the employer. In areas where there have traditionally been seasonal shortages of casual labour, the influx of refugees has created a cheap and accessible labour force for both the smallholder and estate agricultural sectors, although this is thought to depress local wages as a result (Long et al. 1990).

Accrual of Benefits

NGOs provide many relief inputs and services such as schools, boreholes,

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health clinics, income generation projects, etc. While initially targeted toward the refugees, the present policy of most of these organizations is to incorporate a significant number of Malawians as beneficiaries of various services and income generating activities (Machika 1992; Dzimbiri 1992). As a result, local people have benefited from clean drinking water from new boreholes and expanded health services from new clinics built in the refugee areas.

Stimulation of Local Commerce

The influx of huge numbers of people concentrated within small areas of land has the effect of stimulating local demand for consumable and non-consumable items. Within and around settlement areas and camps, small businesses are thriving. These include restaurants, groceries, shops and tea rooms. Also, there are increased sales of fish, secondhand clothing, handicrafts, and traditional herbs and medicines. Services such as tailoring, and bicycle and shoe repair are also examples of expanding small enterprise. A study by Long et al. (1990) confirmed an increase in the volume of trade in Nsanje district, with a consequent increase in market tickets from 15,349 in 1987/88, to 36,604 in 1989/90. In addition, there is a tendency among refugees to market some of their relief items such as oil, flour, pulses and blankets at very low prices to the local population. Finally, the services of local transporters have been in high demand to deliver food and non-food items from the main warehouses to refugee sites.

Improved International Image

The hosting of one million refugees by a small developing country has earned Malawi an international reputation as a generous and hospitable host. Among others, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, has publicly commended the generosity of the Malawian people and government in hosting the refugees.

Apart from the national political implications of this image raising, there are increased opportunities to access international assistance. The recent unfreezing of development aid funds from the EC is due in part to this positive international image. Despite persistent criticism of Malawi's human rights record, its reputation as a host for more than one million refugees cannot be wished away.

Having briefly discussed one side of the refugee-host coin, the positive impacts, we can now turn our attention to the negative aspects of hosting a large refugee population.

Table 1: Distribution of Mozambican Refugees in Malawi

District	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993*
Nsanje	214,298	259,981.	276,556	291,769	291,518	307,137
Chikwawa	25,827	49,136	68,336	87,269	88,188	79,050
Mulanje	35,180	46,968	47,493	51,792	51,054	54,938
Mangochi	26,399	34,700	38,918	44,965	44,516	38,419
Thyolo	0	22,000	34,305	40,462	40,033	16,998
Mwanza	20,323	35,139	48,652	83,167	93,817	90,492
Machinga	13,985	17,753	22,873	27,303	27,497	—
Ntcheu	132,491	152,102	160,374	138,739	137,062	132,176
Dedza	113,000	160,141	174,544	153,059	155,303	138,137
Lilongwe	20,327	31,228	35,576	38,499	38,636	26,568
Mchinji	4,400	9,858	16,563	20,251	18,668	18,612
Nkhata Bay	0	2,997	2,535	5,267	4,463	2,940
Total	**606,230**	**822,003**	**926,725**	**982,542**	**990,755**	**905,467**

Source: Malawi Government, 1992
* 1993 figures up to August 7: Source FARRU/WFP/UNHCR Malawi

Negative Socioeconomic and Political Impacts

Under this subject we will confine ourselves to a discussion of environmental damage, the strain on resources, strained Malawi-Mozambique relations, decreasing national security, the loss of national autonomy and the dilemma of assisting refugees while ignoring local, disadvantaged Malawians.

Environmental Damage

The environmental damage caused by huge numbers of refugees in Malawi in relation to land, roads and deforestation has been extensively documented by USAID/Malawi (Long at el. 1990), and need not be repeated here. Briefly, a lot of arable land has been surrendered by the local population for refugee camps or settlement areas. Although the opportunity cost of the loss of this agricultural land cannot be precisely quantified, it remains quite substantial.

Forests are a valuable source of construction poles for houses and latrines, firewood, medicine, thatching and fodder. In terms of fuelwood alone it has been estimated that displaced Mozambicans consume between 54,000 MT and 74,000 MT of fuelwood annually (GOM 1992).

The frequent use of heavy trucks transporting food relief to the refugee areas continues to degrade roads. While some of the cost of maintenance is borne by UNHCR, the biggest portion is borne by the Malawi Government. For instance in 1989/90, the total expenditure by the Roads Department was US$ 4.2 million. The UNHCR contributed US$ 1.2 million with the rest being borne by the Government of Malawi (GOM 1992:27).

Strain on Resources and Revenues

The presence of large numbers of refugees in Malawi has placed an enormous strain on the country's economy. In terms of manpower, it has already been pointed out that the administra-

tion of the relief program has been integrated into the existing government structure. This implies that all government departments and ministries involved—the Office of the President and Cabinet, district administration, health, education, women, children and community services, works, agriculture, and forestry—have to somehow double their workload with the same amount of human resources.

A lot of time and effort by both headquarters and district level officials are spent planning and implementing refugee-related programs. Financially, the cost of allowances, vehicle maintenance and staff salaries in all ministries is a significant expense to the Malawian state. Although partially financed by the UNHCR, a sector expenditure sheet on displaced persons for 1990 alone showed a net total additional cost to the Malawi Government of US$ 25.1 million (GOM 1992).

It is estimated that 60 to 70 percent of patients in district hospitals are refugees, resulting in a heavy burden on the personnel and facilities. The direct and indirect costs of hosting the refugees, i.e., pressure on public goods and services, has far-reaching consequences for the country. A joint Government of Malawi, World Bank, UNDP and UNHCR report (1990) found that:

> The influx of Mozambican refugees into Malawi in 1987-90 has created significant stress on the economy and is beginning to undermine the country's development program and structural adjustment initiatives.

This impact is not peculiar to Malawi. In fact, the impact of the Mozambican war on the rest of the southern African countries is even more alarming. The Commonwealth estimates that the total economic cost of destabilisation to the front-line states is in excess of US $45 billion—more than double their external debt.

Strained Malawi-Mozambique Relations

Since hosting the refugees, Malawi has had increasingly poor relations with Mozambique, fuelled by numerous allegations by the Mozambican Government. For instance, Malawi was accused of swelling its coffers with international aid by discouraging thousands of Mozambican refugees from returning home; and also, that the Government of Malawi exaggerates the number of Mozambican refugees in order to persuade the international community to provide more money.[1] The Government of Malawi has consistently refuted such allegations.

Decreased National Security and Rising Security Costs

Over the past five to ten years, Malawi has experienced decreased security as criminal and military elements have brought AK-47s into the country. As the UNHCR Deputy Representative in Malawi lamented:

> Unfortunately there have been several incidents over the past four or five months resulting in both Mozambican and Malawian casualties... these attacks, as far as we can tell, are part of the escalation of the war across the border.

Of late, gunmen have shot dead businessmen in Ntcheu (1992), killed four in Ntcheu/Dedza, and robbed the National Bank in Blantyre and other organizations.[2] The consequences of these activities have been increased insecurity, psychological torture to the Malawian people in the border areas, and heavy costs in terms of police investigations and increased patrols.

Loss of Autonomy

The refugee situation places a host country in a situation in which it has to surrender some of its autonomy in accordance with international standards. For instance, would Malawi enact a Refugee Act without the present refugee crisis in the country? Furthermore, the operation of the humanitarian assistance program may conflict with national development priorities. A lot of actors and interests are involved in decision-making, from the highest national Joint Operations Committee, down to the District Joint Operations Committee and the Camp Management Committee. As a result, the actual implementation of refugee policy may not mirror the exact nature of national development policies and priorities. To what extent, for example, does the sacrifice the District Commissioner makes in terms of time and effort to attend to refugee related issues, such as the planning of African Refugee Day, among others, reflect the official priorities, needs and requirements of the host nation? Scarce human resources have to be delegated to such activities to appease the international donor community, at the expense of more important responsibilities.

Another example of lost autonomy came from the local population who gave up large portions of their land for the siting of refugee camps. They remain uncompensated and do not have access to relief programs. Mere sacrifice and their precarious situation is not a sufficient index of suffering. Unfortunately, the legal determination of refugee status is irrelevant to local villagers who only see a reallocation of national and international resources to a foreign population. Feeding a refugee population, when up to 55 percent of the local population is malnourished, would not seem to reflect the interests of the host nation.

Perhaps, these contradictions could best be explained in terms of imposed policy agendas. As Bach (1988) observed, inequality in the international order makes African host states incapable of being autonomous in formulating refugee policies. In order to gain access to international development and relief funds, the Malawi Government has had to sacrifice services and funds that were previously allocated to its own population.

Conclusion

This paper examined some of the socio-economic and political impacts of refugees in a host country with particular reference to Mozambican refugees in Malawi. The major thrust of the paper was that the costs of hosting a refugee population—for small, economically undeveloped countries like Malawi—far outweigh the

benefits. However, Malawi's dependence on the international donor community leaves it with little choice but to reallocate scarce resources to assist the Mozambican refugees. Clearly, the UN and other international bodies have not been fair in providing economic compensation for the asylum offered to one million Mozambican refugees. ■

Notes

1. *Malawi Daily Times*, Nov. 23, 1990 and March 27, 1991.
2. Ibid., December 23, 1992.

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An Environmental Argument Against Mozambican Refugee Camps in Malawi

Ian Smith

Introduction

There is a fundamental contradiction within humanitarian relief offered to refugee populations. Intervenors simultaneously pursue two opposing objectives: to protect and assist refugees. "Protection," as practiced for long-term refugee populations, generally means the activities of "care and maintenance"—the distribution of food, blankets and other relief items, the establishment of schools, health clinics, boreholes, the siting of refugee camps—in short, controlling all aspects of refugee lives. "Assistance," in contrast, implies human and economic development, maintaining a degree of social continuity between the former and present lives of refugees, facilitating economic and social integration within the host community—ultimately the restoration of refugee control over their own lives.

This paper explores the contradiction between controlling and protecting refugees versus truly assisting them by facilitating integration within the host population. In the case of the Mozambican refugees in Malawi, the refugees' loss of control over their lives and livelihoods through encampment and restrictions on their economic activities, virtually eliminated earlier indigenous attempts to integrate them within the local p opulation. Without adequate material assistance, or the means to get it, marginalized and powerless refugees were forced into dangerous, exploitative and environmentally destructive survival strategies in order to increase their purchasing power.

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Priorities of International Relief

In the business of refugee assistance, the priorities of protection and short-term humanitarian relief have supplanted true assistance and long-term development. The local integration of refugees is considered a luxury, an ideal situation which is rarely pursued by the UN and sister agencies. More often, the responsibility of pursuing refugee "development" is delegated to NGOs who have neither the funds, mandate, or experience to work outside of refugee camps. Numerous studies have shown that the bureaucratic and financial structure of aid agencies predisposes them to *ad hoc* emergency responses (Keen 1992:58). Longer term development initiatives in hosting countries often do not provide immediate or tangible results in the eyes of funding agencies.

Most refugees in sub-Saharan Africa are from an agrarian background. Despite this fact, refugees are rarely encouraged or even permitted to integrate into the local agricultural communities. Camps or settlements are favoured over local integration due to political expediency, a need to control and account for aid inputs, perceived land shortages, or an incurable desire on the part of aid agencies to create "grand social experiments" (Harrell-Bond 1986). Host governments remain reluctant to encourage integration, fearing permanent settlement and further strain on already overstretched social services. Experience clearly shows, however, that most refugees repatriate at the first opportunity, even in the face of continued insecurity and personal risk (Cuny et al. 1992).

Protection and Refugee Restriction

The establishment of refugee camps serves two purposes: first, to facilitate the allocation of emergency assistance;

and second, to legitimize the raison d'être of aid agencies—the perceived need to segregate, label and restrict refugee movement (Zetter 1991). The second factor arises out of the agencies' need to account for assistance, which necessitates exerting a degree of control over refugee lives. Accounting for food and other material aid distributed is much easier in a centralized population, than it is in a "population which is 'mixed up with the local community'" (Harrell-Bond 1986:8). However, accountability and control are fundamentally at odds with the stated objective of UNHCR to "foster the self-reliance of the refugees," in which the "establishment of refugee camps must be only a last resort" (UNHCR 1982:57).

Attempts to control refugees and account for aid inputs cause humanitarian agencies to "fabricate inherently inaccurate numbers" of refugee population in order to satisfy donors and host governments that relief is only reaching the intended beneficiaries (Harrell-Bond et al. 1991).[1] The functional objective of aid agencies thus becomes the harmonization of relief distribution with social control over refugee populations.

Apart from controlling refugee lives, camps, it is frequently argued, decrease pressures on the host environment, economy, and agricultural land (UNHCR 1991; 1992). This is based on the assumptions that refugee needs can be adequately met by relief inputs distributed within the confines of a refugee camp, and that refugees can be effectively segregated from the local society. However, repeatedly we find that aid, particularly food aid, is insufficient and often nutritionally and culturally inappropriate (Keen 1992:6-15). Refugees have to engage in various economic activities to meet basic food and shelter needs. Paradoxically, a refugee camp is the last place a refugee could expect to earn a traditional source of income. Cut off from market opportunities with the local population and without land to cultivate, the economic opportunities become very limited indeed.

In addition refugee camps are a total disruption in social continuity for refugees. Refugees are denied access to land for cultivation and have limited access to the biophysical environment as a possible source of food, fuel, fodder, construction materials, income, medicine, livelihood, etc.

Marginality, Environment and Refugees

When considered in terms of resources, African refugee migration becomes

> ...a process involving a continuous reduction in the level of control which a social class, fraction, category or stratum exercises over the biophysical and inter-human environments in relation to others (Ibeanu 1990:51).

Thus, restrictions on the movement of refugees and the collection of resources is a continuation of the process of disempowerment which led to their initial displacement. The end result of this segregation is often a two-tiered society in which refugees and local residents live in the same area, share the same culture and values, and yet have an entirely different set of rights and social freedoms. Fundamental to the independence and livelihood of refugees from an agrarian background is regaining a measure of control over the biophysical resource base. Yet aid agencies and host governments systematically reduce or eliminate refugee access to the "environment" by restricting them to camps.

The increased pressure on the environment surrounding a refugee camp further divides the host and refugee population by creating local shortages which lead to privatisation of resources normally collected freely, such as wild foods, firewood, and construction materials for houses, etc. (Wilson 1989:65). Refugee camps themselves are often established in open access areas such as communal forests. The clearing of these lands creates additional resource shortages and impoverishes the poorer segment of the local population who rely on these common property resources (CPRs) as a source of income and household needs (Chambers 1986). It is therefore a common strategy of local population to restrict refugee access to common areas or to charge collection fees to compensate for lost resources (Christensen 1982; Chambers 1986; Wilson 1989).

Amid this reality, refugees struggle by any means at their disposal to increase their independence from formal assistance. Refugees often sell or trade material assistance in order to increase their range of economic options. They enter into insecure agreements with the local population permitting them to cultivate land. They migrate to urban areas or estates seeking wage employment. Refugees engage in illicit and environmentally-destructive practices such as deforestation or charcoal manufacture in order to earn a livelihood. Fundamentally, they avoid refugee camps except as a last resort, when they are unable to rely on the assistance of friends or relatives, or are unable to gain secure access to land (Hansen 1979). All of these survival strategies are discouraged or banned outright by either host governments or aid agencies. It is this institutional control over refugees which has led to their insecure livelihoods, resulting in environmentally unsustainable activities.

Refugees in Malawi

As a pawn of South Africa, Hastings Banda's Malawi actively supported the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) in the late 1970s and early 1980s as part of South Africa's "total strategy" to destabilise the Front Line States and increase regional dependence on the South African economy (Hedges 1987). Pressure from the Front Line States caused a partial reversal of Malawi policy towards RENAMO and the expulsion of 12,000 RENAMO troops from Malawi territory in September 1986. The resulting wave of RENAMO terrorism precipitated the first major influx of refugees into Malawi. By the end of 1986, an estimated 120,000[2] Mozambican refugees had fled to Nsanje district of Malawi—greater than the local population—and

their numbers continued to rise until they reached their present level of over 300,000[3].

At the time of this research in July 1992, two-thirds of the refugees were in camps. Eighty-nine refugee households in both refugee camps and "integrated areas" were interviewed on the efficacy of the aid program and access to the local land and forest resources.

Indigenous Assistance

Despite the much-heralded land shortages in Malawi (the main rationale for the establishment of refugee camps) after five years of organized assistance, as many as 100,000 refugees, or one third of the refugees in Nsanje district, have avoided camps and remained in self-settled areas—primarily in Malawian villages along the Shire River or in villages along the hilly border of Mozambique. Judging from the finding that 44 percent of refugee households arrived in Malawi prior to the initiation of formal assistance in 1987—the local population was able to assist and integrate the refugees *to some extent* well before the establishment of a relief program.

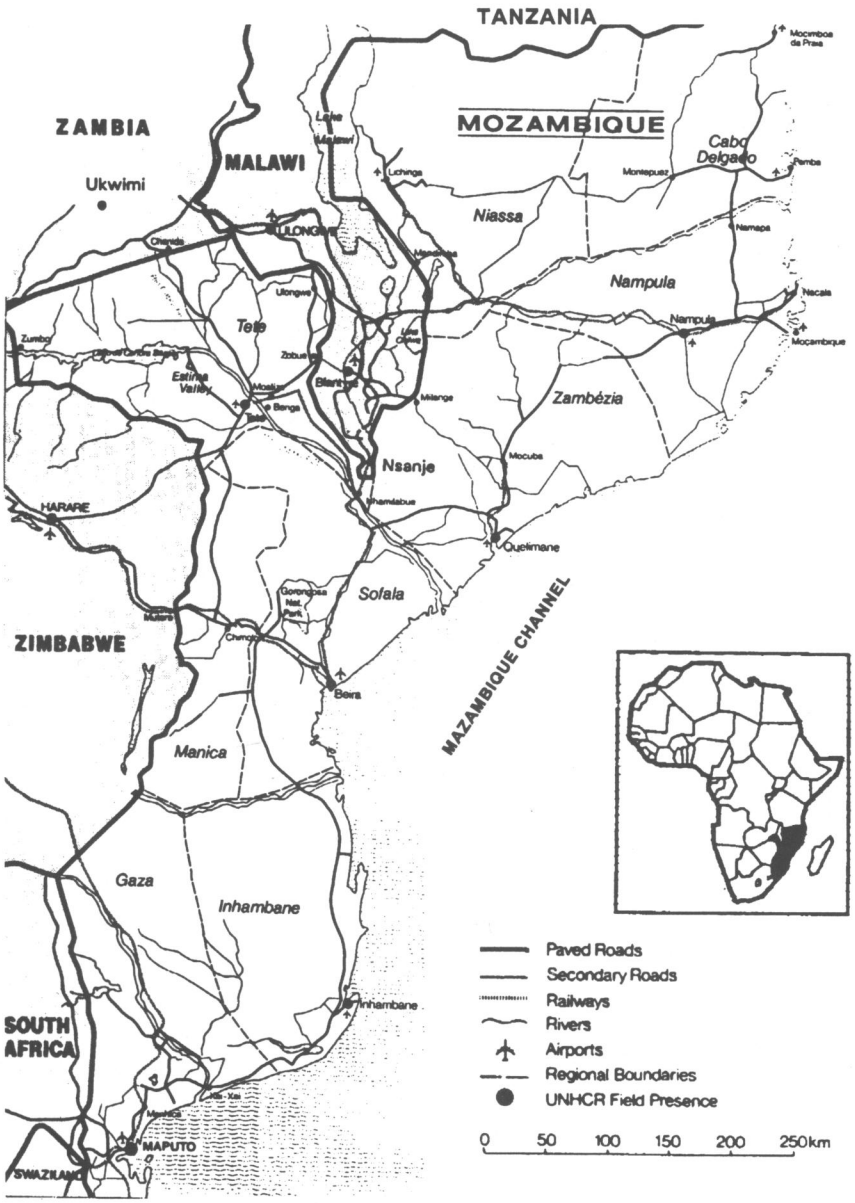

Fig.1: UNHCR Field Presence in Southeastern Africa (source: UNHCR)

With the establishment of the first refugee camps in 1987 by the Malawi Government and subsequent camps in 1988 by UNHCR, indigenous assistance was replaced. Of those refugees arriving prior to 1987, 31 percent were able to gain access to land and avoid eventual settlement in refugee camps. However, only 11 percent who arrived in 1987 or later were able to do so. Arguably, there was not enough available land to settle refugees outside of camps.

However, the fact that refugees reported receiving plots of land as late as 1992 would suggest that it was not a question of land shortages but rather the formal establishment of camps and external assistance which discouraged the local population from helping the refugees. In other words, when the government and UNHCR relieved the local population of their traditional obligation to assist the refugees, they did not.

It is often forgotten, or perhaps ignored, that Mozambican flight into southern Malawi has been occurring more or less continuously since the 1860s (Vail and White 1980; Vail 1983; Mandala 1990). Much of this immigration has been of a temporary nature, precipitated by famines and land alienation resulting from the slave trade, Portuguese policies of *chibalo* (forced labour), the independence struggle of the 1960s and 1970s, and the Rhodesia/South Africa supported RENAMO destabilization from 1978 onwards. Throughout these immigrations, refugee survival was assured by their integration within the local agricultural economy. Refugees either worked as sharecroppers or as wage labourers on estates and smallholder farms during seasonal labour shortages (Mandala 1990). Common kinship and family ties allowed access to the extensive and fertile *dambo* (marshes) along the Shire River.

Historically, and as recently as 1992, these *dambo* lands have ensured the survival of both refugees and the local population during periods of regional instability by supplementing household food production.

Lack of Awareness of Assistance Programs

The traditional practice of expanding *dimba* agriculture during periods of regional food insecurity was largely unknown to the NGOs and UN agencies. Indeed, it remained a mystery to various aid agencies just how the local and refugee populations were surviving in the Lower Shire Valley despite the total failure of the 1991/92 maize crop.

Relief agencies typically had staff shortages with limited opportunities (and inclination) to "visit the field" as they were based in urban centres far from refugee hosting areas. Local agricultural systems remained poorly understood by intervenors, and aid agencies relied on what one UNHCR field officer described as the "black-box principle."

> I know how much food is going in [to refugee camps], but I don't know how much is actually being consumed or how much is needed. I rely on the number of cases of malnourished children at the intensive feeding centres.

The "black box" approach gave the perception that food aid was adequate in Nsanje district, although the scale of economic activity by refugees in order to purchase food suggested otherwise. Ninety-five percent of refugee households engaged in income-generating activities—spending on average 70 percent of earned income on food.Food surveys by the French NGO, *Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)*, indicated that in the first half of 1992, refugees received only 84 percent of the 2,000 calories recommended (and supposedly supplied) by the World Food Program (WFP). Eighteen percent of refugee households sold or traded as much as one-third of their food ration with the local population *and other refugees* to purchase more pressing necessities like firewood, soap, fresh vegetables and small amounts of animal protein. In addition, for various reasons, 34 percent of refugee households did not receive even this small amount of food. Refugee survival was due in no small part to their own initiative and assistance from the local population.

Parallel Economies

The inability, or unwillingness, of the aid program to integrate the refugees into the local population had a more disturbing implication—the development of a *parallel economy*, outside of the traditional subsistence one, based on the collection of firewood and other natural resources, the sale of food aid, wage labour, beer brewing and other marginal income-generating activities. In all, over 90 percent of refugee households earned an income through economic activities other than NGO-sponsored projects or subsistence agriculture. This *parallel economy* extended into Mozambique—ultimately benefiting RENAMO and strengthening their political and financial base. The extent to which RENAMO was able to control an extensive and sizeable border economy based on agriculture, resource collection, and diversion of food aid raises troubling questions about the efficacy of food aid and refugee camps as a surrogate to economic development and local integration.

In one particular camp, Tengani, RENAMO could be seen openly ferrying refugees and local Malawians across the Shire River. Some of them remained in the refugee camps and collected rations, without fear of detection or harassment from camp administrators or relief staff in Malawi. Not only did RENAMO have the freedom to move within Malawi, they also controlled the distribution of the valuable *dambo* land in Mozambique and taxed all food produced, resources collected and land rented in Mozambique. They also controlled the considerable volume of border traffic[4] across the Shire River through a series of check points.

Refugee Survival Strategies and Environmental Degradation

The *de facto* exclusion of refugees from legitimate access to the environment prevented them from investing scarce capital or energy into managing those resources and contributed to environmentally-destructive practices such as uncontrolled deforestation in hilly areas, absence of fallowing, and removal of roots and tree stumps as a source of firewood. Not surprisingly, refugees showed no inclination towards planting trees in communal areas where ownership could not be assured.[5] Interestingly, the majority of refugee households had however, recently planted trees around their houses.[6] Clearly, the objectives of development and sustainable management are at odds with those of protection and control.

The poorest third of refugee households, i.e., those who did not have access to land for cultivation and did not receive adequate food rations, were most likely earn an income from the collection of firewood, bamboo, thatching, or wild foods from open access areas. In all, 42 percent of this group collected forest resources as their main source of income (see Table 1). Arguably, collecting resources was the most undesirable and insecure sources of income as it often involved a high degree of mobility, low returns on labour, and travel in insecure border areas. The privatisation of resource collection by the host population in Malawi and RENAMO in Mozambique further exposed refugees to exploitation and created an additional financial burden. Many of these resources were collected in Mozambique. Seventeen percent of all fuel wood in the refugee hosting areas of Nsanje district came from Mozambique (Smith 1993:93). Overall, the lack of economic opportunity in refugee camps and the insufficiency of food aid led many refugee households to rely on deforestation and insecure livelihoods in order to survive.

The richest third of the refugee households, i.e., those who generally had access to land and/or ample food rations, were the least likely to rely on firewood collection (only 16 percent reported it as their main source of income) and were much more active in more socially acceptable and profitable economic activities such as repair

industries, fishing, farming, etc. (see Table 1). They were able to convert food aid and marketed agricultural produce into capital investment. Interestingly, they were also more likely to engage in wage labour for the local population at higher wages than poorer groups. This would suggest that they were more "integrated" with the local population and were less subject to exploitation. Nineteen percent of refugee households located in Malawian villages relied mainly on wage labour as a source of income, compared to only 8 percent of camp refugees (Smith 1993:93).

Refugee-Host Conflict Over Resources

The official segregation of refugees through a protection policy based on encampment and isolation would lead to conflict between refugees and hosts over resources. Refugees often could not gain access to common areas since the local population restricted access. In fact, many refugee camps were situated on former common areas precisely because "no one owned the land." Wilson (1989) reported that the local population often charged for the collection of various edible plants which were formerly collected freely. This privatization of common property resources and controlled access to these areas and resources by the local population reduced the opportunity for local integration and more generally, economic development among the refugees.

The forested hills of the Kirk Range, formerly open access forests, were patrolled by both the Malawi Forest Department and villagers who routinely harassed refugees attempting to collect wood. Refugees were forced to pay up to MK 2.00 as "collection tax," although the official user fee for government forest reserves was MK 0.30. These taxes were often collected *outside of the government reserves by Malawian villagers.* Growing numbers of refugees claimed that as a result, they collected wood in Mozambique, preferring to pay a tax of "two or three sticks of wood" to RENAMO, and a transportation fee across the Shire River, rather than the high collection fees in Malawi.

The fact that it was officially illegal to transfer land to refugees for cultivation made them especially vulnerable when they entered into tenant agreements with the local population. The increased privatisation of temporary land transfers was exemplified by the finding that 58 percent of refugee households with land were paying rent or sharecropping (Smith 1993:76), a practice almost unheard of in Malawi.[9] Many of the refugees reported that they had land reclaimed by the original owners after cultivation or just prior to harvest. Wilson had similar findings (1989:73). Without legal title to the land, refugees had no claim to recourse. In fact, refugees generally had more secure access to land by cultivating inside the Mozambique border with the consent of RENAMO. In all, 9 percent of refugee households in Nsanje district cultivated land in RENAMO-controlled territory in Mozambique, and 15 percent cultivated in Malawi (Smith 1993:77). Seventy-six percent of households had no access to land. Although cultivating in RENAMO-controlled territory was potentially dangerous, and incurred considerable expenses (5 to 15 percent of harvest was paid to RENAMO in addition to transport fees across the Shire River), for many, it was preferable to the insecurity of land tenure in Malawi.

Ultimately segregation from the host population minimized the possibility of even partial membership in the host community, often in spite of common kinship and a tradition of local assistance to refugees. In Nsanje, tension and conflict with the local population over resources led to the privatization of common property resources and increased land renting. Only refugee households with surplus food rations which could be converted to capital for investment or those with access to productive land were able to attain a degree of local integration.

What Can be Done?

It is difficult to make recommendations for the program in Malawi at this late stage, however, some general recommendations should be made. First, and most important, refugee relief, as administered by the UNHCR and sister organizations, must abandon the refugee camp as a structure for administering relief and controlling refugee lives. A more integrated population would result in mitigated impact on the local resource base and increased economic integration with the local population, which in turn would have facilitated social integration.

Second, relief agencies and host governments have to accept the fact that controlling refugee population necessarily means segregating them, excluding them from local membership, and reducing their options for economic survival. An impoverished, marginalized population with no access rights to the host environment cannot and will not invest in managing that environment. If aid agencies and host governments are serious about assisting refugees and ameliorating local impacts they must seek integration as a medium-term solution.

Third, the rudiments of an indigenous relief structure often are estab-

Table 1. Main source of household income for surveyed refugees (in percent, Nsanje, 1992)

Main source of income	Poorest-third	Middle-third	Richest-third
Resource collection (no capital)	42	24	16
Cottage industries (low capital)[7]	12	8	4
Cottage industries (high capital)[8]	4	36	40
Wage labour	12	4	16
Other	30	28	24
Total percent	100	100	100

lished prior to the intervention of international relief agencies. Indigenous assistance is more environmentally sustainable and allows greater local integration of the refugee population. In light of the large size of some refugee populations, it is preferable to subsidize indigenous relief efforts, rather than replace them with costly and destructive refugee camps and administrative structures.[10] In Malawi, encouraging the local population to supply small garden plots for refugees, combined with material assistance for refugees, would allow capital accumulation, economic integration, less reliance on environmental destruction and a better diet for refugees. In return, the local population would receive labour and/or food from the refugees and common areas would be preserved.

Finally, a willingness by the UNHCR and UNDP to recognize the primacy of the environment and forest resources as a source of livelihood and a determinant of refugee welfare, would allow greater investment in environmentally sound refugee aid and development. Existing programs focus on reducing the demand for natural resources rather than critically examining the socio-economic processes causing unsustainable resource management.[11]

It is essential that aid agencies and host governments reconsider local integration in the medium-term. The segregation of refugees from the local population, through the establishment of camps and the restriction of their economic activities, has entrenched their marginality and exacerbated the unsustainable use of the environment. Rather than facilitating the integration of the refugees, "protection" as care and maintenance has marginalized them—resulting in environmental degradation, exploitation by the local population and empowerment of RENAMO. ■

Notes

1. Some of the philosophical contradictions within "charity" as practiced by international relief are explored in Harrell-Bond (1992).
2. Smith 1993:69. Official sources did not publish numbers until 1987—at that time estimating 158,300.
3. As of August 7, 1993, according to official UNHCR/WFP/Government of Malawi figures.
4. Estimated at 2,000 people per day—predominately refugees, but also a significant number of poorer Malawians (Smith 1993:81).
5. Similarly, in Zambia, it was found that Mozambican refugees invested much less in managing planted trees than did the local population (Spitteler 1993).
6. The trees most often selected were fruit and multipurpose trees such as *neem* and *sangowa*, which provided food, fodder, traditional medicine and shade. In contrast, UNDP/UNHCR sponsored afforestation schemes concentrate on *eucalyptus*, which although fast growing, has limited uses and is ecologically destructive.
7. These include economic activities with minimal capital investment (below US$ 2.50 per month) such as hoe-making, shoe repair, butchering, and "donut" making.
8. Capital investment is US$ 2.50 to US$ 10.00 per month. Includes tailoring, bicycle/sewing machine/radio repair, craft making, beer brewing, fishing.
9. A survey in 1965 showed that only 4 percent of the Malawian population in the southern region rented land (Pryor 1990:405).
10. For instance, in Swaziland, Mozambican refugees were taken in by Swazi villagers along the border. In exchange for some land and material assistance, refugees provided their hosts with labour and shared their food rations with them. After four years, the UNHCR decided to withhold rations from refugees not in camps. This led to the impoverishment of the refugees, and a reluctance by the local population to offer further assistance (RPN 1991).
11. The obsession with distributing fuel-efficient wood-stoves to refugees, for example, does not address the inadequacy of material aid to refugees or their marginalization, both of which contribute to uncontrolled deforestation. In fact, the introduction of woodstoves has not had any impact on deforestation around refugee camps.

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Refugees as a Development Resource: The case of the Mozambican refugees in Malawi

Violet Bonga

Introduction

There are three acceptable durable solutions to refugee problems: voluntary repatriation, resettlement in a third country or integration into the host community. In this paper it is argued that integration appears to be the best solution for the Mozambicans in Malawi because, although the war which forced them to flee from their homeland has officially ended, the situation there is still insecure and many refugees will remain in Malawi for some time. Considering that their country of asylum has limited resources, some effort should be made to increase agricultural potential through irrigation and reclaiming marshy areas. For development approaches such as these, we need the support of our donors. Although relief aid is crucial, it is not sufficient in places where refugees stay for extended periods. Lengthy periods of asylum require some provisions for development.

Helpless Refugees?

Refugees are often considered an economic burden—helpless victims who are unable to alleviate their plight (Harrell-Bond 1986; Mazur 1986). This image implies that the international aid agencies and the host community must provide all inputs for the "care and maintenance" of the newcomers from the day they arrive until the day they repatriate. Their perceived "helplessness" has policy implications because it calls for a top-down approach to all refugee-related issues. This paper demonstrates that, given a chance, these "incapable refugees" can actually enhance the economic development of their country of asylum.

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Survival Strategies

The survival of refugees prior to the establishment of formal assistance suggests that they are not as helpless as intervenors would want to imagine. Many have initiated various income-generating activities such as selling clay pots, doughnuts, firewood, fish or even part of their rations like flour, cooking oil and pigeon peas in order to get cash for other pressing needs (e.g., maize grinding, salt, transport and hospital fees). In addition to selling relief items, some refugees do "ganyu", i.e., various forms of wage labour like gardening, pounding maize, and even collecting the relations of other refugees left behind in Mozambique. Many rear domestic animals like rabbits, pigeons, chickens, ducks, pigs and goats. Cross-border farming is another activity carried out by refugees, particularly in Ntcheu and Dedza. Carpentry, tinsmithing, construction of other peoples' huts and "kiosks" at the market place are among popular survival strategies. All of these examples show that refugees do not enjoy being dependent and they are often keen to work and earn a living (Mwanza and Seshamani 1988).

Durable Solutions

Of the three generally accepted durable solutions to refugee influx, voluntary repatriation has only recently become a possibility with the 1992 Rome Peace Accord. (It is true that some refugees have repatriated but it appears that many did not go back to their original homeland which is a clear indication that it is not safe yet for them to go there).

The second alternative is that of resettling the refugees in a third country. Nyerere (1979) was in agreement with this proposition when he said,

> I do not believe that dealing with the problem of 3.5 million people and giving them a chance to build their dignity and their lives is an impossible task for 46 nations and their 250 million inhabitants. All refugees are individuals with a right to life in Africa. All need a chance to recreate their lives in Africa, and to regain the dignity of being self-reliant and making a contribution to the development of our continent.

This option for the Mozambicans in Malawi may not be attractive because they know that the neighbouring states are also flooded with refugees. Considering the low levels of education and rural background of the majority of the asylum seekers, resettlement would not be an attractive option because they would find it extremely difficult to find employment (Mwanza and Seshamani 1988). Resettlement in the North is not even considered as an option.

For the last option, Harrell-Bond (1986) defined integration as

> a situation in which the host and refugee communities are able to coexist, sharing the same resources—both economic and social—with no greater mutual conflict than that which exists within the host community.

This solution has some advantages in that it offers refugees a more humane alternative to camp life. They are able to lead a "normal" life because they tend to live with people of the same culture and language. It also gives them an opportunity to take control of their lives and to regain a measure of independence. Regarding this option, any planning for assistance and development must be on a long-term basis.

The major challenge for the approach of local integration for refugees is that it is easier to attract aid from donors for short-term relief than for long-term development. It is impera-

tive that donors take the issue of development to heart. In the case of Malawi, Mozambican refugees have created pressures on public goods and services which have led to the deterioration of the infrastructure and resources of the country (see Dzimbiri's paper). It follows that Malawians who have given up so much for the wellbeing of the refugees should also benefit from any refugee-related development projects introduced. Thus it is important to take a regional approach to "refugee aid and development" which benefits both the refugees and the local population.

There have been successful examples of local integration of refugees in Africa. In Tanzania, refugees from Botswana were made eligible for citizenship, and those from Rwanda, Burundi and pre-independence Mozambique achieved a high degree of self-sufficiency. These refugees shared their externally funded facilities with the local community. In Sudan, rural land settlements, rural wage-earning settlements and suburban settlements were set up—also leading to a measure of self-sufficiency.

In Zambia, a UNHCR-funded settlement for Angolan refugees was quite successful because of fertile soils and adequate rainfall. At Ukwimi settlement in Zambia, Mozambican refugees are said to have harvested up to a thousand bags of maize annually (Mwanza and Seshamani 1988). Kibreab (1987) studied rural refugee settlements in eastern Sudan where each refugee household was given ten *feddans* (4.2 hectares) of land by the host government. There were some problems associated with the project because participants were not allowed to transfer land and as a result could not practise fallowing and shifting cultivation. Other constraints included shortages of labour, high morbidity rates and the introduction of inappropriate technologies.[1]

In Malawi, some refugees from camps as well as those who have settled among the local population have acquired land. However, in contrast to the examples cited above, refugees tend to have access to land which is not fertile. The lack of fertilizer and sufficient arable land combined with the effects of the drought of 1991-92, made it impossible for refugees to become self-reliant in food production.

Strategies to Increase Local Integration

Considering the negative impacts to the local population that have resulted from hosting the refugee influx, it is important to find ways of improving the situation for both the Malawians and their refugee counterparts. The crucial question that needs to be answered is, 'how can refugees enhance the development of their country of asylum while at the same time, being regarded as equal members of the local community?' The past experience and knowledge of refugees are often an ignored source of "hidden" capabilities that could be used more fully in the relief program. One area which has realized the potential of the refugees is that of education and health. The children of the refugees are taught by Mozambican teachers—chosen by the refugees themselves. Often the health centres in refugee hosting areas have medical personnel of Mozambican origin.

In the Oxford study, we discovered that the Mozambicans were not a homogeneous group. Among them were engineers, miners, cooks and drivers, although the majority were peasant farmers. This important information was often overlooked by organizations that introduced various "development" projects among the refugee community. For instance, considerable time and funds were wasted in trying to teach the refugees how to grow vegetables, as if they had never done so before! Most of the vegetables sold along the Ntcheu-Dedza stretch of highway between the Mozambique-Malawi border are grown by refugees. The real issue was not the technical know-how of vegetable growing, but the need for inputs such as garden implements, seeds, fertilizer, a water supply and access to fertile land. At Tengani Camp, which is situated very close to the Shire River, it was shocking to see that people were unable to exploit this ample source of water for their gardens. Most of them got the water for watering and brick-moulding from the already congested water points. As a result, people never had sufficient supplies of water and harvests were poor.

In such circumstances, more ambitious attempts to increase regional agricultural production should be considered, for example, the introduction of an irrigation system. The ancient Egyptians, Sumerians, Chinese and Indians flourished because they used the Nile, Euphrates and Tigris, Yangtze and Hwang Ho, and the Indus rivers respectively to such an extent that their lives were transformed (Crowder et al. 1970). There is no reason why the Shire River cannot become the lifeblood of Malawi. Shortages of bricks and a lack of water for domestic needs were major problems in the Southern Region, despite the proximity of the Shire River. There were always long queues at different water points and women often had to line up well before dawn and even in the middle of the night. The introduction of running water to the area would benefit women especially by freeing them to engage in more productive work like income-generating activities. Clean drinking water would also reduce the spread of water-borne diseases common in refugee camps like cholera and dysentery. The cost, lack of reliability, and inconvenience of boreholes would be eliminated. Local Malawian villagers would also benefit from running water and improved health conditions.

Fish farming is another activity that could be developed by redirecting the flow of rivers. A similar project already exists in Ntcheu. In addition, food production would increase since irrigation would allow the extension of the growing season.

Apart from increased agricultural potential from irrigation there is also potential for reclaiming land by draining marshy areas and introducing afforestation programs. The Shire River

has numerous marshy places that could be developed.

In places where irrigation could not be practised, cross-border farming would be encouraged by assisting refugees with basic inputs like seeds, fertilizers and hoes. After all, people who live very close to the border area already collect firewood, thatch, medicinal herbs and construction materials from Mozambique. Apart from engaging in productive work, they would also be maintaining contact with their homeland and collecting important news about recent developments. It was interesting to note that at Mkutu Village in Dedza, it was the refugees whose granaries were full of maize while the local people had nothing. In some cases, Malawians worked refugee land in Mozambique in return for foodstuffs. Occasionally, Malawians were even given portions of land in Mozambique by their refugee neighbours in gratitude for allowing them to settle in Malawian villages.

NGO-Sponsored Projects

Refugee women were involved in NGO-sponsored projects where they learned how to sew and knit. Many of them were grateful and contented that they had learned new skills. However, these limited benefits did not continue after the end of the training period. Items produced were often of poor quality and there were limited marketing opportunities. Moreover, inputs like wool and cloth were too expensive for most refugees. A hand-weaving project would have been more appropriate, particularly in the cotton growing areas. Such an undertaking would supply more marketable products and would stimulate the local cotton market.

Many refugees complained of having nothing useful to do. An elderly refugee man at Tengani market said to me,

> My daughter, I have come from very far in order to buy fish so that I can sell them. I don't want to be idle. I'm used to doing something with my hands. Since I cannot grow my own food I'd rather engage in trading.

In order for development projects to be effective, they should not be imposed on refugees. Refugees should be given a chance to express their needs and these should be taken into account when designing development projects. If something out of the ordinary has to be introduced, clear explanations must be given to the refugees. Their opinions should be sought on the best way to operate these projects. This period of consultation needs to be done at the earliest stages of project design to increase refugee participation. During our visit to the four districts, we discovered that the people who participated in projects knew little about the finances involved. This information was concealed from them by aid workers because it was felt that the refugees were "children", ignorant of financial responsibility. Yet, when it comes to financial matters, refugees rarely waste a single tambala; they are their own accountants.

The participation of refugees in development projects is important for another reason, instilling a work ethic among children. From the interviews conducted it became clear that refugee parents were very concerned about the future of their children, fearing they would never know the value of hard work. Doing some manual work while in a refugee camp would help prepare refugees for eventual voluntary repatriation. Going home, though exciting, will not mean an easy life. Returnees will have to rebuild their society from scratch.

The promotion of primary and secondary school education for refugees is another important development activity which also provides an opportunity for local integration. However, in Malawi there were many problems in supporting this initiative. Secondary school education is very competitive in Malawi. At the time of the research, a planned secondary school for refugees in Nsanje had not yet opened. Many of the primary school children, especially those in senior classes, did not continue with their education, claiming that it was pointless without the opportunity for further studies. In Lutaya, southern Sudan, Ugandan refugees together with students from the host population managed to construct a secondary school. The agencies who at first regarded the project as premature and a luxury were "persuaded" to assist by providing them with some materials (Mazur 1986). There is no reason why such cooperation between refugee and host population cannot also be encouraged in Malawi.

The refugees should be made to feel that in their own small way they can work for the improvement of their society. However, it was sad to notice in another self-settled area that this type of cooperation did not exist. When refugees were asked to assist in projects, the local population refused to help once the refugees had started making bricks for the proposed "playground." They claimed that the services rendered by the visitors for local projects was a sign of gratitude for the land they had been offered. Obviously there is an important difference between enlisting the refugee population to work for the local population and supporting spontaneous refugee-host joint projects.

Deforestation in Malawi is a major problem that has been aggravated by the arrival of the Mozambicans. Trees are cut carelessly, and despite efforts of the Malawi Government Forestry Department to control the process, the situation continues to worsen. Many trees are cut after working hours and on Sundays when it is known that forest guards are not on duty. Both the refugees and the Malawians need to be educated on the importance of forests. Those responsible for afforestation programs should employ both groups in tree-planting and management. In places where fruit trees grow easily, refugees should be encouraged to grow their own fruit like papayas, bananas, guavas, hybrid varieties of mango. Considering that many of them have stayed in the country for over six years, by now they should be enjoying the "fruits of their labour" had afforestation projects been initiated at the beginning of the influx.

Conclusion

In this paper it has been argued that among the three durable solutions to refugee problems, integration of the Mozambican refugees into the Malawian society seems the most plausible solution for the time being, at least until peace and security is fully restored in Mozambique. Refugees are resourceful and every effort should be made to encourage self-reliance. This can best be achieved by introducing various developmental projects that will help them generate income. Donor agencies must realize that concentration on relief aid alone is insufficient when assisting refugees. However, the complex issues of refugee participation, equal membership within the host community and supporting host-refugee cooperation require further research and investigation. ■

Notes

1. Initially tractors were used, but this proved difficult because funds were unavailable for managerial costs. Eventually ox ploughs were employed instead.

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The Political Dynamics of Refugee Food Assistance in Malawi[1]

Agnès Callamard

The assistance that has been provided to Mozambican refugees in Malawi in the last five years is based on a "care and maintenance" approach. Its main objectives are to insure the protection of refugees and to implement life-saving activities. Central to the "care and maintenance" program (and indeed to all types of emergency assistance), is the delivery of food relief and of non-food items, such as blankets, clothes and cooking pots. Up until 1993, the food assistance program in Malawi was hailed by international observers as successful in that it had avoided many of the pitfalls that had characterised similar programs in other parts of the world, such as corruption, continued insecurity and transport difficulties. As of 1993, however, the feeling regarding the program was somewhat different. In the course of a couple of months, the diversion, misuse and corruption of international food assistance had become a constant subject of conversation, scrutiny, investigation and tensions in the refugee camps as well as among national and international policy-makers. The situation in and outside the areas of settlement was in fact so serious that it led to a number of arrests for corruption, resignations among Malawian staff, and possibly the murder of a camp leader in Chifunga Refugee Camp.

The diversion and misuse of food relief or any type of international assistance in Malawi and elsewhere underlines the problematic interaction between international, national, and local actors, who are competing for the control of a principal source of political and economic power. Further, the ability of local actors (both refugees and Malawians) to advance their own immediate economic interests and ultimately to impose a locally-based restructuring of "humanitarian" assistance has been facilitated by the existing international and national political uncertainty, and more importantly, mandated by the difficult economic and political reconstruction of the region.

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Food Assistance in Malawi: The Actors

From 1987 onwards, World Food Program (WFP) has been the principal donor of basic food distributed to the refugees and has been responsible for the coordination of international and internal transport, storage and handling of the items distributed as well as the milling of maize. The quantity of food distributed is, in principle, determined by the number of refugees. Since 1990, over 100,000 MT of cereal and non-cereal foodstuffs has been provided by WFP. Up to 1991, maize was purchased in Zimbabwe and Malawi but after this time, because of the 1991-92 drought in southern Africa, WFP had to rely on donations from the USA and European countries. WFP food assistance has been supplemented in the past by UNHCR special trust fund contributions for the local or regional purchase of food and for the milling costs of the maize. As of 1992, however, WFP assumed the responsibility for providing *all* food commodities, including sugar, salt and supplementary food previously purchased by UNHCR.[2]

The Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) is in charge of the distribution of food and non-food items, a fundamental function of the food relief program. Its operations, including the salary and training of staff, are funded 70 percent by the UNHCR under a

tripartite agreement (MRCS/UNHCR/Malawi government). The balance is funded by the International Federation of Red Cross Societies with a grant from the EEC. The distribution of food (and non-food) items occurs every two weeks in all 12 refugee-affected districts. All refugees presently hold a refugee card that indicates the number of persons in their family. This determines the amount of food received. The distribution is organized and supervised by employees of the MRCS with the assistance of refugee volunteers, also called "tippers." The volunteers, usually men, measure the various items with the help of a cup (for instance 1 cup = 280 grams of beans) or bucket (1 bucket = 1 kg of flour) and fill up bags that refugees bring with them. The "food basket" consists in the following items distributed per refugee per fortnight: maize flour or *ufa* (5.6 kg), beans or peas (0.84 kg); oil (1 tin per family); sugar (0.28 kg), salt (0.07 kg) and groundnuts (0.28 kg).

In theory, the ration should constitute a total of 2000 cal/day per person, a standard suggested by the UNHCR nutritionist and agreed upon by the government, UNHCR and WFP at a Food Aid Co-ordination Unit meeting. But the food monitoring administered by NGOs has revealed important discrepancies between the official food ration and the one actually received by refugees (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1: Average Caloric Ration in 1990, by Refugee Camps

Refugee Camp	Energy Content (cal.)
Changambika	1,901
Chifunga	2,034
Chiringa	1,566
Kamphata	1,643
Kunyenda	1,915
Lilongwe	1,622
Mangochi	1,630
Mankhokwe	1,693
Muloza	1,451
Ntcheu	1,609
Nyamithutu	1,780
Tengani	1,572

Source: Center for Disease Control, Review of Health and Nutrition Program in Malawi, *November 1990, p.8.*

Food Diversion and Reduction: International and Local Responsibilities

The actual reduction and/or disappearance of food has occurred at two different levels of responsibility, namely international and local. Each have struggled to control the relief program.

The international level includes the first stage of the food assistance program, that is, the international mobilization of food items. In several instances, the international organizations (and hence the donor countries) have failed to supply the Malawian program with certain items or with the required quantity. Between December 1988 and June 1989, and again in 1990, groundnuts for example have not been available for delivery to the refugees. The elimination of this item from the food basket is the direct consequence of a UNHCR budget crisis and the ensuing cuts in the Malawian program ($6 million in 1989 and 1990). These budget cuts resulted in the serious deterioration of refugee nutritional status and an outbreak of pellagra, a dermatological disease due to vitamin deficiency. Following publicising of the crisis through the French and American media by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), donations increased, allowing the partial re-introduction of groundnuts. More recently, in July 1993, WFP decided that in the up-coming months, sugar will not be included in the food basket distributed to the refugees. This decision followed the spontaneous return home of an unknown number of Mozambicans and occurred in the midst of much controversy surrounding the issue of repatriation. This decision was implicitly, if not explicitly, based on three grounds: a) to instigate "push factors" to encourage repatriation; b) to align the content of food ration in Malawi with the one in Mozambique; and c) to prevent the growth of an underground market in Malawian sugar within Malawi and the surrounding countries. The decision was indeed prompted by what was perceived by the international community in Malawi as the increasingly unmanageable abuse of the food assistance program by both refugees and local Malawians.

Diversion of food rations at the local level has been a recurrent, if not endemic problem of the food assistance program in Malawi from its onset. Up until the beginning of 1993, it was perceived by most international and national actors as a manageable problem and a "normal" state of affairs that did not jeopardise the health and nutritional status of refugees, nor threaten the overall objectives of the program. Referred to as "under-tipping" (and alternatively "over-tipping"), this "misuse" of food relief takes place during the distribution of food itself. It underlines the stratification and power-making process occurring within the refugee camp and the fundamental role played by international assistance in fostering this process.[3] The "tippers" (volunteer refugees who dole out the ration) reduce or increase the quantity of food they are in charge of distributing, depending on the identity of the refugees. In collusion with local Red Cross workers and section leaders to whom they owe their position, the tippers privilege themselves, friends, family members and section leaders at the expense of other refugees. In the course of a food distribution witnessed by the writer in the summer

Table 2: Average Caloric Ration in 1992 (cals.)

Refugee Camp	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June
Chifunga	1,701	1,832	1,978	1,728	1,643	1,526
Lisongwe	1,953	2,099	1,700	1,743	1,578	1,926
Ntcheu	1,809	–	–	–	1,774	–
Kunyenda	1,800	1,656	–	–	–	–
Mankhokwe	1,647	1,927	1,619	–	–	–

Source: MSF Monthly Report, 1992/ (from sampled camps only)

of 1992, one refugee who happened to be a section leader was first given 3 times the ration he was supposed to receive. (Because of the presence of NGO workers, his sack was then emptied and the food re-distributed). Out of 30 *ufa* rations sampled on this day, 24 were under the required amount, and for six of them more than 7 kg of *ufa* were missing.[4]

Since the first months of 1993 when spontaneous repatriation began, international organizations and NGOs in Malawi have become increasingly alarmed with the scale of food diversion and with what is being perceived as the misuse of food assistance. While under-tipping is still widely practiced, it is exacerbated by the disappearance of important stocks of food (often at the distribution points themselves) and an unprecedented underground market in refugee ration cards. Research conducted in the summer of 1992 indicated that these activities were already taking place then, but at a lower rate. From the first months of 1993 onwards, their scope has indeed increased to include refugees and Malawians who in the past could not have engaged in them, or refrained from doing so; a phenomenon that could be referred to as the "democratization of diversion." An actual quantitative assessment of the outcome of the practices is difficult, but some sources in Malawi suspect that up to 30 percent of the food and non-food items distributed were diverted. According to investigation conducted in sections of Lisongwe refugee camp by some officials, 35 percent of the families were not living in the camp any more but were nevertheless included in the food assistance program.[5] The intensification of these activities has taken place along three main avenues.

First, returnees who have returned to Mozambique near the Malawian border have kept their ration cards and return every two weeks to the distribution points in Malawi to receive food rations. This phenomenon is especially prevalent in the self-settlements of Ntcheu and Dedza where most refugee huts are now deserted. The area now resembles a ghost town, except on distribution days when returnees living in the Angonia district of Mozambique cross the border to collect food and non-food items.

Second, a number of refugees returning to Mozambique are selling, giving, or possibly being coerced into surrendering their ration cards to the remaining refugees, predominantly but not exclusively to section leaders, allowing them to increase their food rations later assigned to home consumption, sale or barter. The extent of the practice is difficult to quantify but all refugees interviewed during fieldwork in Lisongwe camp admitted "knowing somebody" who had at least two ration cards, and in some cases up to fifty. Further, in the course of investigating the intensive feeding center, 14 percent of sampled refugees were in possession of two or more ration cards.[6] To the extent that these refugees can be counted among the "vulnerable" and that refugees are, understandably, very reluctant to admit to the practice, this figure certainly underestimates the extent of the trade.

Third, local Malawians in charge of the delivery of food relief are now diverting important quantities of food from its original destination. While this type of activity did occur in the past, spontaneous repatriation has led to an explosion of such activity in three main ways. In the first place, spontaneous repatriation made the task of "counting" refugees more difficult than it already was, because of practices mentioned above and/or the vested interests of the Malawian employees and representatives of OPC (Office of President and Cabinet) to keep the official count high. For instance, in June 1993, OPC estimated that the population of Luwani camp was 35,427 individuals, compared to the figure of 22,462 compiled by the Health Surveillant Assistants (HSA) for MSF.[7] Second and consequently, the discrepancy between the official and the actual number of refugees allowed local Malawians and Mozambicans involved in the distribution process to increase the quantity diverted. Third, and most importantly, spontaneous repatriation and therefore the imminent closure of refugee camps, acted as a push factor in terms of risk-taking. In an environment dominated by unemployment, poverty, political uncertainty and the absence of economic opportunities, Malawians (from local government officials to Red Cross employees) are taking more risks than they have in the past, in anticipation of their imminent unemployment.

As this brief review underlines, the spontaneous return of refugees to Mozambique fostered conditions for the emergence and development of all three activities. Additionally, the ambiguous and delayed implementation of repatriation and reconstruction programs[8] facilitated the adoption of the strategies described above. In other words, the frequent movements of Mozambican returnees across the Malawian border and the trade of refugee cards—which has to a large extent impeded the shifting of food assistance from Malawi to Mozambique—also result from a repatriation policy based on spontaneous return and more importantly on the absence of repatriation assistance (such as the provision of transport or cash). According to the repatriation plan of action, refugees in Malawi are supposed to return to Mozambique "spontaneously" and without assistance, in contrast to those in Zimbabwe (and eventually in South Africa) for whom repatriation has been (or will be) of an organised form.

Refugees are spontaneously returning, but it is disputed as to just how many of them have done so. In July 1993, the UNHCR office in Tete estimated that in the first six months of the year, 215,000 refugees had gone back to Tete province from Malawi; a figure strongly disputed in Malawi itself. Even if the above figure of returnees is correct, this does not signify however that these refugees/returnees are not coming back to the camp in Malawi to collect their food rations, a situation that explained the major discrepancy between the figures compiled in Malawi and Mozambique. Return of refu-

gees is self-organized and follows a strategy that best suits their interests; a strategy that maximizes their chances of physical, economic, and political survival and necessitates for a number of them to challenge an identity (*refugee or returnee?*) imposed upon them by international standards by crossing the Malawian border on a bi-monthly basis.

As far as these movements are concerned, one obvious way to put an end to them would have been to distribute food assistance on the same day on both sides of the border. The absence of such a regional-based organization of food relief underlines the difficulties that international organizations have faced in coordinating their activities. The lack of coordination and cooperation among relief partners constitutes one of the most persistent problems of humanitarian assistance programs and one that has often impeded their realisation and success.

In theory, coordination mechanisms should be established at the onset of a program to allow and facilitate coordination and cooperation at three different levels: among the different agencies of the United Nations, among the implementing partners (international and national NGOs as well as national governments) and between these two.

In practice, however, one or several units of implementation tend to operate in isolation from each other, with no coordination framework in place, or one which is too frail to constrain the activities of the respective actors. On a regional basis, the problems of coordination are often made worse by communication problems and the large number of international and national agencies involved in assisting the refugees. Excessive numbers of agencies multiply the risks of duplicating relief activities and experiencing personality conflicts, as well as conflicts over funding. All such risks currently influence the politics of repatriation and reconstruction in Mozambique, along with, or because of, the climate of uncertainty regarding the maintenance of peace.

Conclusion

The diversion and disappearance of food relief in Malawi demonstrates the problematic interaction and potential conflicts between local and international interests. Most importantly, it is also a reflection of the numerous problems facing a country and in fact a whole region in the process of political and economic reconstruction. As such, these diversions do serve a "humanitarian" purpose, whether or not it was the one originally conceived and organised within international circles.

In the final analysis, one wonders whether the approaches and humanitarian purposes adopted by refugees and international actors are as dissimilar and conflicting as they appear to be in the field. The strategies of reluctance and procrastination, incessant movement and trading of assets may be grounded in the same principle for both refugees and international actors: to wait and see. As a returnee mentioned in Mozambique,[9]

> RENAMO and FRELIMO are on holidays right now. They are eating a lot and getting fat. We don't know what they will do at the end of their vacations. ■

Notes

1. This paper is based on fieldwork conducted in Malawi and in Tete province of Mozambique in the summers of 1992 and 1993.
2. UNHCR, *Country Briefing Note*, 1991, Malawi, p.4.
3. This stratification process is largely gender-based in that it privileges men at the expense of women. See Agnès Callamard, *Food is Power: The Reconstruction of the Gender Division of Labour in Refugee Camps*, a paper presented at the conference on "Gender Issues and Refugees: Development Implications," Center for Refugee Studies, Toronto, May 1993.
4. Fieldwork notes, July 1992.
5. Fieldwork notes, summer 1993.
6. Fieldwork notes, summer 1993.
7. Médecins Sans Frontières, *Monthly Report* June 1993, Malawi.
8. See Olaf Tataryn in this issue.
9. Fieldwork notes, Tete province, Mozambique, Summer 1993.

Cultural Vulnerability of Returning Refugee Children: The Mozambican Wamakonde in Tanzania

J.A.R. Wembah-Rashid

Introduction

Children are the most vulnerable group when communities are forced to flee for whatever reason. Their vulnerability results from the shock of being violently uprooted from their original environment. This process becomes even more traumatic when they are separated from their natural adult custodians and loved ones. In the African context these could be family, lineage, clan or other ethno-linguistic members, for in rural areas these are the people or groups that are directly or otherwise charged with the responsibility of acculturating children.

It is the disruption of the acculturation process by displacement which renders children vulnerable. They are forced to grow up within a culture different from their group of origin. The impact of such a situation can cause severe psychological stress to children while in the country of asylum and again when they repatriate. The case of the Mozambican Wamakonde refugees who took asylum in Tanzania illustrate this phenomenon and forms the focus of this paper.

The Wamakonde of Mozambique

In their own country, the Mozambican Wamakonde are culturally unique. Their most outstanding cultural elements were their initiation rites and body decoration. Body decoration included citification, teeth filing for both girls and boys; and piercing of the upper lip for lip-plug insertion. Initiation rites were associated with the production of masks and the performance of masked dances. When the Mozambican Wamakonde fled to Tanzania they lived among different host ethnic groups, the Wamwera, Wamakua and Wayao. Refugee migration from Mozambique to Tanzania occurred in three phases: pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence. During the first phase, small bands comprised of families or lineages fled slave raids and crossed the Mozambique-Tanzania border, settling mainly in south eastern Tanzania. Here they were absorbed by the host society and never returned to their country of origin. These migrants can be described as subordinate groups that succumbed to the superordinate culture of their hosts. Children of subsequent generations appear unaffected by the process of flight and cultural absorption.

Between the two world wars, the Portuguese started consolidating themselves by establishing a forced labour plantation economy in Mozambique. Many Mozambicans including the Wamakonde, migrated to Tanzania (then Tanganyika and Zanzibar) where some became settlers and others took employment in sisal, coconut and clove plantations. These migrants fled in family or lineage groups. However, when FRELIMO (the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique), engaged the Portuguese colonial power in a war of liberation beginning in 1966 and subsequently fought the post-independence civil war against RENAMO, cases of children fleeing their country without their natural custodians were recorded for the first time.

Initiation Rites

The most significant rite for the Mozambican Wamakonde was and still is the *ingooma*. The *ingooma* is an elaborate process of passage into adulthood combining cultural indoctrination with physical initiation. In secluded camps or initiation schools, boys are circumcised and girls have their clitoris and labia minora elongated. During their seclusion the initiates learn the history, culture, work ethics, sex education and generally all that is deemed necessary to become acceptable adult members of their society.

Similarly, body decoration and the creation of masks and masked dancing were embodied in traditional knowledge and experience that was held by a very select minority of elders. These specialized positions were not found in every family or lineage, rather each clan had its own, or by special arrangement could utilize those in neighbouring clans.

Inevitably the turmoil of flight meant that some of this cultural knowledge and experience was quite literally lost as the elders entrusted with cultural education were no longer always present within the dislocated community. Besides, on arrival in Tanzania, families did not settle in their own clusters close to each other, so it was not always possible to pull their available resources together and use them in refugee group contexts. Even during the last two phases of refugee flight, when Mozambican Wamakonde refugees were placed in organized camps, they did not live in those camps as single ethnic, clan, lineage or family groups. In fact, with the new nationalistic enthusiasm, refugee camps became, in part, grounds for inculcating the norms and values of the Tanzanian nation-state. Nonetheless, the desire to acculturate their children in the old-fashioned ways persisted. In view of the shortcomings described above, the older generation were forced to adjust, inventing new ways of bringing up their children.

Masks and Dancing

In both the male and female institutions, sculpture and figurines were

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used as teaching aids for certain phenomena or to symbolize certain beliefs. Males used the helmet masked dancer known as *lipiiko* in their language to assert and impose male superiority over women.

Mozambican Wamakonde women had their own facial masks made from baked potter's clay which depicted male characters. These items were used as teaching aids to instill among initiates, a sense of female superiority in line with the tradition of matriliny. It was also made clear to the girl initiates that real power rested with females. For, despite females apparent or perceived physical weakness, they possessed immense internal powers symbolized by their ability to sexually accommodate and subdue seemingly great and powerful males. It is females that carry both male and female children in their wombs, and it was therein that real power and authority rested.

These formerly secret and sacred elements of the symbols and paraphernalia used in initiation rites have now become objects of popular art. Male masked dancers' performances are not restricted or tied to the rites; they are now part of popular theatrical entertainment in urban areas. These instruments and institutions are providing a new message which no longer expresses the power struggle between males and females that existed in the old Mozambican Wamakonde communities. Moreover, the traditional balance of power between the sexes has been upset as men are able to assert dominance as income earners in urban areas. This new economic domination of men over women is slowly eroding the traditional ideology of matrilineal kinship and replacing it with patriliny.

Body Decorations

About three generations ago, all Mozambican Wamakonde born and initiated into adulthood in Mozambique had to have body decorations. Inasmuch as body decoration practices have gone out of fashion in many current communities and are being discouraged where they persist, they were an element of cultural identity among the Mozambican Makonde. Their disappearance among the refugees of the younger generations has therefore robbed the latter of what was considered an important part of their heritage. As refugees in Tanzania, members of the third and subsequent generations have lost this element of their culture.

Discussion

While one can not lament of the fact that these children have undergone some change in their culture, it is clear that children of third or fourth generation Wamakonde refugees grew up in an environment in which matriliny was replaced by patriliny and the fundamental features of their cultural identity were lost. Through the additional loss of specialized cultural instructors, combined with nationalistic impositions of the Tanzanian state which disrupted initiation and acculturation practices, local pressures to assimilate, the Wamakonde either abandoned or lost much of their cultural identity and social organization. Indeed, Wamakonde children were often teased and mocked by their Tanzanian peers for the physical uniqueness of their parents and older siblings. Painstakingly, they made efforts to adjust themselves to the Tanzanian norms and values and in the process abandoned important cultural features such as the Wamakonde initiation ceremony of *ingooma* and the *lipiiko* dances.

With Mozambican independence in 1975, this new generation returned to their country of origin with expectations of fully reintegrating into Mozambican Wamakonde society. Ironically, most of them were rejected by the Wamakonde there. Without the physical markings to distinguish them as Wamakonde, and their cultural evolution towards a patrilineal society, the returnees were rejected a second time as foreigners.

Reintegration to post-independent Mozambique was a difficult process for the "decultured" Wamakonde returnees. They were discriminated against by their own people in their own country, labelled "Wachagwa" which is a derogatory term for foreigner, or just "Waswahili" meaning "detribalized."

The impact of this situation resulted in many of the Wamakonde who failed to reintegrate into Mozambican society returning to Tanzania. Reactions to their return were mixed. The official government stand was to welcome the Wamakonde a second time. However, at the local village level, interpersonal relations with individual hosts were often strained and created conflict resulting in significant psychological stress for those returning to Tanzania.

The past experience of the difficulties of reintegration for returning Wamakonde has important implications for the present repatriation process. The extended period of asylum experienced by many Mozambican refugees in neighbouring countries is bound to create serious problems upon their return. In some cases, Mozambicans have lived in exile for over a decade without contact with home. Cultural differences, as well as more fundamental changes regarding gender roles and rules of social organization may have developed during the exile as a result of the influences of the host society and, ironically, international relief efforts. These differences are likely to be greatest in those refugees who fled as children and are now returning as young adults. If the Wamakonde are an accurate example, the population who did not flee is unlikely to fully extend welcoming arms toward the returnees.

In light of the positive, albeit sluggish implimentation of peace in Mozambique, these are important concerns to be considered by the ruling government and the international community. Since the peace efforts in Mozambique remain promising, these hopes should go hand in hand with concerted efforts by the Mozambican government and the international community to prepare the returnees as well as the receiving population for the long process of national reconciliation. Their homecoming should remind them less of their past experiences. ■

Official Repatriation from Malawi to Mozambique: A View From the Top

Olaf Tataryn Juergensen

Under a series of Tripartite agreements between the Mozambican Government, the UNHCR and the various countries hosting Mozambican refugees, a comprehensive repatriation and reintegration Plan of Operation has been developed. According to the Plan, several key criteria must be met before the UNHCR will sign a *Joint Declaration on the Right to Return and Reintegrate* with the Government of Mozambique (FRELIMO) and RENAMO—officially signalling that conditions are suitable for repatriation. For the UNHCR this means the creation of a climate of irreversible repatriation in which the refugees can voluntarily return under conditions of "dignity and safety." Thus, it is ultimately the UNHCR and the various government representatives who define when and where return migration *officially* takes place. Unfortunately this top-down bureaucratic approach to repatriation often breaks down in the African context because it is not sensitive to the "everyday needs" of the majority of the refugee population, namely the rural peasantry. The objective of this brief paper is to illustrate how concerns outlined in the tripartite approach have had little impact on the migration activity between Malawi and Tete Province in Mozambique.

The Tripartite Vision

Based on a working framework, agreed upon by the Tripartite Commission, several key issues must be resolved before the UNHCR will provide logistical and financial support for Mozambican repatriation from Malawi:

1. the terms agreed to in the 1992 Peace Accord are being observed and implemented, specifically; recognition of the ceasefire, demobilization of armies, and the introduction of a national demining program;
2. basic essential services ranging from sanitation and primary health care, to road reconstruction and food distribution, are available.

These concerns are important, and must be addressed as Mozambique moves into a new post-conflict phase, however, they do not appear to be problematical for the majority of refugees. Although conditions in Mozambique are still tenuous and the above preconditions have not been met, it is estimated that over 80 percent of the approximately 600,000 refugees who fled Tete Province have already repatriated. This migration is partially based on the ability of refugees to self-repatriate easily across the land border between the two countries and the fact that several NGOs and UN agencies have already moved into Tete Province (which is the place of origin for 70 percent of all refugees in Malawi). Apart from the introduction of aid and relief schemes that are designed to help stayees and displacees, the agency presence provides a degree of legitimacy to the notion that it is "safe" to return.

Repatriation and the Peace Accord

At the moment, the Peace Process has stalled because of the inability (or unwillingness) of the international community to place a priority on events in Mozambique. The delay in appointing a special country representative by the UN Security Council and the allocation of only $9.5 million of a promised $150 million for the operation of the Peace program for the first six months of 1993, has resulted in unnecessary and potentially dangerous postponements. This has led to an increased atmosphere of intransigence on the part of both RENAMO and FRELIMO. The observation of the ceasefire, the arrival of approximately 7,000 UN peacekeepers, and the drafting of election laws are promising events. Unfortunately, there are several other episodes that threaten the Peace Accord.

First, the demobilization of solders is one of the most serious pending issues. Career personnel who have served on either side of the conflict for years and who will find civilian life difficult (lack of skills and education) present a unique challenge. Already there have been strikes and demonstrations by the army demanding severance pay and compensation for being demobilized. It is expected that it will not be until the end of the year that the Government will begin discharging between 16,000 and 24,000 soldiers of its 40,000 person army. There is speculation that RENAMO has broken into sub-cells which it does not control and reports of the emergence of UNAMO (União Nacional Moçambicana) and many less organized marauding groups of "bandits" are of concern. Of those troops who are still under RENAMO control (approximately 20,000) the leadership has stated that they will not be de-armed until after the general elections, which have been delayed until the fall of 1994. Several ceasefire violations have been reported. The Government has accused RENAMO of continuing troop and arms movements; while RENAMO has countered with allegations that the Government has continued to push into RENAMO-held territory.

Second, the issue of land mine awareness and eradication is of concern to the UNHCR and local government officials. There is a master plan,

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which is to be organized under a Tripartite Subcommittee of the Cease-Fire Commission (CCF), which calls for the training of approximately 2,000 former RENAMO and FRELIMO soldiers who will conduct the actual demining exercise. This program was to be fully operational before the refugees started to return, however, as of August 1993 both training and demining had not commenced. [Editors note: *UN Special Envoy for Mozambique, Aldo Ajello, stated on September 3 that demining had begun in Tete Province with 66 demobilized soldiers (Foreign Broadcaster's Information Service. Sub-Saharan Africa. 1993(171)*]. The majority of land mines are concentrated in specific areas such as Mutarara and Mandimba, while the border regions of Dedza-Angonia, Ntcheu-Tsangano, and Mwanza-Moatize for example, have had few reported mine incidents. However, as noted earlier, there has been a dramatic rate of repatriation over the past several months despite the fact that the demining program is behind schedule.

Third, basic infrastructural construction and rehabilitation to accommodate returnees has also been highlighted as a precondition for successful return. The tenet that refugees must have access to basic social services (health care, education, and roads) is valid, but should fall under the auspices of development agencies that have a mandate for such long-term project coordination. If refugees are returning *en masse*, as is the case in Tete Province, they should be supported through the provision of basic tools and household goods, seeds, pre-departure immunizations, food, cash grants and transportation for the sick and aged. Currently the UNHCR and the NGO community in Tete is attempting to provide some primary health, material and nutritional assistance, however they are unable to cope with the magnitude and pace of return.

Recognizing Priorities

The refugee relief program in Malawi has access to more resources then its counterpart in Mozambique. Even though there has been a dramatic shift in the refugee population, there has not been a corresponding movement in the emergency assistance effort. Instead of transferring financial and logistical programs to Mozambique (as the majority of NGOs have done) displacees are forced to return to Malawi for their bimonthly food distribution. Some refugees travel for several days, which has a disruptive impact on their ability to rebuild their homes and prepare the lands for the upcoming growing season. Given the agrarian background of the displaced population, all efforts should be made to help the refugees become productive land holders. Any further delays in reallocating resources could hamper the short-term ability of the country to begin the difficult process of rehabilitation and reconciliation. ■

Refuge-Host... *Continued from page 26*

headquarters were the first to get jobs when the settlement was established and are still renting houses to supplementary staff. Women brew beer for the workers and sell sugar-cane to school children.

In Ukwimi, Zambia, refugee-host relationships would have been much better if post-emergency assistance, principally donations which occur after the official two year assistance period, had been distributed equally to refugees and their hosts. The local integration of refugees is partially impeded by the agencies themselves who excessively segregate refugees from their hosts. ■

Notes

1. There are no official statistics of Mozambican refugees in South Africa because they are considered "illegal aliens" and subject to deportation. In 1992, the country deported 61,000 Mozambicans. (see World Refugee Survey 1993:72).

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Refugee-Host Interactions: A Field Report from the Ukwimi Mozambican Refugee Settlement, Zambia

Véronique Lassailly-Jacob

Mozambican Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

As a result of the civil war which has been raging in Mozambique for 16 years, an estimated 1.7 million Mozambican people have sought refuge in neighbouring countries and more than 3.5 million have been internally displaced (World Refugee Survey 1993:67). At present, Mozambique has the largest registered refugee population on the African continent. By the end of 1992, 1.1 million Mozambicans had found asylum in Malawi, more than 300,000 in South Africa[1] and the KaNgwane, Gazankulu, Lebowa and KwaZulu homelands, about 264,000 in Zimbabwe, 72,000 in Tanzania, 25,000 in Zambia and 20,000 in Swaziland (ibid.). Local integration in the country of first asylum has been the only durable solution for these long-term refugees, most of them having a rural background. Rural refugees either spontaneously settle in border areas or are channelled towards assigned areas where they are regrouped, registered and assisted.

Self-settled Mozambican refugees are found in border areas in Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. According to World Refugee Survey (1993), up to 130,000 Mozambicans have settled spontaneously in the Zimbabwean countryside. They are also found in the homelands of Gazankulu, KaNgwane, Lebowa and Kwazulu. Self-settled refugees create small villages or settle among the local population. They manage to integrate and survive with the assistance of local people, by gaining land from local chiefs, trading or by obtaining agricultural wage labour. They form the hidden majority of Mozambican refugees and African refugees in general: "hidden" because host governments try to avoid this uncontrolled kind of settlement for security and political reasons. On the one hand, host governments need statistics about the number of refugees entering into their territory in order to satisfy requirements for international assistance, while on the other hand, they are afraid of insecurity erupting along their borders. In 1987, RENAMO carried out cross border raids against refugees in Zambia and Zimbabwe, killing or kidnapping refugees and local people. For these reasons, host governments usually decide to regroup refugees in camps or agricultural settlements away from the border. By law, all refugees entering Zambia must declare themselves to the police and be taken to a transit camp or an organized settlement.

Assigned areas are divided into reception or transit centres, "care and maintenance camps" (Callamard, this issue) and agricultural settlements. Refugees do not have access to adequate farmland for crop production (except some vegetable gardens) and survive mainly on food supplied by the World Food Program. They are heavily dependent upon aid agencies for all of their basic day-to-day needs and develop a "dependency syndrome."

Agricultural settlements appeared in Africa as a form of UNHCR assistance in the early 1960s. These represent the other type of organized settlement for refugees. Based on the model of land settlement schemes, they are supposed to promote refugee self-sufficiency and local integration. Scheme-settled refugees receive plots of arable land, tools and seeds which enable them to become self-reliant. Agricultural settlements have received considerable attention and funding from the international community and many local and international NGOs. Host countries provide the agricultural land and administrative services to run these settlements. Today, three agricultural settlements are still operating for Mozambican refugees; Likuyu in Tanzania, Ndzevane in Swaziland, and Ukwimi in Petauke district, Zambia.

Ukwimi Mozambican Refugee Settlement

Ukwimi is an agricultural settlement established in 1987 in the Eastern province of Zambia, 70 km north of Petauke and more than 100 km from the border. Refugees receive relief assistance in addition to 2 hectares of arable land, tools, seeds and other agricultural inputs in order to become self-sufficient. Ukwimi was first established to regroup the Mozambican refugees who had spontaneously settled in the border area following the 1987 RENAMO raids. At that time, new waves of refugees were arriving in Ukwimi, fleeing the war but also driven by drought and famine. The last refugees arrived in March 1993. At the time of research (summer 1993), there were 25,600 refugees settled in 73 "villages" scattered over 310 square km. Most refugees at Ukwimi are peasant farmers coming from the Zambia-Mozambique border area and from northern Tete Province.

Ukwimi was implemented under a tripartite agreement between UNHCR, the government of the Republic of Zambia and Lutheran World Federation (LWF). In addition, several other implementing partners have been operating in Ukwimi. This settlement is carefully planned and managed. It is organized in two headquarters (Ukwimi A and B), each of them super-

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vising a number of satellites, (four satellites under Ukwimi A, three satellites under Ukwimi B), that in turn serve 10 to 12 refugee villages each. Refugees benefit from extensive infrastructural investment and development assistance, including seven primary schools, clinics, good roads, clean water, markets, shops, grinding mills, warehouses, farming programs, income-generating activities, skill-training programs, community services, poultry farms and piggeries.

The two communities are related to each other. Both local Zambians and a large number of the refugees belong to the Chewa and Nsenga ethnic groups. They speak the same language and share a common culture and set of traditions. Seven Zambian villages were already settled inside the settlement boundaries when the first refugees arrived in Ukwimi in 1987. Their population was estimated at 1,000 people (Black *et al.* 1992). The authorities decided not to remove them but to include them in the settlement programs.

Each Zambian village was given a demarcated territory including its own fields and was not allowed to cultivate areas outside of these new boundaries as it had in the past. Today, there are nine Zambian villages and five "hamlets" inside the refugee settlement boundaries. Two additional Zambian villages moved from outside the settlement boundaries and reclaimed traditional lands within the settlement boundaries. The movement of Zambian villages into the refugee settlement was motivated by a fear of losing access to traditional lands through the expansion of agriculture by the growing refugee population on the one hand, and the attraction of the newly constructed infrastructure of the settlement on the other hand. As for the Zambian "hamlets", they were mainly established by city leavers who had acquaintances in the surrounding villages. Although there were no available statistics concerning the number of local Zambians presently living inside the settlement, I estimated that there were well over one thousand.

Both Chambers (1986) and Hansen (1990) note that local people benefit from refugees' presence because refugees provide a market and a supply of cheap labour. Refugees are therefore resources for the economic growth and development of the host districts. As far as the self-settlement option is concerned, only two partners interact, refugees and their hosts. In the case of the scheme-settlement option, another important partner has to be added, the planners. They play a major role in planning and designing the site, reallocating natural resources, distributing assistance and introducing infrastructural services, farming programs, income-generating activities, skill-training programs, community services, etc. Interactions between scheme-settled refugees and their hosts cannot be understood without observing planners' actions.

Purpose of My Research

This past summer (1993), I spent a month in Ukwimi and conducted interviews with randomly selected men and women, mainly local Zambians (25) but also refugees (6), agency workers and local government officials (10). The main objectives of my study were to analyze the impact of the refugee settlement on the local people as well as the interactions which developed between refugees and their hosts. First, I tried to understand what was the situation of the area in terms of local economic activities, ecology and infrastructure prior to the refugee settlement. Then, I considered the changes brought about in the local population's way of life as a result of the refugee settlement.

In addition, I analyzed refugee-host interactions, asking questions about social relationship, land tenure, labour, bartered or marketed produce and other economic exchanges. Finally, a last set of questions helped me to understand how the local people perceived their future when the refugees returned to Mozambique. This brief field report will only mention some comments about host-refugee interactions and assistance.

Some Comments on Host-Refugee Interactions

"Relish" supplements the maize porridge called *nsima* which is the main course of the two daily meals. Relish is an important part of traditional meals and it improves the nutritional quality and variety of the diet. It can consist of edible leaves, vegetables, mushrooms, fruit, meat, fish, honey, insects, rodents, caterpillars, or tubers, etc. "Bush foods," or wild resources, represent the main sources of relish which are also partly cultivated on farmlands.

Before the refugees arrived, the local people used to hunt, fish and gather these bush foods. These products were used for both home consumption and marketing. Local people also used to grow pumpkins, beans, okra, sweet potatoes and cassava in their upland fields, and collect edible leaves for making relish. From the fruit trees growing in their villages, they ate or traded mangos, papayas, guavas, and bananas, in addition to rearing small livestock such as chicken, goats and pigs. A few households also had small dry-season gardens in valley areas where they grew bananas, sugar cane and some vegetables. However, these gardens could not be extended because of the abundant wildlife (elephants, monkeys or bush pigs) which often destroyed crops that were not adequately guarded.

Upon arrival, refugees were given food rations and a "food basket" consisting of maize, beans, cooking oil, salt and sugar which was distributed to each household for the following two years. Refugees typically tried to diversify this monotonous diet by using what I call three "food research strategies." The first consisted of collecting relish from the natural environment. The most populated areas inside the settlement rapidly suffered from the depletion of these natural resources.

> Resource competition and the resultant shortage of gathered products has affected Zambian incomes through reducing the availability of these products for sale and has generally had negative impact on diet

and general wellbeing (Sullivan 1992:20).

As a consequence, local people now travel far outside of the settlement to collect bush foods. Collecting wild resources, usually a female-dominated activity (except collecting honey and hunting) is now a male-dominated activity because of the long walking distance involved. Local women have lost this traditional source of income.

Bush fires were traditionally set in August when all crops had been harvested and stored and wild grass had been collected for thatching. Now, refugees set bush fires early in June or July in order to catch rodents. These early bush fires threaten the local population's maize which remains in the fields until transport is available. In contrast, refugee maize is collected very early because refugee villages have been provided with ox-carts by LWF. Depletion of wild resources and the premature setting of bush fires by refugees has led to bitterness and resentment from the local population. Local Zambians accuse the refugees of improperly managing the environment.

> They chop down the trees we worship, they chop down very old trees along the streams in order to extend their garden when these trees helped prevent evaporation with their shade. They collect all the bamboo and reeds at one place, they use chemicals to kill fish and wash their clothes in the stream, polluting the water we drink, they light bush fires too early to hunt mice and rats when our maize is still in the fields. (Local Zambian in Ukwimi settlement).

In other words, they behave as outsiders who do not manage an environment that does not belong to them.

The second "food research strategy" consisted of getting relish from the local Zambians by barter or labour exchange. Refugees exchanged cooking oil, salt, clothes and shoes for sweet potatoes, green vegetables, chicken and fruit. Piecework for Zambians included digging and weeding in exchange for food items. Refugee girls often pound or shell maize for Zambian women in exchange for mangos or other fruits. As a result, many Zambians, mainly the wealthier people who could afford paid labour, were able to extend their upland farms by using refugee labour.

The third "food research strategy" consisted of growing foods on available farmland. In addition to their upland farms, refugees looked for extra land to cultivate and developed dry season vegetable gardening in valley areas called *dambo* land. Many refugees asked permission from the Zambian people to have a garden plot. While refugees have been given plots as well as seeds and fertilizers for free or in exchange for a proportion of the subsequent harvest, local people were not included in the distribution of agricultural inputs. As a result, local people are very resentful of having to buy vegetables grown on their own land by refugees who are highly assisted. Increasingly, there are disputes between refugees and Zambians over *dambo* land, particularly in the northern part of the settlement where the refugee population density is high.

Some Comments About Assistance and the 1991-92 Drought

In theory, after two years, refugees are supposed to be self-sufficient and at that time are cut off from food and agricultural assistance. In practise however, refugees are cut off from food assistance but not from agricultural inputs and support. Refugees continue to receive agricultural inputs like fertilizers and seeds on a credit basis indefinitely. Local people were complaining in these terms:

> We understand that refugees had nothing when they arrived here and they should be helped and assisted and we agreed to give them land to feed them. But we see that now many refugees make a lot of profit from our land. They are now growing tobacco, cotton, sunflowers, vegetables and they are provided with seeds and fertilizers when we get nothing.

After two years, refugees are still refugees, having free access to medical care (free hospital fees) and schools (free uniforms, free boarding fees, free examination fees) while local people have to pay.

The 1991-92 drought disrupted this policy of refugee assistance and highlighted the disparities between the local and refugee population. In the Ukwimi area, the drought was not due to inadequate rainfall but to the lack of rain in the critical months of January and February. When the rains resumed in March, it was too late to save the crops. Hosts and refugees were equally affected by this terrible drought.

The drought response program was not the same for refugees and local people, however. Refugees received maize, beans, fertilizers and groundnut seeds (on loans), and drought-resistant seeds like sorghum and cassava sticks, while the Zambian people received only maize. Some of the poorer Zambians actually went to work on the refugee fields to get groundnut seeds for the next season.

Conclusion

Economic differentiation between households is broader in the refugee community than in the Zambian community. A number of refugees were very successful as farmers or woodcarvers and invested their profits in shops and grinding mills. All private shops and grinding mills in the settlement were owned by refugees, and in addition it was observed that many refugees had bicycles, watches, and radios. Despite the fact that some refugees have a higher income than the local Zambians, they continued to be assisted because of their refugee status, while the local population remained unassisted.

Undoubtedly, the host community benefits from the improved infrastructure and services but those who benefit the most are the headmen and the already wealthy people and those who live near the settlement's headquarters. Being in charge of distributing farmland, headmen offer land to refugees and staff people. In return, they receive many presents as a token of appreciation. Those who live near the

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