

**PERCEIVED SECURITY THREATS AND SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION:
THE CASE OF KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP, KENYA**

BY

EMMANUEL MALUAL MAKUACH

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS
DEGREE IN FORCED MIGRATION**

MOI UNIVERSITY

2025

DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in this or any other University. No part of this project may be reproduced without permission of the author and/or Moi University.

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Emmanuel Malual Makuach

MS/MIG/5450/21

Declaration by the Supervisors

This thesis has been submitted with our approval as University Supervisors.

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Dr. Bramwel Matui

Department of History, Political Science & Public Administration,

School of Arts and Social Sciences

Moi University

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Dr Paul Opondo

Department of History, Political Science & Public Administration,

School of Arts and Social Sciences

Moi University

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Mother Mary Nyibol and most importantly my friends for their support and believing in me.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I take this opportunity to thank the Almighty God for guiding me to the completion of this thesis. I am greatly indebted to my supervisors for their professional guidance, advice, and unlimited patience in reading through my drafts and suggesting workable alternatives. My profound appreciation goes to Dr. Bramwel Matui and Dr. Paul Opondo who worked tirelessly with me. I would also like to thank all those who have contributed in one way or another towards the completion of this study.

ABSTRACT

Kakuma Refugee Camp, one of the largest in Kenya, has increasingly been perceived as a potential security threat here conceptualized as criminality, violence, and destabilization. This study explores how security factors such as prolonged displacement, and cultural fragmentation contribute to this perception. The camp's complex social dynamics often strain relations with host communities and local authorities. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing informed and sustainable security and integration policies. The specific objectives were: to examine how illegal small arms and light weapons are transited from their international destination to Kakuma Refugee camp; to assess the mobility of illegal small arms and light weapons between the refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp and the host communities; to determine the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of refugees, and; to assess the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of the host community. The study used social constructivism paradigm; securitization theories and social disorganization Theory of Crime, and adopted a within case study research design- Kakuma was purposively chosen because it is characterized by weak institutions, poverty, and broken social networks that are predicted by the social disorganization Theory of Crime as predisposed to insecurity. The study targeted knowledgeable inhabitants in the refugee camp and those living near the Kakuma refugee camp. The sample size was 27 knowledgeable interviewees which were arrived at through snowball sample design. The sample size was distributed as follows: (4) refugees' representatives, (5) Host community within the camp (5) NGOs, (7) host community outside the camp and (6) security personnel. An interview schedule was used to collect data. The data was analyzed by generating patterns of themes for each objective. The findings revealed that: For the first objective, illegal weapons were smuggled into the camps through the use of arms smugglers and criminal gangs. For the second objective, the illegal arms circulated between the refugee camps and the host communities through networks that the refugees created with the host community; it also did so through links with security personnel and with outsiders in the neighboring countries. For the third objective, refugees narrated that Kakuma refugee camp faced insecurity due to hostilities amongst refugees of different ethnic backgrounds that reside within the camp. For the fourth objective, the host community and government officials thought that due to social disorganization therein, Kakuma refugee camp poses a threat to the host community; the respondents stated that the host community contributed to this security matrix. The study concludes that Kakuma Refugee camp is vulnerable to infiltration of arms from outside the country and from the host community; the camp also contributes to insecurity in the host community- and the contextual factors being social disorganization that predispose the communities to criminality and violence. The study recommends that there should be increased border controls and anti-corruption efforts that target the officers in the camp and at the borders. Additionally, the participation of the host community and refugees in decision-making concerning illegal arms can reduce the proliferation of illegal arms. Besides, the study recommends more resources for the welfare of refugees and the host community; this would reduce the economic disparities between the two communities- and social dislocation generally.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURE	x
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF CENTRAL TERMS.....	xi
OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES	xii
ABBREVIATIONS	xiii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview.....	1
1.2 Background of the Study	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	8
1.4 Broad Objective	9
1.4.1 Specific Objective	9
1.5 Research Questions.....	9
1.6 Justification of the Study	10
1.7 Significance of the Study	11
1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study.....	11
1.8.1 Scope of the Study	11
1.8.2 Limitations of the Study.....	11
CHAPTER TWO	13
LITERATURE REVIEW	13
2.1 Introduction.....	13
2.2 Mobility of SALWs across International Borders to Refugee Camps.....	13
2.3 Transfer of Illegal Arms between Refugee Camps and the Host Communities	21
2.4 The Nature of Refugee Perspectives.....	21
2.5 Theoretical Framework.....	26
2.5.1 Social Disorganization Theory of Crime	26
2.5.2 Securitization Theory	28

2.6 Conceptual Framework.....	31
CHAPTER THREE.....	33
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	33
3.0 Overview.....	33
3.1 Study Area - Kakuma Refugee Camp.....	33
3.2 Target Population	34
3.3 Research Design	34
3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Design.....	35
3.5 Tools of Data Collection	36
3.5.1 Secondary Data	37
3.6 Pilot Study	37
3.7 Data Analysis	37
3.8 Validity of Data.....	39
3.9 Ethical Considerations	41
CHAPTER FOUR	42
DISCUSSION DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	42
4.0 Introduction.....	42
4.1 Illegal Weapons Transit from Outside the Country to Kakuma Refugee Camp....	42
4.2 Mobility of SALWs between Refugees and the Host communities	48
CHAPTER FIVE	54
DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDING	54
5.0 Introduction.....	54
5.1 Nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the Security Responses of the Refugees	54
5.2 Refugees securitization moves in Kakuma.....	66
5.3 Nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp- the Host community Perspectives.....	68
CHAPTER SIX	83
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	83
6.1 Introduction.....	83
6.2 Summary.....	83
6.3 Conclusions of the Study	90
6.4 Recommendations.....	91
5.5 Suggestions for Future Studies	92
REFERENCES	94
APPENDICES	97

Appendix 1: Interview Schedule.....	97
Appendix 2: Map of the Study Area	98
Appendix 3: NACOSTI Research Permit	99
Appendix 4: Research Permit From UNHCR.....	101
Appendix 5: Plagiarism Awareness Certificate.....	102

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Community and Maintenance of Behaviour	28
Table 3.1 the Distribution of Interviewees	36
Table 4.1 Narrative of themes on factors facilitating transit	43
Table 4.2 Recent Criminal Activities in Kakuma Refugee Camp.....	48
Table 4.3 Narratives on the themes on mobility of SALWs	49
Table 4.4. Recent spates of cattle raids between the Turkana and neighbours.	51
Table 4.5 Recent Highway Robberies by the Turkana and the Pokot Bandits.....	52
Table 5.1 Nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp- Refugee Perspectives.....	55
Table 5.3 Resolutions to other conflicts	68
Table 5.4 Nature of Kakuma- the host community Perspectives	70
Table 5.5 The Securitization Moves by the local community.....	80

LIST OF FIGURE

Fig. 2.1 Conceptual Framework.....	31
------------------------------------	----

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF CENTRAL TERMS

Discursive insights: This refers to the knowledge or information gained through the analysis of the narratives or discourse of individuals or groups involved in the issue of refugees and security threats in the Kakuma Refugee camp and Northwest Turkana, Kenya. It includes the perceptions, beliefs, values, and attitudes of the people towards the issue.

Illegal weapons transit: This refers to the movement of light and small arms across borders or within the country without proper documentation or authorization by the relevant authorities.

Light and small arms: This refers to firearms that are easy to carry, conceal and operate such as handguns, pistols, and rifles with a calibre of less than 20mm.

Security narratives: This refers to the stories, experiences, and perceptions of refugees and host communities with regard to the security situation in and around the Kakuma refugee camp.

Security threats: This refers to any perceived or actual risks or challenges to the safety, well-being, and stability of individuals, communities, or states. In the context of refugees in the Kakuma Refugee camp and security threats in Northwest Turkana, Kenya. It also refers to any factors that may pose risks or challenges to the safety and well-being of both refugees and the host community, including but not limited to the proliferation of illegal weapons, cross-border movements, human trafficking, and the potential for conflict and violence.

OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

Proliferation of illegal arms: The key indicator was the number of reported cases of shootings, threats with firearms, or other firearm-related crimes within the camp.

Firearm Recoveries and Seizures by Security Agencies: Indicator included the frequency and quantity of illegal firearms confiscated by police, UNHCR security, or other agencies operating in or around the camp.

Perceived Availability of Firearms Among Camp Residents: Key indicator included survey results or intelligence reports indicating how easy it is for individuals to access or purchase firearms in the camp.

Indicator of Insecurity: Regular mentions of theft, assault, and armed confrontation highlighted a breakdown in law and order within the camp. Also, widespread Fear and Restricted Movement categorized as psychological insecurity and mobility constraints. In addition, repeated references to clashes between communities pointed to armed group affiliations and underlying ethnic divisions exacerbated by access to weapons.

Link between Interview Narratives and Broader Security Dynamics: here micro-references to insecurity like “We hear gunshots almost every week no one feels safe anymore.” Is linked to Security Dynamic which Indicates persistent small arms presence and weak law enforcement; this could also reflect broader regional challenges in arms control. Also, statements like “Most of the fights between communities end up with someone being shot or seriously injured.” Are linked to Security Dynamic by demonstrating how arms fuel intercommunal violence, mirroring patterns of militarization in other conflict-affected refugee regions.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACSS	African Centre for Strategic Studies
AMISSOM	African Mission in Somalia
ASSN	African Security Sector Network
AU	African Union
CGD	Centre for Global Development
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CT	Counter Terrorism
CVE	Counter Violent Extremism
DRA	Department of Refugees Affairs
EAC	East African Community
EAC	East African Community
FATF	Financial Action Task Forces
G. D. D P	Garissa District Development Plan
GOK.	Government of Kenya
H. O. A.	Horn of Africa
ICG	International Crises Group
IDPLS	Internal Displaced Persons
IDPLS	International Authority on Development
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
KAM	Kenya Association of Manufacturers
KDF	Kenyan Defence Forces
KHNNH	Kenya Human Rights Commission
KIPPRA	Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis

KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PACIN	Pan African Citizens Network
RCK	Refugee Consortium of Kenya
SALWs	Small Arms and Light Weapons
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter introduced this study. The components examined are: the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, justification and significance of the study and scope of the study. This gave a general overview of the study expectations and the general direction the study intended to take.

1.2 Background of the Study

Security threat refers to actual or perceived risks to peace, safety, and stability that originate from, or are associated with, the camp and its surroundings. These threats can be categorized into several dimensions such as ethnic and inter-group conflicts among refugees from different countries or communities, criminal activities such as theft, assault, gender-based violence, or drug trafficking and radicalization and extremism — potential recruitment into terrorist or militia groups among others. The most transitional threat Kenya faces today include terrorism drug smuggling corruption small arms and light weapons proliferations in the refugee camp.

According to the Kenya Police crime statistics 2018, a number of urban, Refugees in the camp Kenya have joined criminal Networks that are involved in petty crimes smuggling of people robbery smuggling of commercial goods illegal arms trade terrorism which has led to the government intention of closing up the refugee camps in Kenya these 585.363 concern (UNCHR 2019) out of these, 20.000 are stateless people 550506. Are refugees and 32.751 are asylums seekers (UNCHR ,2019) The majority of refugees are from Somalia and South Sudan but also from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Rwanda and Burundi to (lesser extent 2019).

Social disorganization refers to the breakdown or absence of social institutions, norms, and community cohesion, which weakens the ability of a community to maintain order and prevent crime. In the Kakuma context, it is understood through several interrelated factors for instance: lack of social cohesion; diverse ethnic, national, and cultural groups coexist in the camp with no shared identity or unifying social norms, distrust and rivalry among groups (e.g., tribal or national conflicts replicated within the camp) undermine collective community action, weak formal and informal institutions; informal social controls (e.g., elders, community leaders) may be weakened due to displacement, formal governance and security systems (police, administration (UNCHR 2019). UNHCR coordination) may be overstretched, under-resourced, or poorly integrated and poverty and socioeconomic train, unemployment, poverty, and idleness—especially among youth—create conditions for crime, substance abuse, and gang formation and mobility and transience: the camp population is often highly mobile, with newcomers, asylum seekers, or returnees constantly arriving or leaving.

Kenyan Government security agencies hold responsibility for law enforcement but also operate alongside private security companies hired to secure the humanitarian compounds. Security reports reveal a wide range of crimes occurring in the camp – sexual violence and rape, domestic violence, banditry, theft, intercommunal clashes, organized crime, drug abuse, boot-legging, traffic violations and disturbance of public order – but many refugees see Kenya’s police itself as a source of insecurity, corruption and extortion (Lind, Mutahi, & Oosterom, 2017).

A study by the Centre for Global Development (CGD, 2021) revealed that while there is a potential for refugee camps to become a source of insecurity, this risk can be managed through effective governance and cooperation. This implies that insecurity in

refugee camps can be managed through collaboration and generally participatory approaches- that straddle, the local, the national and the international community. A related study by the Brookings Institution (2019), averred that refugee camps can be a source of insecurity because of processes such as radicalization and recruitment by terrorist groups from those camps; however, the authors stated that host countries can mitigate this risk through effective border management and intelligence sharing.

The study's argument on the role of radicalization and recruitment by terrorists implies the presence of social dislocation which is what this study seeks to study. The study, i.e., Brookings Institution (2019) recommended that host countries should be empowered to manage their boundaries to be able to nab the illicit transit of small arms and light weapons [SALWs] Similarly, a study by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in 2020 found that refugees do not necessarily pose a security threat- because before refugee camps are established, there are usually security challenges in host communities. The study instead posits that the presence of refugees only amplifies the antecedent security challenges in host communities (Jacobsen, 2002). The study recommended that refugees should be integrated into the host community- and that the needs of both the refugees and the host community should be met to reduce the risk of conflict between refugees and host communities (NRC, 2020).

This finding appears to mirror the recent developments in the practice of refugee camps- a practice that was already underway. For instance, there is evidence in Kenya of the implementation of that earlier on: in 2016, Kalobeyi Integrated Settlement scheme was introduced to integrate the refugees with the host community; the settlement was also meant to decongest Kakuma refugee Camp (UNHCR, n.d). But more importantly such a practice appears to address the deficits in international ethics

on how to treat the refugees and the host community that hosted refugees- the refugees were given access to better life chances than the host community- which raised ethical issues. Also, the refugees came with some externalities like environmental damage, food scarcity, job losses, and crime which adversely affected the local community. Integrated settlements could thus address those challenges by making the host communities beneficiaries of the international humanitarian support. But this supposition is just idealistic because integrated arrangements could sample more the refugees for support and thus still engender inequalities between the refugees and the host community. Also, there is a possibility that not all members of the host community would be incorporated in the integrated settlement schemes because of scarcity of resources.

A study in the Middle East by the International Crisis Group (ICG) in 2021 found that refugee camps could become a breeding ground for radicalization and recruitment of combatants by terrorist groups. This would especially be the case when refugees are not provided with adequate education and employment opportunities. The study recommended that collaboration should be undertaken by host governments and international organizations to address the needs of refugees in camps to reduce the motivation of refugees to join terrorist groups (ICG, 2021). This study does not address the concerns of the host communities that was raised by the previous author.

Additionally, a study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2019 revealed that refugee camps can be predisposed to recruitment by organized criminal groups; such recruitment could worsen insecurity in host communities. The study recommended that preventive measures against organized crime in refugee camps should be put in place; this implies that security measures should be enforced

(UNODC, 2019). This study is relevant for this study since refugee camps can be sources of diverse deviance-including crimes.

A study by the African Security Sector Network (ASSN) in 2018 revealed that refugees just top up on security challenges in Kenya. Such an assertion is valid in Kenya in an area where Kakuma refugee camp is located. The Turkana community- where Kakuma Refugee camp is located- is a pastoralist community. This community has experienced insecurity episodes with the neighboring Pokot and Karamojong' communities long before 1992 when the refugee camp was established. Similarly, the Turkana community has had clashes with the communities that straddle the Kenya, South Sudan and Kenya-Ethiopia borders. The ASSN (2018) study recommended that the Kenyan Government and the international community should improve the socio-economic conditions in refugee camps; the study also recommended that refugees be integrated into the local community (ASSN, 2018). The study made such a recommendation after the Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement had been implemented in Kakuma area in 2016. So, the author was either not aware of this or the author was calling for implementation of this practice in other areas of the country.

Furthermore, the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) (2019) found that in Kenya, refugees face challenges accessing basic services such as healthcare and education. Such poor access to basic needs of life could increase insecurity in the country. Again, this study recommended ramping up the provision of basic services in the refugee camp (KHRC, 2019). This study and the previous ones suggest that the context of existence shapes the motivation to participate in criminal activities- and activities that breach peace and security. This explains why one of the two theories adopted in this study is the social dislocation theory of crime. This theory is relevant

because refugee camps are vulnerable in life and could easily engage in deviance- including criminal activities.

Besides, a study by the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS, 2018) revealed that the presence of refugees can increase the economic opportunities for host communities. However, the presence of refugees can also create competition for resources and widen existing economic inequalities. This study suggested that refugees can attract humanitarian support that can reach the host communities. Similarly, refugees can be a market for local goods; they can also invest in the vicinity of the host community to increase employment opportunities; some refugees may even have creative skills and experiences that ramp up the local economy. The aforementioned study recommended that host communities should be part of decision-making processes in the management of refugee camps; this would ensure that their needs are considered (ACMS, 2018). The findings of the foregoing study have also been reached by a study by the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA, 2018), and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM, 2019).

Additionally, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) (2020) found that refugee camps can create social and economic challenges- including pressure on social services such as health and education. They can also enhance competition for resources such as water and land. This study mirrors the core mandate of this study on what constitutes security threats posed by Kakuma Refugee camp. This explains why this study uses securitization theory that primes four important threats that a refugee camp can pose. These are: military, societal, environmental, and economic. The crime as a threat is also incorporated in the aforementioned threats- as a cross-cutting reality.

This theory together with the social dislocation theory will provide the theoretical anchor for this study.

Kenya has been hosting refugees from neighboring countries for decades; as per the June 2024 statistics, the refugees and asylum seekers in the country were 777,354 distributed in three camps, namely: Daadab with 385,048; Kakuma with 289,861- which includes 74,232 in Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement Scheme; and urban based that were 104,445 (UNHCR, 2024). These refugees and asylum seekers have been known to face several challenges, such as limited access to basic services, and insecurity. The refugee camps themselves have also been a source of insecurity, with reports of criminal activities and terrorist suspects operating therein. This study aims to investigate- from discursive sources sampling social dislocation- the manner in which Kakuma Refugee Camp- in Turkana County in Kenya- has been constructed as a security threats.

The Kakuma Refugee Camp was established in 1992 to accommodate refugees fleeing civil war in Sudan; the refugee camp had grown to a population of about 300,000 by June 2024 (UNHCR, 2024; UNHCR, n.d). The camp hosts refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo and other countries in the East and the Horn of Africa (UNHCR, 2024).

The security challenges faced by the Kakuma Refugee Camp have not only affected the refugees but also the host communities in the surrounding areas. Turkana County, where the camp is located, has also experienced high levels of insecurity, with reports of cattle rustling, banditry, and inter-communal conflicts reported. The proximity of the camp to the host communities has led to tensions between the two groups, with the host communities accusing the refugees of contributing to the insecurity in the area.

The effects of refugee camps on insecurity in Kenya have not been extensively studied, and there is a need for empirical research to better understand the linkages between refugee camps and insecurity. This study seeks to contribute to the existing literature by investigating the social dislocation factors that shape the portrayal of Kakuma Refugee Camp as a security threat, as gleaned from the narratives of the interviewees. The study used a case study research design, using qualitative data methods to execute the research.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The protracted refugee situation in Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp and its environs has evolved beyond a humanitarian concern into a complex security challenge for both local and national authorities. Originally established in 1992 to host South Sudanese refugees, Kakuma has since grown into one of the largest and most congested refugee camps in Africa. Over time, what was intended as a temporary shelter has transformed into a permanent settlement for multiple displaced communities from South Sudan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and other conflict-ridden countries. While the camp provides essential protection and relief, it has increasingly become a hotspot for crime, ethnic tensions, economic strain, and insecurity, both within the camp and in its surrounding communities. Several studies have been done on refugee camps in Kenya. For instance, a study by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS, 2021) found that while refugee camps in Kenya can contribute to the stability and economic development of host communities, they can also pose a security risk. However, this study did not provide a detailed analysis of the insecurity factors shaping Kakuma refugee camp as a security threat in Kenya. Similarly, a study by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2020) examined the impact of refugee camps on

the social and economic well-being of host communities in Kenya but did not specifically focus on the security implications.

1.4 Broad Objective

The broad objective of the study was to examine security threat perceptions in Kenya, a case of Kakuma Refugee Camp.

1.4.1 Specific Objective

The specific objectives included:

- i To examine how SALWs are transited from their international destination to Kakuma Refugee Camp.
- ii To assess the mobility of SALWS between the refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp and the host communities.
- iii To determine the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of refugees.
- iv To assess the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of the host community.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. How do SALWs transit from their international destinations to the Kakuma Refugee camp?
- ii. What facilitates the mobility of SALWs between the refugees in Kakuma Camp and the host communities?
- iii. What is the nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of refugees?
- iv. What is the nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of the host community?

1.6 Justification of the Study

Firstly, the Kakuma Refugee Camp has been associated with insecurity within and in its environs. It is therefore important to examine how SALWs are transited from their international destination to Kakuma Refugee Camp. This can inform intervention measures to curb the transit.

Secondly, refugee camps interact with the host communities. The interaction could involve the exchange of weapons between the refugees and the host communities. Thus, it is necessary to examine the mobility of the illegal SALWs between the refugees in Kakuma Camp and the host communities. This again can assist law agencies to deal with the problem.

Thirdly, human beings and communities develop subjectivity on an object or event- and this is applicable to refugee camps that have an impact on life chances of individuals and communities. Thus, there is need to study the nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of refugees. Refugee perspectives can shed more insight on how Kakuma Refugee camp intersects with the insecurity experiences of the refugees in the camp.

Fourthly, apart from the refugees, the host community too have an experience with the refugee camp. Thus, it is necessary to assess the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of the host community. Such a study can suggest ways in which the occurrences in Kakuma Refugee camp intersects with the lives of the host community- especially on security matters. Those four areas highlighted above have gaps that can enrich the study on Kakuma Refugee camp.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is important because it adds knowledge on how refugees and others transit SALWs to a refugee camp- and from the refugee camp to the host community. This is important for scholars and policymakers who deal with the nexus of international migration and crime- and insecurity as well. The study will also enrich studies on narratives and construction of SALWs' mobility.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

1.8.1 Scope of the Study

This study was restricted to the four specific objectives guiding the research. It analyzed refugee-related security threats within and beyond Kakuma Refugee Camp using a social constructivist perspective. The study focused on narratives relating to the movement and circulation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) into the refugee camp, especially from neighboring South Sudan, despite the existence of checkpoints and security frameworks. It also examined the perceived and actual security threats posed by refugee mobility, particularly concerning SALW flows between the host community and the camp. Narratives from both refugees and host community members were critically analyzed to gain insights into local security dynamics. The study adopted a case study design, used an interview schedule for primary data collection, and was qualitative in nature. Fieldwork was conducted in December and limited geographically to Kakuma Refugee Camp in northwestern Kenya.

1.8.2 Limitations of the Study

Despite its methodological rigor, the study encountered several limitations. Firstly, security concerns and travel restrictions in certain parts of the camp—especially near areas perceived to be at risk for crime or intercommunal tension—limited access to

some respondents. To overcome this, the researcher relied on the assistance of trusted local gatekeepers and community leaders to facilitate safe access and introductions.

Secondly, language barriers presented challenges during data collection, as some respondents were not fluent in English or Kiswahili. This was mitigated by employing trained local interpreters who translated interview questions and responses while maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the information provided.

Thirdly, due to the sensitivity of the subject matter—involving arms trafficking and security threats—some participants were initially reluctant to speak openly. To address this, interviews were conducted in safe, neutral spaces, and the researcher emphasized anonymity and confidentiality in line with ethical standards. Respondents were also assured that participation was voluntary, and no names would be disclosed.

Lastly, the study's findings may not be generalizable to all refugee camps in Kenya or elsewhere, as it focused solely on Kakuma Refugee Camp. However, the in-depth qualitative insights generated are valuable for understanding broader dynamics of insecurity in refugee-hosting contexts, particularly in border regions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The current chapter presents literature pertinent to the objectives of the study. Included in the review are the strategies used for the mobility of illegal weapons from their destination to the refugee camps; the processes that facilitate the mobility of light and small arms between the refugees and the host communities; the nature of Kakuma refugee camp from the security of refugees; and the nature of Kakuma refugee camp from the security narratives of the host community (including government officials).

2.2 Mobility of SALWs across International Borders to Refugee Camps

The trafficking and cross-border movement of illegal weapons has become a high political issue in the Horn of Africa- and has attracted the attention of governments, donors, and civil society (UNODC, 2015). This raises the issue of the agency of refugees in trafficking the SALWs. Migrants are often stigmatized as endowed with a dangerous agency, risky bodies, criminals, and potential terrorists; they are also seen as having immoral agency - for they are seen as fraudsters, queue jumpers and welfare scroungers. Sometimes they are seen as having no agency at all (Nyers, 2003). The refugee agency is sometimes seen as aided by weaknesses of state border control in the global south. For example, the division of the roles and mandates between customs agents and border guards is not always seen as differentiated. This is often the case in developing countries, for which separate border agencies represent an enormous expense - and so state border agencies have a deficit in their operations of deterring the trafficking of SALWs (Council of Europe, (2005).

In more endowed countries, to effect deterrence of the illicit flow of SALWs, more resources and capabilities are used. For example, the Israel border police use advanced communication and night vision equipment, grenade launchers, ballistic helmets, and armoured all-terrain 4x4 vehicles. At some level of personnel, the involvement of the armed forces in border management activities can give rise to problems. The Serbian example illustrates that soldiers in charge of border surveillance activities on the border with Montenegro had not received training and did not have any specific strategy guidelines for carrying out their role. There was also a lack of coordination in border post control activities and with local police authorities. The relationship between border guards and the armed forces is therefore not devoid of ambiguity. While operating in Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe- supplying many products from humanitarian aid to hand grenades- Damana Jovic learned to operate through a network of shell companies and sub-contractors; he later began to link with the Italian Mafia and organized criminal groups smuggling drugs and contraband cigarettes into Europe. This goes a long way to show that trans-border flows can be facilitated by many actors (European Commission, 2022)

Secondly, several specific aspects of the illicit trafficking of SALWs across land borders can be highlighted. First, there is the link between arms trafficking and transnational organized crime. SALWs trafficking is part of trafficking activities criminal groups engage in. Arms trafficking is thus facilitated by criminal networks. Also, cross-border communities aid in trafficking SALWs (UNODC, 2015). In Africa, the state borders were fixed in the 19th Century without taking into account the ethnic borders. In many cases, ethnic or economic ties existed before the borders were imposed; thus, even after the borders were imposed the local communities have often engaged in trans-border exchanges - including illegal trafficking activities. Due to this

nature of borders in Africa, certain border regions can become safe havens for criminals and high crime areas, where transfers by traffickers and criminals are possibly facilitated by the ethnic complicity of border region communities. A study on criminality in West Africa highlighted the connections between the border zones of proliferations of serious crime and the ethnic complicity of border region communities (Arsovska & Zabyelina 2014).

Trafficking between the US and Mexico along the 3000km border further offers interesting insights. In Mexico, the trafficking routes circumvent crossing posts and go through parts of the territory where solidarity between local communities prevails for arms traffickers or even drug cartels to thrive. The aforementioned arms are then generally transferred to brokers or intermediaries– smugglers, petty criminals, or members of a cartel – who get them across the border or get someone else to do this. These weapons are often moved along US highways or enter Mexico by border posts in private or commercial vehicles. Consequently, to develop efficient land border management capable of halting the trafficking of SALWs, one must take into account the dynamics at play in the border zones, in terms of arms demands, the flow and the direction of the trafficking between the two neighboring countries involved in the mix. Additionally, the aforementioned authors note the following: laundering border management failure can create an environment conducive to trade in drugs for precious minerals or arms and vice-versa; also, certain brokers directly trade firearms that have illegally come from the US. A similar case was highlighted in reports by UN expert groups on arms embargoes in Somalia in wartime (UN, 2020). The members of armed groups are sometimes a vector for transporting weapons across borders to sell them in exchange for food or other commodities (UN Expert groups, 2020). Most of the arms

illegally entering Mexico come from the gun-smiths, pawn shops, or gun shows in the southern States of the US (California, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico)

US residents – known as Straw Purchasers legally buy arms from an official dealer. Nevertheless, when they make this purchase, they conceal the real destinations of these weapons (Arsovska and Zabyelina, 2014).

A variety of social contexts and enabling factors allow different types of illegal firearms markets to flourish. This includes, stolen weapons, converted and ordered weapons, and diverted ex-military supplies (Square, 2014). Firearms serve multiple purposes; they are not only a profitable trafficking commodity but first and foremost, a tool to consolidate power and to commit violent crimes. As Albaran & Santos (2017) point out, drug trafficking and arms trafficking are criminal activities worldwide due to the high level of profits produced by firearms due to the high demand in several criminal hotspots.

Lebrun and Left (2013) investigated the supply of weapons and ammunition in Sudan and South Sudan; they concluded that the region contained some 2.7 million small arms and light weapons from mid-2004, following the 2nd Sudanese civil war (1983, 2005). The region became subject to a UN arms embargo- although all parties involved in the purchase of arms did not comply with the embargo. According to official customs data, weapons produced in China and Iran are illegally imported into Sudan and appear to predominate the region- with China accounting for 58 per cent of all arms transfers. According to Boutwell and Klare (1999) were easily carried by individuals or transported by light vehicles and have greatly intensified the scales of conflicts in countries and societies around the world.

Compared to the Cold War era, dominated by a few big suppliers who supplied weapons to prop their customers' political ambitions- and cement political alliances- The new fragmented, criminal, weapons and market has become increasingly located at the regional and local level by mercenaries and criminal traffickers who want financial gain. The expansion of global trade, the internet, the changing international business practices and, the recent growth of private military companies, consultants and trainers- who provide and deliver military services and supplies- have further complicated these complex and often opaque international markets (Griffiths & Wilkinson, 2007).

Finally, several studies have illustrated that the trafficking of SALWs and ammunition across land can take the shape of small-scale trafficking (also called anti-trade): which can involve the phenomena of straw purchasers or micro trafficking with a weak state government institution. Trafficking of weapons in Africa skyrocketed immediately after the onset of the Cold War. However, the number of civil wars in Africa has declined since the 1990s reducing demand for trafficked SALWs. But the firearms trafficking during those years did not evaporate; the trafficking continued to be recirculated throughout the region. These legacy firearms are primarily of interest to those looking to start a revolution, for daily use, the primary source of arms appears to be official state stocks, legitimately procured but diverted to the illicit market. Criminals seem to be able to get what they need from the local security forces, buying or renting weapons from corrupt elements in the police and military. The imports that do occur are not made through underground arms brokers, but rather through mainstream commercial channels, and then directed through corrupt officials or complicit governments to criminals and rebel groups (Arsovska & Zabyelina, 2014).

Following the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, Libya's security vacuum and the disintegration of centralized control over military stockpiles led to an unprecedented proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) across North and West Africa. The collapse of the regime unleashed vast quantities of firearms into unregulated circulation. These weapons—previously secured by one of Africa's most heavily armed governments—were either looted or sold off by remnants of the security apparatus and non-state actors seeking quick profit or strategic advantage (De Vries, 2011). In particular, Tuareg fighters returning from Libya with combat experience and weaponry contributed to the destabilization of Northern Mali. The armed conflict in Mali in 2012, which led to a temporary occupation of the north by Tuareg and jihadist forces, was fueled in part by these Libyan arms (Florquin & Pézard, 2005; Small Arms Survey, 2014). The Tuareg transported arms through southern Libya into Algeria, Niger, and Mali, further facilitated by porous borders and pre-existing smuggling networks (UNODC, 2013). As these armed groups capitalized on Libya's uncontrolled arsenal, a wider regional contagion effect was observed, particularly across the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin.

Compounding the issue, the outbreak of Libya's second civil war in 2014 reignited domestic arms demand, resulting in both an inflow of weapons for internal combatants and an outflow of surplus arms to neighboring states. As jihadist and insurgent groups faced competition for Libyan sources, they intensified attacks in other weakly governed states—particularly Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger—targeting military installations to acquire additional weaponry (OECD, 2021). These attacks were not only strategic but became a form of arms acquisition, further undermining regional security and reinforcing the cycle of violence.

Despite a ceasefire signed in Libya in October 2020, trafficking reportedly increased. This paradox is explained by a decreased local demand for arms within Libya due to reduced internal hostilities, which allowed smugglers to redirect their supply outward. As local actors demobilized, surplus weapons became available for regional sale, thereby sustaining regional black-market flows and arming both insurgents and organized criminal networks in adjacent countries (De Vries, 2011).

On sources of these SALWs, several spaces have been identified. First, some of these weapons stray from Legal or regulated transfer. These include legally manufactured arms and international transfers that import and export or transit States legally authorize by their respective national law and international law. Also, SALWs can be obtained in Illicit grey market transfers. These transfers have some authorized elements while other aspects may be illicit, such as when authorized by either importing or exporting country but not both. Grey transfers can also occur when, for example, governments or their agents exploit Loopholes or circumvent national and or international laws or policies. These grey firearms can also include largely unregistered firearms (including misplaced, lost or forgotten firearms, antique souvenirs, and battlefield trophies, all of which might still be capable of living firing or easy conversion to live firing) not held used or convey for criminal purposes but identified as often ending up in the illicit market (Bricknell, 2012:23).

Besides, there are illegal black-market transfers. These are transfers in clear violation of national and or international laws, which take place without official government consent or control, including cases of diversion and illicit cross-border trafficking. Black-market firearms include, therefore all legally brokered, traded, diverted or trafficked arms or those in active criminals, insurgents, or terrorists' hands or stockpiled

by such groups (UNODC, 2015). This is true for example, in cases of illicit transfers that were approved for shipment by government officials where licensing or customs agents failed to spot fraudulent claims in export and shipping documentation or the shipment was diverted to an illegal end-user end route to the authorized recipient .in both cases, data unauthorized and authorized shipments are likely to be reported together (1980).

There are also large-scale firearms trafficking activities that involve different scenarios and situations. The examples below illustrate some of the most common cases that involve large-scale trafficking and point to some of its characteristics, such as the complexity of its modus operandi and the global nature of its illicit trade. Illicit arms traffickers are organized to move large-scale shipments of arms, measured in hundreds of tons or more passing through numerous national law enforcement agencies. Large-scale trafficking is often associated with supplies to groups involved in armed conflicts (State and non-state actors, rebels and insurgent groups inter alia) or shipments to embargoed and banned destinations (UNODC, 2015). It is initiative, given the size and the military-like structure of many of these armed groups that require not only higher quantities but also a certain degree of standardization of their military arsenals, unlike common and organized crime groups.

Upscale instances of firearm trafficking often involve illegal brokers and dealers and at times covert government agencies dealing in high volume firearm transfers. For example, in the mid – 1980s the United States of America supplied small arms and other light weapons to insurgent and rebel groups in Angola and the contras in Nicaragua (Stohl & Tuttle, 2008). The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s saw a wide variety of weapons covertly supplied to the Mujahedeen. Even following

the scandal involving Colonel Oliver North and the Iran – contra affair, and the media exposure of the scale of misappropriation of government funds devoted to weapons smuggling, the Central Intelligence Agency persisted with a covert weapons supply pipeline to Nicaragua, shielded by a network of front companies (Klare & Anderson, 1996).

2.3 Transfer of Illegal Arms between Refugee Camps and the Host Communities

Refugees are involved in the cross-border movement and re-circulation of weapons. Refugees have used networks created during exile to execute illegal trade deals with the host communities (Paoli et al., 2017; Paoli, 2018). In this case, the influx of Somali refugees has enabled a massive inflow of illegal weapons into Kenya society adding to the rising levels of crime.

Refugees' militarization is responsible for small arms diffusion. The concept of refugees' militarization is used to describe refugee camps and populations that are characterized by the storage and trafficking of arms; it also means the presence of active and ex-combatants that use camps as military bases (Lischer, 2001: UNCHR 2000). This makes it hard to separate refugees from fighters, criminals or even genocidaires (Ogatta, 1998).

2.4 The Nature of Refugee Perspectives

There are various, sometimes conflicting, narratives around refugee camps and other migrants in Kenya, demonstrating dividing lines between the actors. The narratives emanate from central government authorities, from county government level or local authorities, and civil society and the private sector. These actors give diverse views on security; the picture that emerges is multifocal. First the Kenyan government narratives depict 'a contrast between its international and domestic positioning. Kenya's central

government has been relatively positive in its rhetoric around refugees and other migrants on the international stage, reflecting international and regional commitments to refugees' inclusion and self-reliance on the one hand and to wider regional freedom of movement on the other. Kenya's government has welcomed regional freedom of movement internationally as a component of Pan-African identity, building on sentiments espoused by previous governments.

In a 2017 speech to regional leaders, President Kenyatta emphasized that 'the free movement of people on our continent has always been a cornerstone of Pan-African brotherhood and fraternity' (Dahir, 2017). Kenya's government has not been as effusive in its praise for refugees' contributions to international fora compared to neighbours such as Uganda (Hargrave et al., 2020). Instead, the government has often emphasized pressures linked to refugee hosting and the need for greater international support. For example, speaking at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019, the

Chief Administrative Secretary of Kenya's Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government highlighted challenges faced by Kenyan host communities, calling for a focus on the root causes of forced displacement and responsibility sharing for Kenya's disproportionate burden, which has persisted for far too long (GoK, 2019).

However, the government has nonetheless supported global and regional commitments towards refugees' inclusion; in the same statement, saying, "We recognize that empowering refugees is essential for achieving sustainable solutions" (Mutongu, 2017, p. 13). However, domestic government rhetoric concerning refugees and other migrants in Kenya has often taken on a distinctly negative tone, a trend that the current administration appears to perpetuate. Instead of championing Pan African solidarity, recent policy statements and public discourse have reflected a sharp "us and them"

mentality, with a clear emphasis on prioritizing citizen employment over migrant workforce integration (Kamau & Mutava, 2024, p. 2).

Rather than promoting inclusive frameworks, the prevailing government narrative increasingly casts refugees and even some East African neighbors—as potential security threats, undermining efforts at social cohesion and regional unity (Uganda, 2022, p. 7). This securitized discourse has led to heightening public suspicion and systematic restrictions, such as limiting freedom of movement and access to livelihood for refugee populations (Campbell, 2006, p. 396; Human Rights Watch, 2013, p. 88), with potentially harmful long-term societal implications.

Security-focused narratives often centre on ethnic Somalis, depicting them as threatening, violent, and to blame for terrorist incidents – although alleged connections have not been substantiated by evidence. While especially prominent in the aftermath of high-profile terrorist incidents from 2013 onwards, security-focused narratives date back to the large-scale arrival of refugees in the early 1990s (RCK, 2015) and build on long-held discrimination towards Kenyan Somalis (Freeman, 2019). In 2011, Assistant Minister of Internal Security Orwa Ojode described Al-Shabaab as 'like a big animal with the tail in Somalia and the head of the animal is here in Eastleigh [a Somali neighborhood in Nairobi]' (quoted in O'Callaghan & Sturge, 2019). Such narratives are often amplified by the media, who have blamed Somalis for everything from a measles outbreak to environmental degradation and illegal weaponry (Jaji, 2014), while more broadly portraying refugees and other migrants as a security threat (Kisang, 2017).

Secondly, there is a more positive narrative concerning refugees at the level of local government. County governments have demonstrated openness towards refugees, seeing their presence as an opportunity to further county-level development. In contrast

to national authorities' domestic positioning, county governments have espoused far greater openness to refugees' social and economic inclusion. In the context of wider devolution processes, and areas receiving a small portion of the national fiscal budget, local governments have recognized the possible gains for host populations through refugees' inclusion, for example through their fiscal contributions to county budgets, alongside wider gains in terms of skills transfers to host economies and supporting their diversification (ReDSS & Hall, 2015).

Recognition of such benefits has been a key component of county-level discussions, while also being manifested in practice, through the inclusion of refugees in CIDPs. Notably, for county governments this is part of a wider balancing act; they have been clear that their primary interests are in beneficial outcomes for citizens (ReDSS & Hall, 2015; ACMS & Hall, 2018). As such, they have pointed to pressures linked to Kenya's camps, notably environmental degradation and, in Garissa County, echoing the security concerns cited at the national level. Nevertheless, county governments have proved relatively steadfast in their support of refugees' inclusion. In Garissa County, this has come despite pressure from local politicians, who lobbied against refugees' inclusion in its CIDP (ACMS & Hall, 2018). Thirdly, positive narratives can also be identified in Kenya's private sector. Recent interventions by Kenyan businesses targeting refugees have largely focused on financial inclusion, mobile money and the energy sector.

Engagement by actors such as Equity Bank – an East African financial services provider headquartered in Nairobi – is presented as part of a broader commitment to supporting inclusion among marginalized groups. Explaining the bank's decision to extend its services to refugees, Equity Bank Director for Special Projects Allan Waititu has stated, '[it] was a lateral expansion: "...part of a strategy to become a financially

inclusive bank' (Barford et al., 2019). Similarly, in 2019 Michael Joseph, CEO of Kenyan mobile network provider Safaricom, explained, 'forcibly displaced people ...' are among the most vulnerable populations in the world. Safaricom believes that no matter the circumstances, no one should be left behind (Aluel, 2019). Kenya's private sector actors have also sought to highlight refugees' and other migrants' potential development contributions, and the need for policy change that facilitates them. For example, the Kenya Private Sector Alliance has been key in calling for wider implementation in Kenya of EAC commitments to freedom of movement, citing the development potential of national policy change that facilitates free movement of labour (ACMS & Hall, 2018 p. 18).

Fourth, civil society narratives focus on refugees' and migrants' rights and protection. Civil society mobilisation is particularly strong with regards to refugees; through prominent actors such as the Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) and Kituo Cha Sheria. Over the past decade, civil society in Kenya has broadly moved from opposing government policy to playing a more direct role in influencing it through lobbying, training to authorities and technical support (ACMS & Hall, 2018). Particular success has been seen in terms of work to secure refugees' inclusion in national healthcare systems.

Civil society actors have also pursued legal challenges in high-profile cases, prompting the Kenyan High Court to step in on several occasions to declare the government's policies unconstitutional. Civil society engagement has been less prominent among other migrants. Yet a notable exception to this is the Pan African Citizens Network (PACIN), a regional civil society organization that has been advocating for labour migrants. PACIN lobbies for Kenya to relax its labour and visa requirements for

African citizens to promote freedom of movement and, ultimately, migrant protection (ACMS & Hall, 2018). Labour migrants have also benefitted from support from unions such as the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA), which champions the need for improved working conditions for both nationals and foreign workers (ibid.).

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted securitization theory in international relations; it emerged as a theoretical strand of the Copenhagen school. As a concept securitization had been first presented by Ole Weaver in 1995 to redefine the terminological meaning of security by questioning and criticizing all previous ontologically materialistic theoretical approaches to security. This study uses two theories: The Securitization Theory and the Social Disorganization Theory of Crime. Each of these theories is explained. Thereafter the conceptual framework is presented where the independent and dependent variables are presented.

2.5.1 Social Disorganization Theory of Crime

Social Disorganization Theory has been widely used to examine how neighborhood's level factors impact delinquency and crime rates (Kingston, Huizinga & Elliot, 2009, Shaw & McKay, 1969). The Theory is rooted in the notion that social structures that impact a location's level of desirability make it difficult for residents of the neighbourhood to come together to create common goals; this then creates levels of social disorganization that lead to the inability of local communities to realize their common values; the community cannot solve commonly experienced problems such as crime and violence within the community (Kornhauser, 1978).

Due to the disorganization in the community, Cullen (1994) points out the importance of examining social support such as community networks, social networks, and confiding partners, when conducting research guided by social disorganization theory. Although social disorganization theory was originally focused on delinquency rates and crime generally, the theory has been expanded to focus specifically on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV?) noting the importance of examining the community-level factors and their relationship with IPV (Bensen, Wooldredge, Thistlethwaite, & Fox, 2004; Browning 2002; Morgan & Jasinski, 2017).

The theory has two major prepositions: first areas with a high degree of residential mobility, ethnic diversity and economically disadvantaged populations are often linked with higher crime rates. A community that exhibits social disorganization often lack social efficacy, which refers to the ability of community members to control the individuals and events in their environment. Secondly, in this theory, powerful social institutions like the family, the school and work structures often play a fundamental role in promoting social order. These propositions often interact and overlap, creating a complex pattern that forms the foundation of the Social Disorganization Theory of Crime. For instance, a community with high residential mobility might lack the stability for social institutions to effectively enforce social norms. This disorganization can lead to lower social efficacy, thus contributing to increased crime rates. This theory is relevant to the four objectives but they do not explain the agency of refugees and the host communities to turn around their fortunes- this gap is filled by the securitization theory.

This theory informs the study on the fact that crime and deviance are more likely to occur in communities with weak social structures, disrupted institutions, and lack of

collective efficacy (i.e., the ability of members of a community to control behavior and maintain order). This is depicted in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Community and Maintenance of Behaviour

Members of Community	Control and maintenance Behaviour
Community policing	UNHCR and police
Community leaders in collaboration with the host community for intelligence sharing	Security coordination during violence
Organized meetings	Use of force to disperse groups
Mediation of conflict	UNHCR
Equitable service delivery	UNHCR
Promotion of peace and harmony between the host community and he refugees	GSU and Kenyan police

Source: Researcher, 2025

2.5.2 Securitization Theory

Securitization theory is broadly part of social constructivism and explains how speech acts help to transform issues into matters of security. This theory is relevant to explain objectives three and four in this study which is concerned with discursive security narratives. The authors note: "A public issue only becomes securitized when and if the audience accepts it as such" (Buzan et al, 1998).

Securitization theory - with its core concepts - refers to a process in which an actor makes a claim that a 'referent object', deemed worthy of survival is existentially threatened. The theory provides the framework of analysis that provides four components that are to be the focus of analysis, namely: the 'securitizing actor', the 'referent object', the 'audience' and the 'extraordinary measures' taken to counter the

identified threat. Security issues can be categorized into five security realms; economic, political, societal, military and environmental security.

On economic security, massive immigration may strain the financial capacities of host countries in terms of housing, education or welfare provision (2008, 16). Political insecurity concerns threats to state sovereignty (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998, p.141). Like realists the foregoing authors view state sovereignty as the referent object of security; political security threats can be deduced from refugees supporting the opposition, irredentist forces to wrestle power from the incumbent ruling regime, engaging in terrorist activities, or when the refugees try to introduce norms that contradict the norms of the governing political order (Buzan 1998: 151-153; Weiner, 1993, p. 91; Castles & Miller 2009: 280). Refugees may pose a threat to the hosting state's capacity to control its borders; also, Political refugees may ignite bilateral tensions between the host and the sending nation. (Castles & Miller 2009: 280).

Societal security, on the other hand, refers to the preservation of the social fabric of society which exists from a small unit like a family to communities or civilizational or religious identities (Weiner, 1993: 23). Finally, environmental insecurity is concerned with adversity observed in the environment. Only where ecological balance is maintained, resources are protected, and supplies ensured, will the potential for conflict be significantly reduced.

Environmental security has been defined in different ways to fit various contexts, and despite the many attempts to define the same, the concept is understood differently by people of various professions in diverse countries. For instance, it has been argued that in developing countries, environmental security has more to do with a household's ability to meet the demand for environmental resources in production and consumption

activities. In this regard, it is observed that for many of the four billion inhabitants in developing countries, security is conceived at the most basic level of the struggle for individual survival (Muigua, 2022, p. 4).

It is estimated that over eight hundred million live in absolute poverty and deprivation, five hundred million are malnourished, and many millions have no access to safe drinking- water and do not have the income necessary to purchase food. They lack protection against the consequences of environmental degradation and natural calamities, such as floods and drought, which, particularly in Africa, have produced famine and suffering of unprecedented proportions. This theory is relevant to objectives three and four- the objectives concerned with the nature of Kakuma Camp from the narratives of the Refugees and the Host community (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2006).

This theory offers insight to this study on how issues are transformed into security threats through speech acts—that is, when political actors (e.g., governments, media, or institutions) frame a particular group, event, or phenomenon as an existential threat to a valued referent (e.g., national security, societal harmony, state sovereignty). Once an issue is securitized, it is removed from normal political debate and becomes subject to extraordinary measures, such as surveillance, militarization, or restrictive policies.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

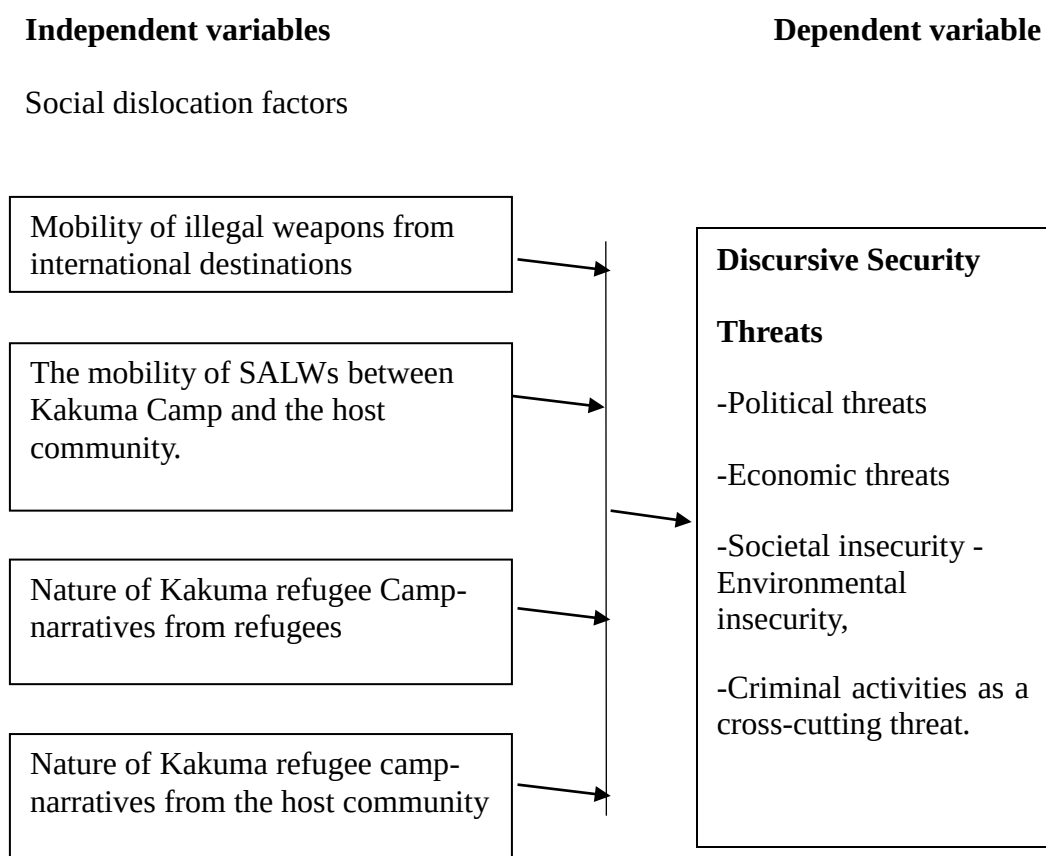


Fig. 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher, 2023

In this study, social dislocation factors are the independent variables. The factors are those concerning the mobility of illegal weapons from international destinations, mobility of light and small arms between the Kakuma Camp and the host community; the nature of the Kakuma refugee camp from the security narratives of refugees; and the nature of Kakuma refugee camp from the security narratives of the host community. On the other hand, the security threats of Kakuma Refugee camp are the dependent variables measured through political threats, economic threats and societal threats, environmental threats- and criminal activities which are cross-cutting threat.

Securitization Theory and social disorganization theory are relevant to understanding the relationship between refugees and insecurity. The framework provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contributed to the securitization of Kakuma refugee Camp in the context of social dislocation in the refugee camp, its environs and the origin of the refugees.

Securitization Theory is relevant for the framework: it provides the referent objects of security; namely: Societal, environmental, military, and economic- which are always associated with Refugee camps because of its association with concentration of large populations. The Social dislocation theory of crime- on the other hand- is relevant because it offers insights on the context of the insecurity in Kakuma refugee camp, its environs- and even the social context of the place of origin of refugees. The theory also provides an explanation on the crimes committed in the refugee camp and its environs.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter presents the design and methodology that was used in this study. Methodology refers to the system of procedures used in sampling and collecting information required for particular research. This section describes the research design, the target population, description of sample size and sampling procedures, data collection instruments, data analysis procedures, presentation and ethical considerations.

3.1 Study Area - Kakuma Refugee Camp

Kakuma Refugee Camp is located in Turkana West County of the north-western region of Kenya, 120 kilometres from Lodwar County Headquarters and 95 kilometres from the Lokichogio Kenya-Sudan border (UNHCR 2024). The Refugee camp as per June 2024 statistics is home to 289,861 refugees who have fled from conflict in nine countries in the east and the Horn of Africa- the countries are Somali, South Sudan, DRC Congo, Ethiopia, Burundi, Sudan, Uganda, Eritrea, Rwanda and others-countries beset by conflict and drought (UNHCR, 2024; UNHCR, n.d)). The Refugee Camp- covering an area of 25 square kilometres is made up of four Camps: Kakuma 1, 2, 3 and 4; the adjacent Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement Scheme- which itself comprises of villages 1, 2, and 3, was established in 2016, is an integration of the Refugees and the Host community (Pettaway and Bartolomei, 2002; UNHCR, n.d). Women constitute 53.2% and males are 46.8%; while children and the age 1-17 are about 77% (UNHCR, 2024). The neighboring Counties are West Pokot, Samburu and the Karamojong in Uganda. The County came up as a place that was set by the Kenyan Government far away from any possible threat to Kenya as a nation. Kakuma refugee camp is 1km

from Kakuma town. This study treats Kakuma Refugee Camp as including the Kalobeyi integrated Settlement Scheme.

3.2 Target Population

The target population are those deemed having knowledge in the subject of the study; these were the following: the Kenyan security personnel, the host community within the camp, the host community outside the camp, the refugees and the NGOs.

3.3 Research Design

The study was structured as a within case study. According to Khan et al.'s (2022) case study research is a hands-on research method that concentrates on one specific entity. It allows the researcher to explore the details of the subject being studied deeply. In opting for this method, the researcher acknowledged the inherent value of concentrating on a specific organizational unit rather than a broader array of organizations. The researcher selected a within case study design because it fits the study's goals well. Research design was used because it gave the researcher an in-depth study of one case- the Kakuma Refugee Camp and its environs. The case exemplifies the most similar case because it is characterized by weak institutions, poverty, and broken social networks that are predicted by the social disorganization Theory of Crime as predisposed to insecurity. The case study approach allows for the exploration of the lived experiences of refugees and other stakeholders within their natural setting. Kakuma hosts a population with varied backgrounds, cultures, and migration histories, which significantly shape their perceptions, coping strategies, and interactions with aid agencies and local communities. A case study provides the flexibility to delve deeply into these variations, capturing rich, qualitative data that is essential for understanding the nuances of life in the camp. This design facilitated the collection of qualitative data

on the security nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp in the context of prevailing social dislocation. The units of analysis were individuals from Table 3.1.

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Design

Snowball sampling was used to select six (6) security personnel who were knowledgeable and experienced in matters of safety and protection within the camp.

This non-probability sampling technique was ideal for reaching individuals who were easily accessible through conventional methods due to the sensitive nature of their work and the hierarchical structure of security operations. The process began with one known and trusted security officer who was identified through initial contact with camp management or humanitarian agencies. After conducting an interview with this initial respondent, they were asked to refer or recommend other security personnel who fit the study criteria. This chain-referral process continued until the targeted number of six security officers was reached. The technique was effective in identifying security staff with first-hand knowledge of the security landscape in Kakuma.

Purposive sampling was also used to select the entire population of twenty-seven (27) respondents who were deemed to have specific knowledge, experience, or roles relevant to the objectives of the study. These respondents were deliberately chosen based on their positions, responsibilities, and insights into the issues under investigation. This included: refugees (4), Host communities within the Camp (5), NGOs (7), host communities outside the camp (5) and security personnel (6). The selection was guided by the researcher's judgment, ensuring that each respondent had the potential to contribute meaningful and context-specific information to the study. This approach allowed for a focused and information-rich data set, aligned with the study's goals. Those interviewed were as depicted in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1 the Distribution of Interviewees

Category	Number
Refugee	4
Host community outside the camp	5
NGOs	7
Security personnel	6
Host communities inside the camp	5
Total	27

3.5 Tools of Data Collection

In this study, data was collected using an interview schedule, which served as the primary tool for gathering qualitative information from respondents in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The interview schedule was carefully developed to align with the research objectives and to ensure consistency across interviews. The use of an interview schedule was particularly appropriate for the context of Kakuma, where participants come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and where flexible, face-to-face interaction enhances understanding. The tool consisted of a set of open-ended and semi-structured questions designed to explore the experiences, perceptions, and insights of the selected respondents on key issues under investigation.

The interview schedule allowed for guided conversations while also providing room for respondents to elaborate on their responses and share additional relevant information. This flexibility enabled the researcher to probe further on emerging themes and capture rich, detailed data that would not have been possible through rigid or standardized questionnaires.

Interviews were conducted with different categories of respondents, including security personnel, NGO staff, refugee leaders, and other key stakeholders. For the security personnel, interviews were guided by a snowball sampling approach, while purposive sampling was used to reach the broader group of 27 respondents.

3.5.1 Secondary Data

Secondary data from the Provincial Administration, United Nations High Commission for Refugees and Kenya Police relevant to the subject of study were used to triangulate the primary data. Additionally, published and unpublished materials that were relevant to this study were used. These diverse sources of data served to corroborate the data.

3.6 Pilot Study

Before the main data collection exercise in Kakuma Refugee Camp, a pilot study was conducted in Dadaab Refugee Camp using a sample of six (6) respondents. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the effectiveness, clarity, and reliability of the data collection tools—specifically, the interview schedule—and to identify any potential logistical or contextual challenges that might arise during the main study.

Dadaab was selected as the pilot site because it shares similar characteristics with Kakuma in terms of population composition, humanitarian operations, security concerns, and the general refugee camp environment. Both camps are managed under similar frameworks by the UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies, making Dadaab an appropriate testing ground for refining research tools intended for Kakuma.

The six respondents in the pilot included individuals who held comparable roles to those targeted in the main study, such as community leaders, humanitarian workers, and camp security personnel. This mix ensured that the interview schedule was tested across different perspectives, thereby increasing the robustness of the tool.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data collected in this study was primarily qualitative in nature, obtained through an interview schedule administered to a purposively selected group of 27 respondents

including security personnel selected through snowball sampling. The aim of the data analysis process was to interpret and organize the collected information in a meaningful and coherent manner to answer the study's research questions.

The analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, a method well-suited for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. This approach allowed the researcher to gain a deep understanding of respondents' experiences, perceptions, and insights within the unique context of Kakuma Refugee Camp.

The data analysis process involved the following steps:

1. Transcription of Interview Responses

All interviews were transcribed verbatim to ensure that no meaningful information was lost. This process enabled the researcher to capture the richness of the participants' narratives, including tone and emphasis, which are critical in qualitative analysis.

2. Data Familiarization

The researcher thoroughly read and re-read the transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. This step facilitated the identification of initial impressions and recurring ideas that would later inform the development of themes.

3. Coding

Open coding was conducted manually to highlight significant statements, phrases, and keywords related to the research objectives. Codes were then organized into broader categories that reflected underlying patterns in the data.

4. **Theme Development**

Related codes were grouped to form major themes and sub-themes. These themes represented the core findings of the study, such as security dynamics, stakeholder roles, challenges faced by refugees, and the effectiveness of interventions in the camp.

5. **Interpretation**

The identified themes were interpreted in light of the study's objectives and research questions. Interpretations also considered the social, cultural, and institutional contexts of the refugee camp, as well as the interplay between different stakeholders involved in the camp's operations.

3.8 **Validity of Data**

The issue of validity is whether an instrument achieves what it measures in reality (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). Major problems with validity, according to Aginako, Peña-Lang, Bedialauneta and Guraya (2021), are whether data being assessed is relevant and exact, and the amount to which is generalized from those results. In this research, it was addressed if the interviewer is measured correctly and ascertain whether all of the interview questions are appropriate and aligned with the research's purpose. To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the data collected in this study, several forms of validity were considered and addressed during the design and execution of the research. These include construct validity, face validity, criterion validity, and content validity. Each type played a critical role in strengthening the quality and applicability of the research findings.

1. **Construct Validity**

Construct validity refers to the extent to which the interview schedule accurately measured the theoretical concepts or constructs intended by the study. To establish

construct validity, the questions in the interview schedule were closely aligned with the study's objectives and research questions. Each question was designed to reflect key dimensions such as refugee experiences, stakeholder involvement, security challenges, and service delivery mechanisms. The researcher also reviewed existing literature and previous studies conducted in refugee settings to ensure the constructs being measured were conceptually sound and relevant to the context of Kakuma Refugee Camp.

2. Face Validity

Face validity refers to the degree to which a data collection instrument appears effective in terms of its stated aims, especially from the perspective of respondents and other stakeholders. In this study, face validity was enhanced by engaging experts and faculty members of the department of History, Political Science and Public Administration who are familiar with refugee operations and humanitarian work to review the interview schedule. Their feedback ensured that the questions were clear, culturally sensitive, and appropriate for the context of Kakuma.

3. Criterion Validity

Criterion validity assesses how well one measure predicts an outcome based on another, established measure (the “criterion”). While this study is qualitative and not primarily focused on statistical prediction, criterion validity was addressed through triangulation—comparing data across different types of respondents (e.g., security personnel, NGO workers, refugee leaders) to validate key themes and patterns. Consistency across these groups indicated that the responses were not isolated or subjective but reflected broader, verifiable realities within the camp. Furthermore, alignment of findings with documented reports and evaluations from humanitarian agencies operating in Kakuma contributed to criterion validity.

4. Content Validity

Content validity refers to the extent to which the instrument covers all relevant aspects of the subject under investigation. To achieve this, the interview schedule was developed after an extensive review of literature on refugee camp management, humanitarian response, security dynamics, and stakeholder engagement. The tool was designed to comprehensively cover all major thematic areas relevant to the study. Experts in research methodology and refugee affairs also reviewed the instrument to ensure it adequately captured the full scope of the study topic. Their input ensured that important areas were not omitted, thereby strengthening the content validity of the data collection tool.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

A research Authorization letter was got from Moi University and from NACOSTI. Another letter was obtained from the Refugees Affairs Secretariat (RAS) of Kenya under UNCHR to allow me to have access Kakuma Refugee camp. Confidentiality was adhered to. This was to protect the rights of research interviewees to enhance research validity and maintain scientific and academic integrity. The security of the interviewees was mainstreamed to ensure no adverse effects on them.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings on how SALWs are transited from their international destination to Kakuma Refugee Camp, assess the mobility of SALWS between the refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp and the host communities, determine the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of refugees and to assess the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the narratives of the host community.

4.1 Illegal Weapons Transit from Outside the Country to Kakuma Refugee Camp

This study gives an analysis of the mobility of SALWs from their international destination to the Refugee Camp. Table 4.1 shows a summary of themes that emerged from the narratives of interviewees about this transit of weapons to the Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Table 4.1 Narrative of themes on factors facilitating transit

Narratives facilitating transit	Number of Interviewees	Total interviewees
Illegal weapons are brought into refugee camps through the involvement of external factors such as arms dealers and smugglers	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
Illegal weapons are brought into refugee camps through the involvement of internal actors such as camp staff and refugees themselves	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
Lack of security measures and border controls contribute to the influx of illegal weapons into refugee camps	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
Social and economic conditions within the camps contribute to the demand for and use of illegal weapons	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
Illegal weapons are used for self-defence rather than criminal activities in refugee camps	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27

Source: Researcher data (2024)

The majority of the interviews stated that internal actors such as camp staff and refugees brought illegal weapons into Kakuma Refugee Camp. The responses mirror the Social Disorganization Theory of Crime- because guns are sourced by refugees from areas of conflict and social dislocation. Also, Kakuma Refugee and its environs are enacted as a zone of social dislocation that primes the use of SALWs for survival. Some of the refugees smuggled arms into the Camp for fear of not having a weapon to

defend themselves in Kakuma Camp where insecurity is rife- due to diverse ethnicities and nationalities in the camp. The socio-economic conditions of the Camp and the surroundings are depicted as one of social dislocation that creates a demand for the refugees to acquire an illegal firearm. One of the refugees noted:

"There is competition for the meagre economic resources in the camp and the neighboring host community. This has led to collaboration among some criminal elements that straddle the host and the refugee communities; the network pursues their criminal enterprise for mutual gain." (Refugee).

Additionally, in the Kakuma Refugee Camp and its surrounding areas, several resources are scarce, contributing to collaboration and criminal activities. Apart from the smuggling of SALWs from areas proximate to conflict zones in South Sudan and Uganda, the following criminal activities were reported as rife in Kakuma. There was theft and robbery that affected both refugees and the local community: gangs targeted shops and other valuable items that would bring money to them. Due to desperation and lack of opportunities, human beings were trafficked and exploited for labour or other illicit activities, both within and outside the camp. Additionally, the scarcity of resources and lack of recreational opportunities led some individuals to engage in drug trafficking and drug abuse. This further exacerbated health and security issues. Conflicts over scarce resources, cultural differences, and gang activities led to incidents of violence and assault. Domestic violence and gender-based violence were also prevalent due to stressful living conditions and limited law enforcement. Access to clean and sufficient water was limited to local and refugee communities; this scarcity often led to conflicts. The Camp and its environs had gangs that operated therein terrorizing the inhabitants.

Talla Gangs (TLG) was the notorious gang that started to operate in the Hong Kong area of the Camp before dispersing to different parts of the Camp- especially Kakuma

1, Kakuma 2, Kakuma 3 and Kalobeyei settlement Area. The B13 gang group which was composed of members of the Somali and the Ethiopian communities operated at night; they did ambush at night, taking away phones from the victims. The host gangs operated along roads heading to Kakuma Refugee Camp. On November 1, 2021, renewed clashes involving the Anyuak, the Nuer, the Dinka, and the Congolese in Kakuma Refugee Camp left 20 dead. During this conflict, 8 Dinka members were reportedly beaten to death by angry Nuer youth; this was after a Dinka man raped a 9-year-old Nuer child, leaving her in a coma. Similar patterns of conflict were reported in 2014, 2016 and 2024. This amplified Kakuma Refugee Camp as a space of social dislocation and closer to the Hobbesian state of nature.

Water points are also sources of conflict between Refugees themselves and the host community since water taps are limited and the refugee population was increasing day by day. UNCHR agencies provided water tankers and taps in the camps; most of the water tankers were filled between 2 pm and 6 pm. When somebody who was far from the neighbourhoods- including the members of the host community- came to get water than those from the neighbourhoods contested. This is when the conflict began and refugees always clashed with the host community over the shortage of water. UNCHR had employed the host community to manage all water tanks in the Camp; these employees-maintained generators which supplied the Refugee Camp with water but some employees of the UNCHR were known to steal fuel and sell it; this caused a water shortage in the Camp and its environs- leading to scarcity- and conflict between the host and the refugee community.

The resultant social environment was at best close to the Hobbesian anarchy. 'I heard screams and saw people running. I grabbed my children and ran to the nearby police

post. We don't feel safe in our homes anymore," said Mary Nyaruach, a refugee. Another refugee, Peter Gatwech, said the current situation at the Camp had made things worse for asylum seekers who arrived in Kakuma in pursuit of a safe and peaceful environment." We need to come together and find a way to live in peace. Our children are watching and learning from us," Gatwech said.

Two (2) interviewees stated that the movement of guns and other illegal arms was due to porous borders. The porous border in question was the Kenya and South Sudan border because it was only the South Sudanese who were engaged in the illicit mobility of guns. The Kenya-South Sudanese Border is poorly patrolled and is prone to abuse by those that experienced social dislocation; making it relatively easy for individuals to cross without detection. Refugees and individuals smuggling weapons could avoid attention from locals and chiefs in several ways: by crossing through remote points and rugged terrains- they avoided main roads and villages where locals and authorities could be more vigilant. Many crossings happened at night to reduce the likelihood of being seen by locals or authorities.

Also, smugglers often collaborated with locals who acted as guides or lookouts. These locals could be paid to turn a blind eye or assist in the smuggling operations. The illegal weapons were hidden in various ways such as being buried in cargo within vehicles or disguised as everyday items; sometimes they were carried in small dismantled parts to avoid detection. Locals could allow weapons to pass unnoticed for several reasons: smugglers could bribe locals or offer them a share of the profits in exchange for their silence or assistance. Some locals could fear retaliation from armed groups or smugglers if they reported the activities. A local chief informed that the Kenyan Police did arrest a suspected refugee on 18th October 2015 with an AK47 rifle.

This also points out that the police had not been able to make arrests in the recent past- and so this points to the secrecy of the transition of SALWs.

Because some security personnel were reported as corrupt, they allowed illegal weapons to enter the country. A host community member noted that: "There are some police officers who collaborate with the smugglers through the porous borders and leave guns to enter the Camp". Corrupt officers allowed the passage of illegal guns and typically received various forms of compensation in return for their actions. These could include financial bribes; also, there were non-monetary gifts such as a share of the illegal goods. Travellers along the highway have reported being asked for bribes at multiple checkpoints along major roads leading to Kakuma Refugee Camp.

This implied that bribery was a habit. On other roads like Lodwar, Lokichar, Kainuk, Kapenguria, and Kitale, interviewees reported that some police would ask for bribes despite a refugee having travel documents to authorize travel within the country. This kind of highway culture by some police made the people involved in the mobility of illicit guns move by buying their way through police roadblocks and carrying with them the illicit SMALWs to Kakuma Refugee Camp.

These findings mirror the findings of Kirui and Mwaruve (2019) who noted that the transportation of illegal arms into the Refugee Camp was usually a coordinated activity that involved some government officials and arms smugglers. The arms are used to rob fellow refugees so that the robbers can have more resources than the rest. The guns transmitted from outside the country end up being used to maim and kill- which paints the Refugee Camp as a frontier of anarchy where human rights are vulnerable. Table 4.2 shows criminal activities dates when committed.

Table 4.2 Recent Criminal Activities in Kakuma Refugee Camp

Area	Date	People killed
Kalobeyei	20 th of June 2024	24
Hong Kongo	12 July 2024	1
Kakuma	November 17 2023	Young man killed and dumped in an irrigation scheme
Kakuma 1	October 8 th 2023	1
Hong Kong	November 15 2023	Shops were looted in a busy market day
Emmanuel Ndereyimana	Attack date: 30/7/2023	
Abdi Hussein Mohammed	4/8/2023	Nationality
Francis Laduu Abraham	39/8/2023	Burundian
	20/8/2023	Somali
	24/8/2023	South Sudanese
Opiyo Napeyok	24/8/2023	Ugandan (She survived the attack but lost Sh3,000 and smart phone)
Mohammed Hassan	4/8/2023	South Sudanese (Survived a night attack after refusing to open door)
Mohamed Ali	4/8/2023	Somali
Nkunzimana Claude	31/8/2023	Somali
		Burundian

Source: (Field Data, 2024)

The insecurity in Kakuma Refugee camp and its environs is related to the regional dynamics because the influx of refugees from neighboring countries has imply insecurity in Kakuma refugees camp and its environs. Insecurity in Kakuma Refugee Camp is both a reflection of/and a response to broader regional instability, highlighting the complex interplay between local community. Refugees and regional security challenges in Kenya and it borders in the camp killings and looting of the shops continued and its remain as security threats in the largest Refugee camps as host communities and Refugees themselves experienced insecurity.

4.2 Mobility of SALWs between Refugees and the Host communities

The second objective was to assess the mobility of SALWs between the refugees and the host communities. Table 4.3 summarizes the narratives from the interviews about

the mobility of illegal weapons between refugees and the host communities. Again, the findings suggest that the Social Disorganization Theory of Crime has a more explanatory power in these security narratives.

Table 4.3 Narratives on the themes on mobility of SALWs

Narrative on mobility of light and small arms	No of interviewees
1. Threatening neighbours made theRefugees (4) Turkana acquire guns from theHost community within the Camp refugees (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
2. Facilitated by corruption within lawRefugees (4) enforcement agencies Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
3. Facilitated by weak legal frameworksRefugees (4) and governance structures Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
4. Cultural and linguistic barriersRefugees (4) contribute to the challenges inHost community within the Camp enforcing laws and regulations on arms(5) trafficking Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
5. Social and economic disparitiesRefugees (4) between refugees and hostHost community within the Camp communities contribute to the mobility(5) of light and small arms Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27

Source: Research data (2024)

The interviewees noted that the host community acquired guns from refugees for self-defense; refugees on the other hand sold guns to get money to support their families. So scarcity among the refugees fueled the need to sell guns to the host community. The host community needed guns to defend themselves from refugees and their hostile neighbours like the Karamojong' and the Pokot. This implied that the refugee host relations in SALW trade were embedded in the larger regional flows of SALWS from South Sudan; these flows of illicit SALWs increased an environment of social dislocation characterized by inter-ethnic mistrust amongst the Turkana and neighbours. Thus the gun trade itself appears to thrive in different communities that securitized their societies and economies as threatened by neighbours armed with SALWs; each ethnic community had the attitude those menacing neighbours needed to be deterred.

The Turkana host community was threatened by some Karamojong and some Pokot who were part of the regional nodes of trade in SAWLs. In 2001, during a time of relative shortage, it was reported that AK-47s sold by SPLA fighters to arms merchants in eastern Ugandan commanded a price of \$90 to \$147 each, a pistol could be purchased for approximately \$30, and a rifle could be traded for a bag of sorghum 17 (hrw .org). The Karamoja community traders would sell weapons to Pokot traders living on the Uganda/ Kenya border, who sell them in Kenya for Ksh 10.000 (approximately 135 \$) 18 (hrw .org). So, the communities that threatened the Turkana society and economic security- were at the tail-end in a chain of SALWs trade which increasingly brought high returns. Table 4.4 shows the recent spate.

Table 4.4. Recent spates of cattle raids between the Turkana and neighbours.

Date	Recent raids between Pokot, Karamojong and Turkana
May 22, 2023	Cattle raids resurface at Kenya/ Uganda border
May 22, 20223	Pokot leaders called on the government to intervene quickly. The cattle raids threatened a peace agreement between Sebtet, Karamojong and Pokot. Just recently hundreds of cattle had been driven off in the Kanyerus area of West Pokot County by bandits from Uganda.

Source: (Field Data, 2024)

Apart from the Pokot and the Karamojong' there was a notion from some of the host community members that the refugees were violent people; hence the host community needed to arm themselves for protection. The refugee banditry had led to insecurity in and outside the Camp. A member of the host community stated: "I have witnessed 6 deaths related to violence among Refugees themselves".

As Table 4.4 reveals, some factors that facilitated the illegal arms from neighbouring countries also facilitated arms between the Refugee Camp and the host community. For instance, corruption within law enforcement agencies was stated by the interviewees to have facilitated it. Refugees and asylum seekers could be asked to pay bribes to access essential services, such as resettlement, food, water, medical aid or shelter in the Kakuma Refugee Camp. Bribes could also be required to obtain permits or other UNCHR documentation or other forms of assistance. Some security personnel or other authorities usually demanded money or valuable exchange for not harassing or detaining refugees. The interviewees stated that the police usually demanded Ksh.50 per Boda Boda. The police justified this because they did provide security and they needed something for tea. This priming of a bribe according to the interviews carried out, the interviewees provided a loophole for criminals to transit illegal SALWs between the host and the Refugee Camp.

Just like for the international transit of SALWs, the fear of adversity in the camp or the host community has equally led to the demand for illegal SALWS in the Refugee Camp and the Host community. Some refugees acquire arms so that they could ward off discrimination and criminal activities in the camps. But some sought to engage in criminal activities in the Camp and the neighborhood. This did make them to create relations with the criminal network inside and outside the camp to pose security challenges. A case in mind was a network of criminals known as the 42 Brothers and Talla Gangs (TLG) that operated in Kakuma 3, Kakuma 2 and Kakuma 1- including the Hong Kong Area; the gangs carried out criminal activities. These guns acquired by the Pokot and the Turkana were used in road robberies in the Lodwar, Kainuk, Lokichar and Marich-Pass- where some youth from both the Turkana and the Pokot roamed with illegal AK47 Rifles. Table 4.5 shows recent highway robberies by the Turkana and the Pokot Bandits.

Table 4.5 Recent Highway Robberies by the Turkana and the Pokot Bandits.

Date	Highway Raids
2 May 2022	The passengers were en route to Lodwar from Kitale on Labour Day Four people were injured when gunmen sprayed a Quick Shuttle with bullets just past the KWS camp in Kainuk, Turkana County
February 11, 2023	Four Police Officers Among Six People Killed by Bandits, following a bandit attack on the Kitale - Lodwar highway at Kaakong area of Turkana County on Friday at 4pm.
June 29, 2020	Turkana County Commander Samuel Ndanyi singled out Kakong, Kenya Wildlife Service Kainuk, Turkwel Hydropower junction, Lami Nyeusi, Kambi Karaya and Marich Pass as the most dangerous areas.
July 6, 2023	Senate urged to fast-track resolution of border disputes between Pokot and Turkana counties in order to bring peace A Ugandan military court sent to prison 32 Kenyans after they were allegedly found in possession of illegal firearms and ammunition in the north-eastern sub-region of Karamoja.

Source: (Field Data, 2024)

The perennial highway robberies have resulted into consequences of deaths of my people in both gunshots and accidents I have an experience of a road ambush that involved some members of refugees' community between Kainuk and Lokichar region. A 40-year-old robbery with violence suspect was arrested in connection with a series of robberies plaguing the Lokichar Township and its surroundings. Kakuma Refugee camp, focuses on the growing insecurity in the region. Tondonyang attack from suspected Ethiopian Militia killed four Turkana fishermen on 15th of May 2025. It is also regional threats which already creates fragile as well restricts movement across both roads and borders point of Kenya with their neighbors such borders South Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somalia are remains inaccessible due to insecurity.

Such incidents not only highlight the vulnerability of refugees and host communities but also creates serious insecurity that affects related regional instability that affects both economic and political landscape like what happen between the Kenyan-Ethiopian border when questions arose about the government's capacity to protect both citizens and displaced populations. This calls for stronger collaboration between local, national, and international actors to address the root causes of this insecurity on highways strained relations with regional dynamics as business people stop importing some goods from Kenya to neighboring Southern Sudan. This resulted into negative impact in both local businesses across Turkana County with it environs because people suspended all travel to Turkana County thus affecting Kakuma Refugee Camp and its environs. This led to isolating the camp and disrupting economic activity in the area that cause serious insecurity in the Kakuma refugee camp.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDING

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings for objectives three and four- both of which are on the nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp. The two objectives were: 3) to determine the security status of the Kakuma refugee camp from the security narratives of refugees and 4) to assess the security status of the Kakuma refugee camp from the security narratives of the host community (including government officials). The discussion starts with findings for objective three and then follows with those of objective four.

5.1 Nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the Security Responses of the Refugees

The third objective was to determine the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the security narratives of refugees. Again, like the previous chapter the Social Disorganization Theory of crime best explains the nature of the refugee Camp. Insecurity associated with the Camp is heavily laced with structural undertones of the presence of a hostile environment of violence and scarcity. Table 5.1 summarizes the narrative themes of interviewees who are refugees in the Kakuma refugee camp.

Table 5.1 Nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp- Refugee Perspectives

Nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the security narratives of refugee	Interviewees	No. of Interviewees
The refugee camp is a cage	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs (7) Security personnel (6)	27
The security situation in Kakuma refugee camp has improved in the past few years	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
The security situation in Kakuma refugee camp has deteriorated in the past few years	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
The presence of UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies has improved the security situation in Kakuma refugee camp	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
The use of community policing has helped to address security challenges in Kakuma refugee camp	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
The involvement of refugees in the security management of the camp has contributed to its overall security	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27

Source: Research data (2024)

Many refugees described the Kakuma Refugee camp as a cage symbolizing confinement where there is no freedom of movement. For example, John, a 35-yearold South Sudanese Refugee, averred his struggles to find consistent work; he occasionally did “boda boda” (motorcycle work ferrying people) to get cash; but this cash was not enough to support his family. John missed the sense of purpose and stability he had when he worked as a teacher in his home country. He constantly worried about his

children's future due to the lack of educational opportunities in the Camp. Mary, 40 years old- a Congolese from the Democratic Republic of Congo- was a single mother of three. She missed the community support she had back home. In Kakuma, she faced daily struggles to provide for her children with limited resources; Mary often felt for her children's safety and well-being in the Camp which was an insecure environment. Amina 22, from Sudan, missed pursuing her education. She was studying medicine before fleeing her Country. In Kakuma, she had limited access to educational resources and she spent most of her time doing household chores, Amina dreamed of resuming her studies; she felt that the Camp life needed to come to an end for her to resume her studies. Thus, the Camp as a cage reveals the ambiguity of a place that is to provide refuge yet those therein experience alienation from the life chances- here human security of refugees is threatened by foregone opportunities in the home countries or the ambitions to transit to a third country- away from the Camp. (Data 196,885 Government, UNHCR).

Intersecting with the previous symbolic representation was the idea that the Camp was a 'waiting room' indicating a temporary and transitional to 3rd world countries. It is a place that one should not stay for long. Many refugees therein fled their home countries due to conflict, persecution, or violence. They arrive at Kakuma expecting a haven where they could live without fear of harm. This expectation was driven by the urgent need to escape immediate threats to their lives and the assumption that the Refugee Camp would provide security as they transited back home or somewhere better. Refugees often expected that in a camp like Kakuma, they would have access to essential services such as food, clean water, shelter and healthcare. These expectations came from the belief that international organizations and governments would provide humanitarian aid to meet their basic needs. The expectations were dashed by the dearth

of resources and insecurity in the camp. (Data on 20. 2024, an insecurity incident happened in Kakuma Refugee camp between two refugee communities. Unfortunately, following this incident, some refugees from Kakuma moved in large numbers to Ruiru -Sub -county through normal and hired public transport. As of July 4. 2024, the total number was 762 households comprising 30.054 individuals. (DRS REPPORT).

Ethnicities hostile in their origin states meet in the camp and so the Camp experienced ethnic and tribal tensions. Thus, too long a stay in such a camp could exacerbate interethnic animosities, as it happened between the Nuer and the Anyuak. These two communities had a history of conflict in Jonglei state in South Sudan; both communities had been fighting over scarce land and resources; living conditions for these two communities were harsh back home. This stress often manifested in negative ways. The stress and frustrations of living together in one place called Kalobeyei settlement area in the Kakuma Refugee Camp rekindled these old animosities within the Camp. Conflicts back home would often spill over to the Camp. The recent clashes between the Anyuak community and the Nuer community were due to animosity back home and overstaying in the Camp. (Data 297,258 UNCHR 2024 UNCHR Report).

Additionally, the results from the interview noted that the security situation in Kakuma Refugee Camp had improved in the past few years. NGO official noted that: "In the past few years, there were very many cases of insecurity being reported to the police station but it has greatly reduced in the last 4 years".

This is in concurrence with the views of the security personnel who felt that the security in the area had greatly improved. The improvement in the Refugee Camp started in 2006 when the host communities and refugees began collaborating on security matters- as a result of securitizing the society in Kakuma and its environs as

needing protection due to the presence of SALWs. This collaboration fostered mutual trust and understanding, allowing for more effective monitoring and response to potential threats and shared security efforts- such as joint patrols, information sharing and establishment of community security officers. These measures not only enhanced the safety of the camps; they also promoted a sense of community and shared responsibility, ultimately leading to a more secure and stable environment for all Refugees and host communities. Additionally, the host community and the refugees agreed to a greater extent that the presence of UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies had improved the security situation in Kakuma Refugee Camp. A refugee noted that: "The presence of these UN bodies put all the relevant authorities in check and security is a major concern for them especially for the refugees".

UNCHR and other UN agencies had formed local community policing that comprised of Refugee leaders and host communities; these improved inter-communal relations. The majority of those interviewed stated that the use of community policing in 2013 had helped to address security challenges in the Kakuma Refugee Camp; and that the involvement of refugees in the security management of the camp had contributed to its overall security. Again, this resonates with the Social Disorganization Theory of crime that posits that the context of crime or crime-free society matters.

However, the interviewees admitted that there was still some insecurity in the Camp due to several factors. There were scarce essential resources like food, water and medical supplies; this had led to tension and competition among camp residents- and a flash of violence. These made some refugees think of relocating elsewhere for safety. For example, Mary Nyalong, a South Sudan National was the victim of ethnic clashes in Kalobeyei settlement; by the time of writing this thesis she was requesting the

UNCHR and other agencies to relocate her to Dadaab Refugee Camp for safety. Also, conflict with the host community or external threats such as nearby conflict attacks or the presence of armed groups could sometimes create a pervasive sense of fear. For example, On October 29/2022, a man known as Sebabiri living in zone 111 Block 4, was beaten to death.

Mental health issues, the trauma of displacement and ongoing stress can affect the mental health of camp residents, potentially leading to increased violence or unrest. On February 5th 2024, a mother of four committed suicide in Kakuma 3 Area citing mental health and frustrations; also, UNCHR had created quidding spaces- people with mental health issues in the camp- and counselling among Refugees after cases of mental illness became more salient among the Refugees themselves.

Lack of rule of law or enforcement of rules can result in lawlessness and disorder. The interviewees stated that on 16th November 2024, a middle-aged man was killed by unknown gangs in the Camp, but when leaders from refugee communities requested police to help them to bring the body out from the dump site the police refused for more than three days. Also on 29 April 2024, community leaders blamed Kenyan police over the death of a South Sudanese man in custody in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

There was competition for the available meagre resources in the camp. UNCHR scholarships also created competitions between Refugees from different nationalities living in the Camp. Additionally, the economic inequality of refugees was severely evident in the Kakuma Refugee Camp. Inequality like employment opportunities was rife among refugees; refugees often had limited access to employment opportunities compared to the local communities; jobs within the camp were scarce and highly competitive, and many refugees ended up in low-paying informal work. Even when

refugees found work, their incomes were typically much lower than those of the local communities. This is partly because many jobs available to refugees were low-skilled and did not pay well. Kakuma faced legal restrictions that limited the ability of refugees to work outside the camp or start their businesses; the need for permits, which were difficult to obtain, restricted the refugees' economic activities. Economic Integration into the broader economy was challenging for refugees due to discrimination, social stigma and restrictive policies policy. National and local policies often hindered the economic integration of refugees, maintaining their economic marginalization. Social and cultural barriers, including discrimination and xenophobia further entrenched economic inequalities among refugees.

Many refugees expressed a deep sense of powerlessness and alienation regarding access to justice within Kakuma Refugee Camp. One refugee lamented, *"If someone wrongs you here, there is nowhere to go. We just keep quiet or move away"* (Male, South Sudanese, 28). The respondents consistently highlighted a lack of formal legal frameworks, with no operational courts or accessible legal representatives in the camp. A Somali mother of four shared, *"My child was denied a place in school, and no one explained why. I tried to ask around, but everyone said I should just accept it."* Such educational grievances were common, with refugees noting the absence of advocacy groups to champion their rights.

Corruption and mismanagement further compounded their frustrations. One participant explained, *"Sometimes you have to pay to get basic services, and if you complain, you will be marked"* (Congolese youth, 22). These experiences point to a perception that justice could be bought, undermining trust in the administrative system.

Fear of retaliation also emerged as a powerful deterrent to seeking justice. A Dinka woman shared, *“Even if someone abuses you, reporting is dangerous. What if they come after you or your children?”* This fear extended to interactions with both authorities and fellow residents, reflecting a climate of intimidation and silence.

Another critical issue was lack of legal awareness. Many respondents admitted they didn’t know where or how to report grievances. *“No one ever told us about our rights or how to report. We just survive,”* stated an Ethiopian refugee (Male, 35). The absence of accessible information and legal education left residents feeling uninformed and disempowered.

Language and cultural barriers were also cited repeatedly. *“We don’t understand Swahili well, and the officials don’t understand our languages,”* said a Burundian man. These barriers hindered meaningful dialogue with camp authorities, reducing the chances of fair resolution.

Lastly, many respondents pointed to the overburdened humanitarian system. *“The UN staff are too few. They come and go. They are tired and don’t listen,”* said a refugee leader. The shortage of resources and personnel meant that even where mechanisms existed, access was extremely limited.

Data voices Refugees close to starvation are protesting for their very survival. Cuts to aid have led to catastrophe in Kenya’s Kakuma Refugee Camp—home to nearly 300,000 refugees. In recent days, refugees in Kakuma staged peaceful protests demanding access to food, water, and shelter—the necessities for survival. (media@refugees.org)

The main object of insecurity was actually to satisfy economic needs since the resources are scarcely available. There were several attacks either at home or on the roads. Theft cases were the order of the day, especially at night and this was done by organized gangs. The criminal activities were carried out by both by some refugees some members of host community. Petty stealing as well as robbery was experienced in the Refugee Camp. A refugee lamented that:

"The level of insecurity in the camp is very bad and there is a need to make improvements". **(Source: (Field Data, 2024))**

The main factors that have led to a high rate of insecurity in the camp are lack of education, drug abuse as well as reduction of food portions in addition to the presence of gangs in the camps. Kakuma Refugee Camp had faced several challenges related to food security including reductions in food portions due to various factors such as funding shortfalls, supply chain issues, and rising costs data on reduction of food portion sizes (WFP Report 2021). WFP announced that food rations for refugees in Kenya including Kakuma Refugee camp were cut by 30% due to funding shortages. In 2022 continued funding challenges led to further reductions, with some reports indicating up to 40% cuts in food portions in 2023. Despite efforts to secure more funding, WFP reported ongoing reductions maintaining reduced rations at around 60% of the required daily intake; UNCHR Reports indicated that food distributions have been consistently below the required minimum, often providing less than 2,100 kcal per person per day- which was the standard minimum requirement. Nutritional impact Surveys conducted in Kakuma had shown increased rates of malnutrition among children and vulnerable populations due to reduced food portions. The Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate in Kakuma had been reported to exceed the emergency threshold of 15% during periods of significant food ration cuts (UNHCR, 2006).

The humanitarian response in Kakuma refugee camp faces severe strain, largely due to the "global inflation and rising food prices [that] had made it more expensive to procure and distribute food." This economic pressure directly impacted the most vulnerable, leading to "smaller portions being distributed to stretch available resources," a practical cut that residents undoubtedly felt acutely in their daily struggle for sustenance. Compounding this, the efficiency of aid delivery was hampered by "administrative delays and bureaucratic hurdles," as well as "coordination challenges among various aid agencies and stakeholders," collectively exacerbating the pervasive issue of food scarcity within the camp.

In response to these dire circumstances, organizations like UNICEF and WFP have been compelled to implement "targeted nutritional programs to support vulnerable groups, including children, pregnant women, and the elderly," explicitly aiming "to mitigate the impact of reduced food portions." This includes the establishment of "supplementary feeding programs and therapeutic feeding centers...to address acute malnutrition cases," a clear indication of the severe health consequences arising from the broader food crisis. From the perspective of the humanitarian community, there is a continuous, urgent plea for support, as "Humanitarian organizations continuously appealed for increased funding from the international community to restore full rations and ensure food security in Kakuma," frequently launching "Emergency appeals and fundraising campaigns...to bridge funding gaps and provide immediate relief."

Amidst these challenges, the resilience of the refugee community is evident in "community-based solutions." Initiatives focusing on "enhancing local food production through community gardens and small-scale farming projects" represent a critical effort by the refugees themselves to "supplement food rations," demonstrating an agency in

the face of adversity. Furthermore, "Training programs on nutrition and food management were provided to refugees to help them maximize the use of available resources," acknowledging the need to empower individuals with skills for self-reliance and resource optimization in a constrained environment.

Data Local Integration Plans: UNHCR works with governments and partners to develop integrated socio-economic development plans that address the needs of both refugees and host communities, promoting long-term sustainable solutions.

The high level of poverty in the camp among the refugees had created joblessness as well as youth radicalization; this also contributed to the state of insecurity in the camp. Conflicts were equally created through the fights for resources as well as family squabbles arising from petty issues among the neighbours. The objective of the insecurity is to create disharmony in the camp and create economic gain among the individuals involved in criminal activities. The involvement of refugees in the security management system of a refugee camp was crucial for fostering a sense of community, trust and safety (Mogire, 2003). It promoted a collaborative approach, considering the unique perspectives and experiences of the displaced population. (Data: 804,594 persons UNCHR, 2024.)

The study by KHRC (2019) found that refugees faced challenges accessing basic services such as healthcare and education, which could exacerbate existing security challenges in host communities. The collaboration between the government and the refugees plus other stakeholders could improve the security situation- though to a low extent (Mogire, 2003). There was high insecurity at night and through community policing, there had been a merging of gangs to overcome community policing. A study by the International Crisis Group (ICG) in 2021 examined the impact of refugee camps

on the security of host countries in the Middle East. The study found that refugee camps could become a breeding ground for radicalization and recruitment of combatants by terrorist groups, especially when refugees are not provided with adequate education and employment opportunities.

Securitization theory can also explain the Nature of Kakuma refugee camp from the perspectives of refugees. Refugees' leaders have tried to ensure safety and order within the camps; these groups have taken roles akin to neighborhood watch programs, addressing internal conflicts and protecting vulnerable members. Refugees voice grievances through community meetings. The recent ones are in Table 5.2.

Refugees often participate in community meetings organized by camp management or NGOs; these meetings provided a platform to discuss issues such as security, living conditions and access to services. Refugees also reported issues to NGOs and human rights organizations operating within the camp. These organizations often acted as intermediaries bringing grievances to the attention of higher authorities. Security issues related to theft, violence, sexual assault and external threats had been prominent. Refugees had expressed concerns about their safety within the camp and the need for better protection measures. Complaints about, living conditions, inadequate shelter, poor sanitation, lack of clean water and insufficient food supplies were common.

5.2 Refugees securitization moves in Kakuma

Date	Actors
24,5 2024	UNCHR, Refugee community leaders held a meeting to discuss security situations in the camp. They agreed to form joint police patrolling in the affected Area of Kalobeyei Area.
15. 7 2013.	Community leaders, refugees, county government, UNCHR held meeting over violence between Dinka and Nuer clashes, come out with a solution.
Date 2rd of August 2024	UNCHR held a meeting over tension between Ayual and Hol community in Hong Kong Area the County government and UNCHR, community leaders of Hol community and Ayual communities has agreed to monitor the security situations and they will report it in case of any attack
Meeting of 30 th June 2024.held at UNCHR	All communities living in Kakuma and Kalobeyei to refrain from using the force for revenge, and crude weapons such as machetes and Pangas cannot be used against other people
Meeting of 30 th June 2024. held at UNCHR	Possessions of crude weapons and involving in unlawful activities is illegal and perpetrators will be prosecuted in line with Kenyan Law. Those involved in criminal activities to be prosecuted and which may result in subsequent cancellation of their status.
Meeting of 30 th June 2024.held at UNCHR	Joint patrolling too be established. During distribution of food rations,

Source: (Field Data, 2024)

The above dates showed the actors present to sort out insecurity in Kakuma and Kalobeyei Area; the meeting brought community leaders and the Turkana County commissioner, UNCHR to solve the camp conflicts (Turkana County Commissioner's Office 2024, June 30). The refugee leaders securitized the community in the Camp as requiring protection. For example, the Kakuma and Kalobeyei Community elders and leaders and youth of refugee communities met at the UNHCR for a Peace and Reconciliation meeting on 30th June 2024. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Julius

Kavita, the County Commissioner, of Turkana County. The meeting was attended by Mr. Nanduri Sateesh- Head of Sub Office, Kakuma

UNCHR and Mr. Sammy Koch Deputy Camp Manager, Department of Refugee Services, Kakuma. The Solutions preferred on this date were as follows:

- All communities living in Kakuma and Kalobeyei to refrain from using force for revenge, and crude weapons such as machetes and Pangas cannot be used against other people
- The possession of crude weapons and involvement in unlawful activities is illegal and perpetrators will be prosecuted in line with Kenyan Law. Those involved in criminal activities are to be prosecuted which may result in subsequent cancellation of their status.
- All communities living in Kakuma and Kalobeyei to inform the Kenya police service about criminal activities and details of perpetrators.
- Social Media platforms to frozen if are misused to incite people
- UNCHR and Partners to conduct protection and needs assessment and accordingly provide support to people affected including facilitation of relocation, and provision of immediate Lifesaving assistance.
- Joint patrolling to be established. during the distribution of food rations,
- Religious Leaders to address disputed communities and call for peaceful coexistence.
- Increase the presence of Law enforcement officials and establishment of more police posts to ensure the safety and security of people and properties Anyuak and Nuer communities to join the Kenya police services conducting joint Patrolling (Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, 2024, February 27)

On the 2nd of August 2024, UNCHR held a meeting over tension between Ayual and the Hol community in the Hong Kong Area. The Turkana County Government and the UNCHR, community leaders of the Hol and the Ayual communities agreed to monitor the security situations and report any incident in case of any attack. Table 5 shows the resolutions of other conflicts.

Table 5.3 Resolutions to other conflicts

Date	Activities
January 2021.	Ethnic clashes between Nuer and Anyuak in Kakuma Refugee camp community leaders urged the Nuer and Anyuak to stay together as one family.
March 2021	Nuer community in Kakuma 4 asked UNCHR to relocate them to Dadaab refugee camps
June 25 th 2024	Fighting ceased after leaders from community Nuer and Anyuak communities agreed to help stop hostilities
July 4 2024	Insecurity incidents between two refugee communities
July 15 2024	Lokjaak community appeal for relocation to Dadaab
2 rd 8 2024	Hol and Ayual community clash in Kakuma 1 Hol was revenging to Ayual community in Kakuma Refugee.
3 RD 8 2024	Turkana county commissioner and UNCHR, Community leaders held an emerging meeting solve the conflict before it escalates further

Source: (Field Data, 2024)

The UNCHR and NGOs have implemented programs to improve living conditions, provide legal assistance and offer psychosocial support. The Host state did deploy the police presence in the camp to prevent conflicts and the commission of illegal Activities (UNCHR, 2024).

5.3 Nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp- the Host community Perspectives

Objective four was meant to assess the security status of Kakuma Refugee Camp from the security narratives of the host community (including government officials).

Members of the host community often viewed the camp as a burden symbolizing the strain on local resources and infrastructure. They note "Kakuma Refugee Camp puts a lot of pressure on resources it is a burden we have to bear.' The Camp therefore was portrayed as a terrain of conflict, tensions and competition between refugees and host communities. Again, the Social Dislocation Theory of crime is also relevant here as well. The influx of refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp had significantly strained the host resources and infrastructure. The water supply system in Kakuma Refugee Camp had been under pressure due to the high demand from both the refugee and host communities, the camp population had increased, but the water infrastructure had not been adequately expanded to meet this growing need. Sanitation facilities including latrines and waste disposal systems were insufficient leading to health risks and environmental concerns throughout the camp. In 2017, reports indicated that the water supply system was providing only 20 litres per person per day, which was below the UNCHR standard of 30 litres (UNCHR report from 2021). The foregoing report highlighted ongoing challenges in maintaining adequate sanitation facilities, with the ratio of one latrine for every 50 people, far above the recommended standard (UNHCR; Help Children Now, UNICEF USA- 2019 Medical services in the healthcare facilities in Kakuma Refugee Camp were overburdened, with insufficient medical staff, supplies and infrastructure to meet the needs of the larger refugee population; this affected both the refugee and the local community. There were also disease outbreaks, which could spread rapidly in the overcrowded conditions of the Camp. For example, in 2019, an outbreak of cholera occurred in the Camp; this was exacerbated by inadequate water and sanitation facilities. The healthcare system struggled to contain the outbreak due to limited resources (UNHCR) (World Athletics 2014).

Table 5.4 Nature of Kakuma- the host community Perspectives

Nature of Kakuma refugee camp- the host community perspectives	Source of narrative	No of interviews
Refugee Camp as a burden	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs (7) Security personnel (6)	27
The security situation in Kakuma refugee camp poses a threat to the host community	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs (7) Security personnel (6)	27
The involvement of host community members in the management of Kakuma refugee camp has helped to address security challenges?	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs (7) Security personnel (6)	27
The social and economic disparities between refugees and host communities contribute to the security challenges in Kakuma refugee camp	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs(7) Security personnel (6)	27
The involvement of government officials in the management of Kakuma refugee camp has helped to address security challenges	Refugees (4) Host community within the Camp (5) Host community outside the Camp (5) NGOs (7) Security personnel (6)	27

Source: Research data (2024)

Additionally, the majority of the interviewees were of the view that the security situation in Kakuma Refugee Camp posed a threat to the host community. However, they were not very clear whether the involvement of host community members in the management of the Kakuma refugee camp had helped to address security challenges. Additionally, the majority of those interviewed stated that the social and economic disparities between refugees and host communities contributed to the security challenges in the Kakuma Refugee Camp. NGO official noted that: "The fight for meagre economic and social resources creates conflict which in turn leads to criminality in the area".

The involvement of government officials in the management of the Kakuma Refugee Camp had helped to address security challenges. A member noted that: "The government is everywhere and there is no way that they can let the insecurity from the camp spread outside." the increased presence of government and security agencies in Kakuma Refugee Camp had evolved, influenced by several factors. First was the establishment and growth of the Camp: when Kakuma Refugee Camp was established in 1992 in north-western Kenya the Camp grew together with the presence of government security apparatus. The Camp was created to accommodate refugees fleeing conflicts in Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Initially, the Camp was managed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with limited direct involvement from the Kenyan government.

However, as the Camp grew in population and complexity, the Kenyan government's involvement increased to maintain order and security- which became salient from the late 1990s to the 2010s. As the Camp's population swelled due to ongoing conflicts in neighboring countries, security concerns escalated. Issues such as inter-ethnic violence, crime, and potential terrorist threats required more stringent security measures. The Kenyan Government deployed more police and security personnel to monitor and manage the Camp. Security checkpoints, patrols, and surveillance became more common to prevent violence and maintain order. The security presence became a big agenda particularly after major terrorist attacks in Kenya, such as the Westgate Mall attack in 2013 (AP News, 2013)

The threat of terrorism from groups like Al-Shabaab led to heightened security measures across the country, including in refugee camps. Increased surveillance, intelligence gathering, and stricter controls on movements in and out of the camp to

prevent infiltration by terrorist elements became the norm. The increased presence of police and security forces conducting regular patrols, searches, and sometimes raids to enforce laws and maintain order was noted from time to time. But this strong government presence had drawbacks too: Refugees' privacy was significantly reduced as their movements and activities were constantly monitored. Freedom of movement within and outside the camp was often limited, making it difficult for refugees to seek opportunities or reunite with family members (CSIS, 2016).

The heavy presence of security forces in refugee camps can indeed create an atmosphere of fear and distrust among refugees, leading to significant tensions and potential conflicts. This pervasive insecurity is corroborated by various studies. For instance, the UNHCR acknowledges that "fear" is a primary driver for refugees fleeing their homes, and even after reaching a safe country, these fears often persist. The presence of "errant military and police forces" is explicitly cited as a source of physical threats to refugees, contributing to a lack of safety (UNHCR, "Addressing refugee security," 2006).

Furthermore, there is a tangible risk of security personnel abusing their power, which can lead to human rights violations, harassment, or exploitation. Research by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights indicates that national responses to migration, particularly those implemented by law enforcement, frequently result in a "myriad of human rights violations" against migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. These violations can include murder, sexual and gender-based violence (GBV), torture, unlawful detention, and discrimination ("Study on the human rights impact of law enforcement on asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in Africa," 2023). Specific concerns are raised about refugee camps not always being safe havens, where

unaccompanied women and girls may be vulnerable to exploitation by camp guards and male refugees (UNHCR, "Addressing refugee security," 2006). Moreover, reports from human rights observers highlight that restrictions on freedom of movement imposed by local police or soldiers can effectively turn camps into places of internment, raising concerns about arbitrary detention and the treatment of detainees (OHCHR, "Monitoring and Protecting the Human Rights of Refugees and/or Internally Displaced Persons Living in Camps," n.d.).

Additionally, a significant focus on security often diverts crucial resources from essential services such as education, healthcare, and livelihood programs, which are vital for refugees' well-being and self-sufficiency. In the Kenyan context, for example, it has been noted that while host communities sometimes perceive refugees as receiving preferential treatment for services, refugees themselves often lament the perceived mismanagement of resources by both the host government and humanitarian organizations, with concerns about diverted funds meant for their livelihoods. There have even been instances reported where healthcare staff within camps opened private clinics and diverted hospital drugs for profit, further diminishing available services (Carleton University, "Refugee Welfare in Kenya: Challenges and Solutions," 2024). More broadly, the Kenyan government has explicitly stated that some resources are "diverted to provide security to the refugees" due to perceived insecurity posed by the refugee presence, particularly after major terrorist attacks (University of Nairobi, "Refugee Repatriation as a National Security Concern in Africa: Kenya-Somalia Experience (2013-2018)," 2018).

Finally, the constant surveillance and presence of armed personnel can have profound negative psychological effects on refugees, especially those who have already

experienced trauma and conflict. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that refugees and migrants are significantly more prone to mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) compared to host populations. These conditions are not solely linked to pre-migration trauma but also to "ongoing stressors related to the experience of displacement itself," including "challenging and life-threatening conditions including violence, detention and lack of access to services to cover basic needs" in host countries (WHO, "Refugee and migrant mental health," 2025). Studies emphasize that post-migration stressors—which include conditions like a lack of safety in refugee camps and severe living conditions—can predict levels of distress as powerfully as, or even more so than, prior war exposure (Cambridge University Press, "The mental health of civilians displaced by armed conflict: an ecological model of refugee distress," 2017). The policy of "encampment" in Kenya, which curtails freedom of movement and work, contributes to feelings of insecurity and exacerbates mental health challenges among refugees (Migration Policy Institute, "East Africa's Economic Powerhouse and Refugee Haven, Kenya Struggles with Security Concerns," 2024).

Interviewees were of the view that the security situation in the Kakuma refugee camp posed a threat to the host community. Insecurity was sometimes constant but occurred especially when Refugees were celebrating big occasions like Independence Day and Valentine's Day; youth fight during those occasion. For Example, on 14th February 2024, youth from different communities clashed which resulted in the detention of some Refugees in Kakuma- and two youths died in police custody. Also, on 9th July 2024 which was a South Sudan Independence Day and also a public holiday (UNCHR report from 2021). The same incidents happened which also resulted in serious injuries among youth who fought. On 21st June 2024, the Turkana community fought with the

Nuer community for reasons; the reason the Nuer youth went and raped a Turkana girl: this angered the local community who responded by engaging in a fight with the Nuer community of South Sudan

However, the involvement of host community members in the management of Kakuma refugee Camp had improved the security situation. UNCHR formed a local community and refugee security team to work hands in hands security agencies in Kakuma Refugee Camp; the team always responded if there was a problem among refugees and local communities around Kakuma Refugee Camp. Refugees' leaders always operate to ensure the safety of the Refugees and host community by responding or working with security agencies in the Kakuma; they provided intelligence gathering that could help the security operations in the Kakuma and its environs.

The social and economic disparities between refugees and host communities contributed to the security challenges in the Kakuma refugee camp. Business communities like Boda Boda said they had suspended their usual business across some dangerous places in the camp. For example, on June 20, 2024, there was an Incident in the Kalobeyei settlement Area; a violent clash erupted between the Anyuak and the Nuer communities (Lutta, 2024; FCA Kenya, 2024). The conflict reportedly began due to escalating ethnic tensions in South Sudan; multiple people were killed including several women and children, and many injuries were reported. Numerous shelters were burned, and properties were destroyed, leading to further displacement and loss of personal belongings. The violence caused significant displacement within the camp as families fled their homes seeking safety.

The Security forces were deployed to quell the violence and restore order. Humanitarian agencies provided emergency assistance to the affected individuals,

including medical care, shelter, and psychological support. UNHCR and various NGOs moved to address the root causes of the conflict and promote reconciliation. Increased security measures were implemented within the camp to prevent further outbreaks of violence. This included regular patrols, surveillance, and the establishment of peace committees involving community leaders. Humanitarian organizations continued to provide support to those affected by the violence, ensuring access to necessities such as food, water, shelter, and medical care.

The host community interviews suggested that Suppliers of essential goods like cereals, milk, and vegetables experienced significant disruptions in their supply chains due to the violence. Transport routes became unsafe, and market activities were halted during these periods of conflict. One interview noted:

"When the fighting breaks out, it's too dangerous to deliver our goods to the camp. We've had to stop our deliveries several times because of the violence." **(Interviewee, 2024)**

Another interviewee noted the economic impact that the violence affected not only the refugees but also the local economy. Suppliers and farmers from the host community relied on the camp for a substantial portion of their income.

The interviewee noted thus: "Many of us depend on the camp for our livelihood. When there's trouble, we can't sell our produce, and it affects our families too." **(Interviewee, 2024)**

On security concerns, the interviewee from the host community noted that host community members who supply goods to the camp often felt unsafe during times of heightened tension. They were wary of travelling to and within the camp.

The interviewee noted:

"It's scary to go to the camp when there are reports of fighting. We don't want to get caught up in the violence." **(Interviewee, 2024)**

The violence also strained relationships between the host community and the refugee populations. Suppliers often found it challenging to navigate these tensions while conducting their business.

An interview noted: "We used to have good relationships with many people in the camp, but now there's a lot of mistrust. It's hard to do business in this environment." **(Interviewee, 2024)**

Consequently, many suppliers expressed a desire for an increased return to peace and normalcy.

These insecurity episodes have been fueled by social and economic disparities between refugees and host communities. Disparities can create a sense of marginalization among groups, increasing the risk of social unrest and making it harder for authorities to maintain order within the camp. Addressing these disparities through inclusive policies and resource distribution was crucial for fostering harmony and minimizing security risks in such environments (UNHCR, 2016).

Likewise, the results indicated that the involvement of government officials in the management of Kakuma Refugee Camp had helped to address security challenges to a large extent. The Government had all the machinery to handle any form of insecurity in and outside the refugee camp. Proper coordination with other stakeholders and agencies was crucial in making sure that collaborative efforts bore the fruit of a safe environment. Interviewees equally noted that the Government played a critical role in securing the refugee camp since it had all the necessary machinery.

The Kenyan Government deployed police officers and other security personnel to patrol the camp and its surroundings. This ensured a visible law enforcement presence to deter crime and maintain order. The government worked closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) to develop and implement security strategies. This collaboration included information sharing and joint security assessments. The Government had established security checkpoints at strategic points within and around the camp; this helped to control the movement of people and goods, preventing unauthorized access and potential security threats. Community policing initiatives were yet another implemented by the government to curb violence. Community policing involved training and working with refugee community leaders and members to identify and address security issues collaboratively. This approach helped build trust between refugees and law enforcement. Strict registration and documentation processes for all refugees had been implanted; this helped to ensure that only legitimate individuals resided in the camp. This process aided in tracking and monitoring the population within the camp **(Interviewee, 2024)**.

There had also been Implementation of conflict resolution and mediation mechanisms to address disputes within the camp; this helped prevent conflicts from escalating into violence. The government had also employed surveillance techniques and intelligence gathering to monitor potential security threats. This included both human intelligence (informants) and technological means (cameras and other monitoring devices). The Government had also provided security training and capacity building providing security training for both government personnel and community members to enhance their ability to respond to and manage security incidents effectively. The Government has also developed and maintained emergency response plans to address potential security crises, including evacuation procedures and coordination with emergency services. The government had also enforced the legal framework governing the conduct within the camp, including addressing issues such as gender-based violence, theft, and other criminal activities through appropriate legal channels. Last but not least the

government had ensured the provision of humanitarian assistance such as food, water, and healthcare reduces the likelihood of conflicts arising from resource scarcity.

The Government of Kenya in collaboration with UNCHR worked together with the community leaders to maintain security in the camp and its environs by deploying security forces like police backed up the local security leaders appointed by the different communities across the Kakuma Refugee Camp (Interviewee, 2024).

Securitization Theory examines how certain issues are framed as security threats that require extraordinary measures. Applying this theory to the host community's perspective on the Kakuma Refugee Camp provided insight into how the presence of the camp had been perceived and managed. The host community often viewed the Refugee Camp as a source of competition for limited resources such as water, and grazing firewood. This competition can escalate into conflicts leading to the perception of refugees as a security threat. Local businesses labour markets and environmental degradation had been affected by the influx of refugees; this had sometimes led to economic tensions. The presence of a large refugee population could strain social services infrastructure, and cultural cohesion leading to grievances from the host community channels.

Host community members often voiced their grievances through local meetings and forums organized by local government authorities or community leaders. Grievances were sometimes aired through local radio stations and social media platforms, community leaders could directly approach local government officials, humanitarian agencies and security forces to express concerns. The host community also approached the traditional chief, UNCHR and the Turkana County Government to address their grievances when such incidents as attacks, and robberies occurred. Some NGOs

working in the area facilitate discussions between the host community and authorities, provided a platform for grievances to be heard. Table 5.6 shows some meetings.

Table 5.5 The Securitization Moves by the local community

Date	Activities
Date 22 Jul 2003	community leaders and Turkana community peace dialogue after deadly clashes
25 June 2003	Host community organized meeting to address to insecurity in the camp through dialogue.
4 August 2006	Host community meets with UNCHR, Refugee leaders to address tension in Kakuma refugee camp after refugees killed.
11 June 2024	Host community addressed their issues on forum attended by UNCHR agencies, Refugee leaders together to address insecurity matters after members of Nuer raped Turkana girl near Kalobeyei settlement Area.

Source: (Field Data, 2024)

As can be seen in Table 5.5 the host community from armed violence and inter-communal conflicts therein. Their safety, access to basic needs and overall well-being were major security concerns. The Host community thus expressed the good neighbour principle in securitizing the refugee community as requiring protection. The host community also securitized their society as threatened by competition over scarce resources and tensions with the refugee population.

The perpetrators were alleged to be members of the host community. Ejem, a Turkana elder of Lopusiki Village explained that refugees were also involved in armed robberies within and around the camp. He argued that the Kenya Government as well as UNCHR and refugees alike initially thought that the perpetrators were members of the host communities. But the view that refugees were involved gained currency when a refugee by the nickname Apalowong was waylaid and ambushed In April 2013, and shot by police at night only to realize he was around with a gun. From then on the police had to

rethink their approach to banditry in and around. This demonstrated that several refugees possessed illegal guns in the camp and were directly involved in robberies within and around the camp. A Somali refugee Mohammed Hussein observed that several refugees in the Kakuma Refugee camp possessed guns in their houses. He averred that in July 2011, conflict erupted between the Turkana and the Dinka following the killing of a young Turkana boy by a Dinka refugee. The body of the Turkana boy had been thrown into a pit latrine; this sparked the conflict in the Camp (Radio Tamazuj, 2024).

The findings from this study clearly underscore the multifaceted nature of security challenges in Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei settlement area. While the UNHCR has made notable efforts—such as aiming to meet international standards for water and sanitation (UNHCR, 2021)—gaps remain in critical areas like healthcare, infrastructure, and social cohesion. The inadequate ratio of latrines (1:50), frequent disease outbreaks like the 2019 cholera epidemic, and an overstretched healthcare system highlight chronic service deficiencies that compromise both refugee and host community well-being.

Security concerns have also been prominently linked to ethnic tensions, particularly during high-profile celebrations, with tragic consequences including deaths and mass displacement (Lutta, 2024; FCA Kenya, 2024). The clashes between communities such as the Anyuak and Nuer illustrate how unresolved grievances and social disparities exacerbate volatility. Despite these tensions, collaborative security strategies—such as the joint deployment of police, peace committees, and community intelligence systems—have shown promise in mitigating violence.

The study also highlights the significant role of host community engagement and government involvement in addressing insecurity. Government-led efforts including checkpoints, community policing, surveillance, and legal enforcement have contributed to restoring some level of order. However, the findings caution against an overreliance on securitized approaches, which may intensify fear, infringe on rights, and heighten trauma among already vulnerable populations (CSIS, 2016; UNHCR, 2006; ACHPR, 2023).

Finally, applying Securitization Theory reveals how both refugees and host communities construct narratives of threat and protection, often framing one another as both victims and potential aggressors. These competing perceptions fuel a complex dynamic in which grievances over resource allocation, economic opportunities, and public safety intersect with broader geopolitical concerns such as terrorism and border control.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The section provides the study findings in summary and presents the conclusions. This section further gives recommendations grounded on study findings.

6.2 Summary

The study revealed that the majority of the key informants were male. Further the findings showed that the majority of the interviewees were aged between 45 and 54; this was closely followed by those aged 35 and 44. The majority of the respondents were graduates and well-versed in matters concerning, the social dislocation factors shaping Kakuma refugee camp as a security threat in Northwestern Turkana. Both the social Disorganization Theory of crime and Securitization Theories were relevant in shedding insights into the discursive Security nature of Kakuma Refugee Camp. For social disorganization theory insights on objective one, the transit of SALWs from the international source was attributed to the conflict in South Sudan that made SALWS available to smugglers.

The porous border enabled the refugees and other smugglers to transit weapons. The Refugee Camp and its environs also had its social dislocation that made persons therein and thereabouts acquire a SALW. Key factors in the camp included scarcity of economic opportunities, psychological trauma, and the presence of criminal gangs. Displacement of the refugees from their respective countries creates a psychological burden that brings about stress and the commission of a crime. Lack of education or skills training and influence of criminal networks were identified as factors that contributed to refugees involving themselves in crimes.

Some considerable respondents were of the view that illegal weapons were from external actors especially those who are dealers in illegal arms; an equal number stated that the arms came from other sources not necessarily from the external dealers and smugglers. This could mean that criminals have a way of getting arms from various sources- and the sources implied the operation of social dislocation. The results too indicated that illegal weapons were brought into refugee camps through the involvement of internal actors such as camp staff and refugees themselves. It indicates that it is not easy to get arms from outside when you are a refugee and this could be brought into the camp by those who are in the system within.

Staff from various agencies were seen as able to smuggle weapons into the camp because they were not thoroughly scrutinized by the security personnel. The study found that a lack of security measures and border controls contributed to the influx of illegal weapons into refugee camps. Guns and other illegal weapons were smuggled through the porous Kenya-South Sudan Border and they got their way into the camp through various means. The lack of thorough checks in the camp also led to the infiltration of arms into the camp.

The results further showed that social and economic conditions within the camps contributed to the demand for and use of illegal weapons. The refugees sought to gain economic freedom and satisfy their financial needs and those of their dependents. Lack of proper means for survival coupled with the fact that refugees could not be able to access decent jobs could lead to some elements of criminal activities by the refugees since they needed to cater for their survival. On the other hand, the results showed that those with illegal arms were not using it for self-defence but rather for criminal

activities. Some of the refugees smuggled arms into the camp for fear of lack of protection having in mind that they are coming from unprotected regions.

Results from the interviews stated that the movement of guns and other illegal arms was due to porous borders and because some security personnel were corrupt hence allowing the weapons to enter the country. There was laxity from the security personnel in carrying out thorough searches at the entry points. Additionally, drivers from the war-torn areas could ferry the arms once they were given substantial money; they would hide the weapons coupled with the fact that there was no stricter border control by the personnel at the entry point. In some instances, arms were smuggled into the country through the use of undesignated roads by arms dealers or even the host community. Transportation of illegal arms into the Refugee Camp was usually a coordinated activity that involved some government officials and arms smugglers.

The host community equally sold arms to the refugees since they had access to illegal arms from neighboring countries. The host community having access to weapons made it easy for the infiltration of arms into the Refugee Camp. These guns could equally be sold or hired to the refugee camps criminals. The arms were used to rob fellow refugees so that those robbing could have more resources than the rest. The findings from the mobility of small arms noted that the mobility of light and small arms between refugees and host communities was facilitated by corruption within law enforcement agencies.

It is not easy for arms to be smuggled into the camp when there is strict adherence by the law enforcers. Corrupt officers would take bribes and look the other way as arms were smuggled into the country through the borders as well as in the camp. Strict surveillance at the border and in the camp reduces the chances of arms being brought into the camp. Conversely, the mobility of light and small arms between refugees and

host communities was neither facilitated by weak legal frameworks and governance structures nor otherwise. This is an indication that there are enough legal frameworks to cater for the smuggling of arms into the camp. Execution of the laws is paramount in ensuring that the proliferation of arms is reduced in the refugee camp and its environment.

Additionally, cultural and linguistic barriers did not contribute to the challenges in enforcing laws and regulations on arms trafficking. Enforcement of the laws is not pegged on the language use since ignorance is no defense. The cultural differences of the refugees do not exempt them from adhering to the law; hence any law-breaking is purely treated as criminal and not otherwise on cultural differences.

There was also a notion from some of the host community members that the refugees were violent people; hence there was a need for the host community to arm themselves for protection. This led to insecurity in and outside the camp. Discrimination by the host community equally led to the infiltration of arms into the country and eventually into the refugee camp. Some of the refugees acquired arms so that they could ward off discrimination; the arms also empowered them to involve themselves in criminal activities in the camps. This made them create relations with the criminal network inside and outside the camp to pose security challenges. Isolation of the refugees from the host community has been a factor that brings about the movement of arms.

A number of interviewees stated that the security situation in Kakuma Refugee Camp had improved in the past few years. The refugees noted that there was an improvement in the Camp; this had been made possible by the improvement of security systems. But other interviewees had the opposed view- that the security situation in Kakuma Refugee Camp had deteriorated in the past few years. The clash in those views could be

because though there was a reduction in crimes, the level was still high and not at the level that they expected. This was a result of the fluctuation of security in the camp. There are times that there was insecurity; while in some cases, the security was okay.

The presence of UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies improved the security situation in the Kakuma Refugee Camp to a great extent. UNHCR and other agencies both local and international were keen on ensuring that the camp was safe and inhabitable. Their presence too made the security agencies work round the clock to ensure there was security in the camps and the environs. Additionally, the respondents agreed to a larger extent that the use of community policing had helped to address security challenges in the Camp. Engaging refugees in decision-making, community policing and emergency response can enhance overall security and address specific concerns within the camp.

Community policing in refugee camps goes beyond traditional law enforcement. It is a holistic approach that recognizes the importance of community engagement within the camp. The establishment of trust between refugees and law enforcement is essential for effective crime prevention in the camp and the refugees seem to have known its importance. The interviewees thought that the involvement of refugees in the security management of the camp had contributed to its overall security. The involvement of refugees in the security management system of a refugee camp was crucial for fostering a sense of community, trust and safety. It promotes a collaborative approach, considering the unique perspectives and experiences of the displaced population. There were several attacks either at home or on the roads. Theft cases were the order of the day, especially at night and this was done by organized gangs.

The criminal activities were not carried out by criminals amongst the refugees only, criminals from the host community participated. Petty stealing as well robbery was experienced in the refugee camp. The level of insecurity in the camp was pathetic; there was a need to intervene more. The collaboration between the government and the refugees plus other stakeholders had however improved the security situation though to a low extent. There was high insecurity at night and through community policing, there had been a merging of gangs so that they could be resilient.

Under objective two, the host Turkana community acquired SALWs from the refugees in Kakuma Camp because of security threats from the Karamojong and the Pokot. Social dislocation in the neighborhood was one important factor in the mobility of arms from the refugees to the Turkana community. As for objective three, the refugees' perspective on the nature of security in the camps indicated that the security situation in the Kakuma Refugee Camp posed a threat to the host community. Social disorganization theory too had an explanatory power here. Refugee camps can pose potential threats to host communities in various ways. There may be competition for limited resources such as jobs, housing and public services leading to tensions and strains on local infrastructure.

There could further be a risk of social tension and cultural clashes due to differences in customs and values. Effective management and support from authorities are crucial to mitigate these challenges. However, the interviewees agreed to a moderate extent that the involvement of host community members in the management of the Kakuma Refugee Camp had helped to address security challenges. Involvement of host communities in refugee camps does not always guarantee improved security due to

several factors such as cultural and social indifference, lack of understanding between the communities as well as competition for the available resources.

On the other hand, interviewees agreed to a greater extent that the social and economic disparities between refugees and host communities contributed to the security challenges in Kakuma Refugee Camp. Social and economic disparities between refugees and host communities can contribute to the security challenges in refugee camps in various ways. Disparities can create a sense of marginalization among groups, increasing the risk of social unrest and making it harder for authorities to maintain order within the camp.

The refugees securitized the camp as a cage of adversity, conflict, and lack of freedom. Addressing these disparities through inclusive policies and resource distribution is crucial for fostering harmony and minimizing security risks. The refugees and other stakeholders tried to reduce the threats. Likewise, the results indicated that the involvement of government officials in the management of the Kakuma refugee camp had helped to address security challenges to a large extent. The government has all the machinery to handle any form of insecurity in and outside the refugee camp. Proper coordination with other stakeholders and agencies was crucial in making sure that collaborative efforts bear the fruit of a safe environment.

In objective four, the host community Interviewed were of the view that the security situation in Kakuma Refugee Camp did pose a threat to the host community though the host community had equally played a great role in the insecurity situation. Social dislocation theory also sheds insights into this. However, the involvement of host community members in the management of the Kakuma refugee camp helped to address security challenges since the refugees created a network with the leadership of

the host community. There was an exchange of arms for money as well as protection of criminals by either group. There aren't enough resources in the camp and equally, the environment near the camp is equally not well economically endowed. The involvement of government officials in the management of Kakuma Refugee Camp helped to address security challenges.

But even with that, securitization Theory did reveal that the host community raised the spectre of Kakuma Refugee Camp as a threat to the host community and the refugees themselves. The securitization moves of the host community led the Kenya Government to deploy more security personnel to restore normalcy.

6.3 Conclusions of the Study

The study concluded that illegal arms are smuggled into the camps through the use of arms smugglers and criminal gangs. This happens due to the nature of porous borders and the fact that the host community easily accessed arms to supply them to criminals. Further, some of the refugees have created contact with arms dealers in their countries making it easy for them to acquire arms. There is laxity among the security apparatus due to corruption and hence poor checking of refugees into the country and the camp.

The study further assessed the processes that facilitate the mobility of light and small arms between the refugees and the host communities. From the findings, the study concluded that light and small arms are brought through networks that the refugees have created with the host community, and security personnel as well as links with outsiders in the refugees' countries. This made it much easier for the smugglers to carry SALWs to the camp and the host community. Arms get their way into the camp through refugees, host communities as well as arms smugglers (some of which are government

officers). Social and economic disparities between hosts and refugees had created room for the infiltration of light and small arms.

Likewise, the study sought to determine the security status of the Kakuma refugee camp from the security narratives of refugees. The study concluded that there was still a high level of insecurity in the area. There was competition for resources, and disparity in social and economic status thereby creating a source of conflict and potential for the commission of criminal activities. This has increased the rate of insecurity in the refugee camp as well as in the host community.

Further, the study assessed the security status of the Kakuma refugee camp from the security narratives of the host community (including government officials). It can be concluded that the security situation in Kakuma refugee camp posed a threat to the host community though the host community have equally played a great role in the insecurity situation. The involvement of government officials in the management of Kakuma Refugee Camp has helped to address security challenges.

6.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that there should be increased border control, and anti-corruption crusade among the officers in the camp and the borders; additionally, there should be involvement of the host community and refugees in decision-making concerning illegal arms so that proliferation of illegal arms can be contained.

The study equally recommends efforts to mobilize resources for both the refugees and the host community so that the socioeconomic disparities may be reduced to reduce

motivation for participation in crime. Collaborative efforts from all the local and international agencies and stakeholders are therefore desirable.

Additionally, the study recommends improvement in social and economic amenities in the refugee camp. This will reduce conflicts arising from scramble for the available meagre resources thereby reducing security threats in the area. Furthermore, there is a need to improve community policing both in the refugee camps as well as the host community area. This would make the refugees and the host community take responsibility for their security and get a sense of ownership in decision-making.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Studies

This study adopted a qualitative, case study research design focused on narratives at a single point in time. Future studies could adopt a longitudinal approach to track how perceptions of insecurity evolve over time in relation to changing policies, humanitarian interventions, or regional conflicts. This would offer a dynamic understanding of how securitization processes emerge, intensify, or decline.

Comparative research between Kakuma and other refugee settlements such as Dadaab or Kalobeyei could help identify context-specific versus systemic drivers of insecurity. Such a study could assess whether similar social dislocation factors, arms mobility patterns, and securitization narratives appear across camps or are unique to Kakuma due to its geographic and demographic composition.

A quantitative analysis examining correlations between socioeconomic indicators (e.g., poverty levels, education, employment status) and incidence of crime or arms trafficking within the camp would complement the qualitative findings. This would

help solidify causality and guide policy recommendations with statistically backed evidence.

REFERENCES

- Adamson, F. (2006). *Crossing Borders: International Migration and National Security*.
- Agwanda, O. (2022). *Securitization and Forced Migration in Kenya: A Policy Transition from Integration to Encampment*. *Population and Development Review*, 48(3), 1–20. (p. 7) Reddit+3Reddit+3Cambridge University Press & Assessment+3SAGE JournalsWiley Online Library
- Aisch, G., Pearce, A., Rousseau, B (2016). *The New York Times: 'How Far Is Europe Swinging to the Right?'*
- Alix-Garcia, J., & Saah D. (2009). The Effects of refugee Inflows on Host Communities: Evidences from Tanzania. (Online), *World Bank Economic Review* 2010.
- Attender, H., Keohane R. O., & C. A. Wallander, (1999). *Imperfect Unions*, Oxford University Press,
- Baldwin, D. A. (1997) "The Concept of Security", *Review of International Studies*, pp.5-26.
- Bamberg, K., De Sommer, M., & Val sells, M. L. (2018). EPIM Policy Update. *European Policy Center*, 20 February 2018.
- Baylis, J. (2013). *The globalization of world politics*, Sixth Edition. Oxford
- Boutwell, J., & Klare, M., (1999). *Light weapons and civil conflict: controlling the tools of violence*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.
- Brookings Institution (2019),
- Bryman, A. (2012). Sampling in qualitative research. *Social research methods*, 4, 415-429.
- Campbell, E. H. (2006). *Urban Refugees in Nairobi: Problems of Protection, Mechanisms of Survival, and Possibilities of Integration*. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19(3), 396. Kujenga Amani
- Campbell, E., (2006). Urban Refugees in Nairobi: Problems of Protection, Mechanisms of Survival, and Possibilities for Integration. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19, 396-413.
- CGD (2021). Centre for Global Development.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*: Sage publications.
- Hair, J. F., Anderson, R. E., Babin, B. J., & Black, W. C. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis: A global perspective* (Vol. 7): Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Human Rights Watch (Organization), & Simpson, G. (2009). *From horror to hopelessness: Kenya's forgotten Somali refugee crisis*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch
- Human Rights Watch, (1998). *"Prohibited person": Abuse of Un- Documented Migrants, Asylum Seekers, and Refugees in South [SEP]Africa* (New York:
- Human Rights Watch. (2013). *You Are All Terrorists: Kenyan Police Abuse of Refugees in Nairobi*. (p. 88) Human Rights Watch

- Jacobsen, K. (2002). Livelihoods in conflict: the pursuit of livelihoods by refugees and the impact on the human security of host communities. *International migration*, 40(5), 95-123.
- Kamau, M., & Mutava, M. (2024). Kenya's domestic migration policies undercut regional commitments and burden other EAC states. *The Conversation*. (p. 2) The Conversation
- Kirui, P., & Mwaruvie, J. (2019). The dilemma of hosting refugees: a focus on the insecurity in north-eastern Kenya. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(8).
- Klare, M. (1995). Light weapons diffusion and global violence in the post-cold war era. In J Singh (ed.), *Light weapons and international security*. New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis.
- Kuruk, P. (1999). "Asylum and the Non-Refoulement of Refugees: The Case of the
- Mbote, P. K., Akech, M., AfriMAP., Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa, Open Society Foundations., Open Society Foundation, & Open Society Institute. (2011). *Kenya: Justice Sector and the Rule of Law: A review by AfriMAP and the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa*. New York: Open Society Foundations.
- Missing Shipload of Liberian Refugees," *Stan-ford Journal of International Law* 35: 313.
- Mkutu, K., (2003). *Pastoral conflict and small arms and light weapons: The Kenya-Uganda border region*. London: Safer world.
- Mogire, E., (2003). *Refugees and the proliferation of illegal small arms and light weapons in Kenya*. Eldoret: Moi University Press.
- Mutongu, Z. B. (2017). *The Plight of Refugees in Africa: A Perspective from Kenya*. *African Studies Review*, 60(1), 13.
- Ndonga, S., (2013). *Kenya: HRW opposes Kenya's relocation of refugees to camps*. Retrieved from: <http://www.capitalfm.co.ke>
- Njoroge, M. (2007). *Small arms and light weapons in Kenya*. Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Foundation.
- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in 2020
- Paige, L. (2017). Read Donald Trump's New Order on Immigration. Retrived on 25.09.2017 from; http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/donald-trump-immigration-executive-order-text_us_58bd9204e4b0d2821b4fc745 Refugees. United Nations Treaty, 189(2545).
- UNHCR (n.d). UNHCR, Kenya. <https://www.unhcr.org/ke/kakuma-refugee-camp>.
- UNHCR (2017). *Figures at a Glance. Statistical Yearbooks*. Available online at UNHCR website. <http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>, 19 June 2017.
- UNHCR (2024). Kenya Registered Refugees and Asylum Seekers as per 24 June 2024: <https://www.unhcr.org/ke/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/07/KenyaStatistics-Package-June-2024.pdf>
- UNHCR. (2013). *UNHCR 2013 planning figures for Kenya*. Nairobi: UNHCR.

- UNHCR. (2016). *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015*. United Nations.
- (1958). *The 1951 UN Convention Relating to status* UNODC (2019). United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
- Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr, J., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business research methods* (International: Canada: Cengage Learning.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Schedule

A. Interviewees Details

B. Mobility of illegal weapons from their destination to the refugee camps

1. What makes it easy to cross the Kenya South-Sudan boundary with weapons?
2. What is the role of different actors in facilitating the mobility of weapons from the border to refugee camps?
3. What agency does the refugee exercise to reach with the weapons?

C. The mobility SALWs between the refugees and the host communities

1. What discourses exist concerning the mobility of SALWs between the refugees and the host community?
2. What patterns of relation exist between the refugees and the host communities that facilitate the mobility?

D. The nature of Kakuma refugee camp- the security narratives of refugees

1. What patterns of relation exist in Kakuma that concerns security and insecurity?
2. Where does security and insecurity emanate from?
3. What are the objects of insecurity in the camp?

E. The nature of Kakuma refugee camp- the security narratives of the host community

1. What patterns of relation exist in Kakuma that concerns security and insecurity?
2. Where does security and insecurity emanate from in the camp?
3. What are the objects of insecurity in the camp?
4. What causes insecurity?

Appendix 2: Map of the Study Area



Appendix 3: NACOSTI Research Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 991623	Date of Issue: 16/September/2023
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Mr. Emmanuel Malual M. Anyar of Moi University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Turkana on the topic: DISCURSIVE SECURITY THREATS ABOUT KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP, NORTHWEST TURKANA, KENYA for the period ending : 16/September/2024.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/23/29446	
Applicant Identification Number 991623	Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Verification QR Code	
	
NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.	
See overleaf for conditions	

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013 (Rev. 2014)
Legal Notice No. 108: The Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, hereafter referred to as the Commission, was established under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013 (Revised 2014) herein after referred to as the Act. The objective of the Commission shall be to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

CONDITIONS OF THE RESEARCH LICENSE

1. The License is granted subject to provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, and other relevant laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the licensee shall adhere to such procedures, standards, code of ethics and guidelines as may be prescribed by regulations made under the Act, or prescribed by provisions of International treaties of which Kenya is a signatory to
2. The research and its related activities as well as outcomes shall be beneficial to the country and shall not in any way;
 - i. Endanger national security
 - ii. Adversely affect the lives of Kenyans
 - iii. Be in contravention of Kenya's international obligations including Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN).
 - iv. Result in exploitation of intellectual property rights of communities in Kenya
 - v. Adversely affect the environment
 - vi. Adversely affect the rights of communities
 - vii. Endanger public safety and national cohesion
 - viii. Plagiarize someone else's work
3. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
4. The license any rights thereunder are non-transferable
5. The Commission reserves the right to cancel the research at any time during the research period if in the opinion of the Commission the research is not implemented in conformity with the provisions of the Act or any other written law.
6. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research.
7. Excavation, filming, movement, and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
8. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
9. The Commission may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project for the purpose of assessing and evaluating compliance with the conditions of the License.
10. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy, and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) onto a platform designated by the Commission within one year of completion of the research.
11. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.
12. Research, findings and information regarding research systems shall be stored or disseminated, utilized or applied in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Commission from time to time.
13. The Licensee shall disclose to the Commission, the relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, and the relevant national agencies any inventions and discoveries that are of National strategic importance.
14. The Commission shall have powers to acquire from any person the right in, or to, any scientific innovation, invention or patent of strategic importance to the country.
15. Relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee shall monitor and evaluate the research periodically, and make a report of its findings to the Commission for necessary action.

National Commission for Science, Technology and
Innovation(NACOSTI),
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P. O. Box 30623 - 00100 Nairobi, KENYA
Telephone: 020 4007000, 0713788787, 0735404245
E-mail: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

Appendix 4: Research Permit From UNHCR



**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION,
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR CITIZEN SERVICES**

DEPARTMENT OF REFUGEE SERVICES (DRS) - KAKUMA

Website: www.refugees.go.ke
E-mail: refugee.affairs@kenya.go.ke
Tel: +254-020-2093675
Fax: +254-020-8047923
When replying please quote:
DRS/KKM/ADM/7/24

Kakuma Field Office
P.O. Box 57-30501
Kakuma, Kenya

15th July, 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: AUTHORIZATION TO VISIT KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP

Your request is here refer; -

Permission is hereby granted to the person mentioned below. The purpose of visiting will be to conduct academic research on discursive security threats about Kakuma refugee camp; North West Turkana, Kenya. He will be in the camp from 15th to 31st July, 2024 time not exceeding 1800hrs.

NOTE; Overstaying without Official permit is an offense

S/NO	NAME	ID/P.NO	NATIONALITY
1.	EMMANUEL MALUAL MAKUACH	775098	SUDANESE ,

However, you are required to adhere to the regulations of the camp during the visit.

Upon expiry return the permit to DRS.

Kind Regards,

Edwin K. Chabari
CAMP MANAGER - KAKUMA CAMPS AND KALOBYEI SETTLEMENT
Cc: SCPC Kakuma



Appendix 5: Plagiarism Awareness Certificate



SR661

ISO 9001:2019 Certified Institution

THESIS WRITING COURSE

PLAGIARISM AWARENESS CERTIFICATE

This certificate is awarded to

EMMANUEL MALUAL MAKUACH

MS/MIG/5450/21

In recognition for passing the University's plagiarism

Awareness test for Thesis entitled :EXAMINING SOCIAL DISLOCATION FACTORS SHAPING KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP AS A SECURITY THREAT similarity index of 17% and striving to maintain academic integrity.

Word count:22111

Awarded by

Prof. Anne Syomwene Kisilu

CERM-ESA Project Leader Date: 05/09//2024