

# **Host community and refugees – a healthy relationship?**

- Field study on the effects of the refugee influx on the host community in Kakuma, Kenya.



Ellen Jonsson  
School of Social Science  
Bachelor Thesis Peace and Development Studies  
2FU31E  
Supervisor: Jonas Ewald  
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Examiner: Chris High

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the impacts of the refugee influx on the host community in Kakuma, Kenya. This is done by a field study, in February-March 2016, with an abductive qualitative method, using semi-structured interviews. Interviews have been conducted with both refugees and members of the host community along with external actors in order to provide a more in-depth understanding of both the positive and negative impacts the refugees have had. The analysis was conducted using an analytical framework with a point of departure from Chambers theory on the Hidden Losers from 1986 and looking at five dimensions of impacts the refugees might have on the hosting community. This is used to better understand the co-existence between the refugees and the host community.

The findings shows that there are both positive and negative impacts on the host community due to the refugee influx. There have been an important economic and social development in the remote and resource scarce area Kakuma. This has provided the local population with more services like education and medical service. At the same time there are many more people sharing limited resources which is a major cause of conflict, especially given the lack of water and food.

The future for the refugees and the host community is uncertain. Kenya has said (in May 2016) they will close the refugee camps due to environmental degradation, economic strains and security issues. How this will affect the people concerned is at this time too early to say.

**Keywords:** Conflicts, Co-existence, Refugees, Host Community, Kenya, Turkana, Kakuma, Chambers, Field Study.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	1
Acknowledgments .....	2
List of Appendices .....	5
Acronyms and Abbreviations.....	6
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	7
1.1 Research Problem .....	7
1.2 Objective and research questions .....	8
1.3 Method.....	9
1.4 Literature Summary .....	10
1.5 Relevance.....	11
1.6 Limitations, Delimitations and Ethnical Considerations .....	12
1.7 Thesis Outline.....	12
Chapter 2: Analytical framework .....	13
2.1 Literature review.....	13
2.2 Previous research in Kakuma .....	17
2.3 Analytical Framework .....	17
Chapter 3: Methodology Framework .....	20
3.1 Methodology.....	20
3.2 Method.....	20
3.2.1 Choice of Method .....	20
3.2.2 Preparations.....	21
3.2.3 Carrying out Information Gathering and Analyzing.....	21
3.2.4 Validity and Reliability .....	23
3.2.5 The Role of the Researcher .....	23
Chapter 4: Background.....	25
4.1 East Africa .....	25
4.2 Turkana County and Kakuma Host Community .....	25
4.3 Kakuma Refugee Camp.....	27
Chapter 5: Findings .....	29

5.1 Security .....	29
5.2 Land and Labour.....	31
5.3 Services, Food and Common Property Resources.....	32
5.4 Other Cases of Integration .....	34
Chapter 6: Analysis .....	36
6.1 Negative aspects of the refugee influx .....	36
6.2 Positive aspects of the refugee influx .....	37
6.3 Integration and co-existence .....	38
Chapter 7: Concluding Discussion .....	40
7.1 The situation in Kakuma.....	40
7.2 Chambers and Grindheim .....	40
7.3 Method.....	41
7.4 The Future.....	42
Chapter 8: References .....	44
8.1 Printed Sources .....	44
8.2 Online sources .....	45
Appendices .....	47
Appendix 1 .....	47
Appendix 2 .....	49
Appendix 3 .....	50
Appendix 4 .....	51
Appendix 5 .....	52
Appendix 6 .....	53

## **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – List of refugee respondents

Appendix 2 – List of host community respondents

Appendix 3 – List of key informants from NGOs

Appendix 4 – Interview guide: refugees

Appendix 5 – Interview guide: host community

Appendix 6 – Interview guide: NGO staff

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

CPR – Common Property Resources

DRA – Department for Refugee Affairs

GoK – Government of Kenya

IDPs – Internally Displaced People

LGBT – Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transsexuals

LWF/DWS – Lutheran World Federation / Department for World Service

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

RAD- Refugee Aid and Development Theories

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WFP – World Food Program

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Research Problem

Over 50 million people are fleeing their homes worldwide today. These people are often escaping due to war, conflicts, environmental disasters and lack of resources. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) around 16 million of these have refugee status and many of them are in an immediate need of assistance. The number of refugees around the world has been increasing the last years due to conflicts in Syria, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan etc. (UNHCR, 2015a). This puts an immense toll on the home countries but also on neighboring countries which are strongly affected by a large influx of refugees. Over 86 % of the refugees around the world today are being hosted by developing countries. Countries that are often already under a significant pressure to tend for the needs of its own population (UNHCR, 2016a). How well can developing countries really attend to the needs of refugees and how does the relationship between the refugees and the hosting community really work when both of them often are in need of assistance? In order to examine this I have conducted a case study of Kenya with a field study in Kakuma, Kenya, one of the largest refugee camps in Africa.

Kenya is after Ethiopia the largest recipient of refugees in Sub-Saharan Africa. In January 2015 Kenya hosted about 650,000 people of concern, including mostly refugees but also a smaller quantity of asylum seekers and stateless people. The influx of refugees in Kenya has been ongoing since early 1990s. Most of the refugees are Somali but there is also a large amount from South Sudan and also people from about 15 other countries around Africa (UNHCR, 2016b). For a developing country like Kenya the refugees might have a large effect on the society, both for the development but also for the co-existence between the people.

Kakuma town is situated in the northwest of Kenya close to the border of South Sudan and situated in the Turkana district. Kakuma Refugee Camp was established in 1992 due to the outburst of conflict in Sudan which led to the need to accommodate mainly children and youth fleeing from violence, the so called *Lost Boys of Sudan* (Aukot, 2003). Since 1992 the initial refugee camp has grown into the four camps that today make up the whole of Kakuma Refugee Camp. Currently the camp hosts refugees from around 15 different countries, but is dominated by refugees from South Sudan and Somalia. This means that Kakuma Refugee Camp is one of the biggest and most multi-ethnic refugee camps in the world, with an



estimate of around 180,000 refugees (UNHCR, 2016b; Lutheran World Federation / Department for World Service, 2015).

Kenya is like several of its neighbors struggling with underdevelopment and poverty. The country has about 45 million inhabitants and many of them are living under the poverty line. This is especially true for the people living in the Turkana District surrounding Kakuma Town. The Turkana people are mostly pastoralist and nomadic, mainly making their living from cattle herding. The development in Turkana District is marginalized and is one of the poorest areas in Kenya. Most of the local Turkana live under the poverty line and there is a lack of access to both basic resources for livelihoods and education. Kakuma means “Nowhere”. A good name for a place isolated in a harsh environment with severe droughts, extreme temperatures and large risk of flooding a couple of times a year. Living in and around Kakuma is not easy for anyone (Aukot, 2003).

This was the reality for the Turkana people even before 180,000 refugees moved into the area. Living conditions are still just as harsh. But now so many more have to share the little that the land has to offer. The lack of water is still a reality so is the limited possibility to grow crops and produce food. This causes difficulties for the host community, the 180,000 refugees, the Kenyan Government (GoK) and the Aid agencies. The risk for conflict will increase due to lack of resources, however the aid and support given to the refugees might be beneficial and spillover to the host community as well.

## **1.2 Objective and research questions**

The main purpose of this thesis is to examine the relationship between the refugees and the local host community in Kakuma Refugee Camp. This includes examining how the large influx of refugees impacted the host community and whether the Kenyan Government could have done something different to create a better relationship. This will shed a light on how well developing countries can attend to the needs of refugees and how the relationship between refugees and the hosting community work when both of them are in need of assistance and aid. This will be done with a point of departure from Chambers and his theory on the hidden losers (further developed in chapter 2). These thoughts give the following research questions:

- How do the relationship between the refugees and the host community function in regards to negative and positive impacts on social life, such as livelihoods and the security situation, since 2012?
- How do the co-existence between the groups function, in regards to integration and the work done by NGOs and the Government of Kenya?

### **1.3 Method**

As will be further developed in chapter 3, the study was conducted through a qualitative case study (Flyvbjerg, 1997:301) of Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kakuma Host Community. The objective was to get in-depth information on the situation in and surrounding the refugee camp in Kakuma. In conducting a case study it was possible to get a deeper understanding of the relationship between the refugees and the host community. This can later be used to generalize and help understand the implications for the host community of a large influx of refugees. It can also help to improve the relationships and support the integration in Kakuma with relevance also in a larger context since the refugee crises occur in many places around the world. Hence, the study can provide assistance to groups working with refugee aid, like governments, but also the specific groups concerned; refugees and host communities (George & Bennet: 2005:19-21).

The goal was to conduct semi-structured interviews with both refugees, host community members and relevant staff from aid agencies. The type of questions that was asked focused on the relationship between the host community and the refugees. What are the perceptions of the relationship, are there conflicts and in what circumstances, have the relationship changed during the years and what do the interviewees think can improve the relationship? This type of questions will provide a better understanding of the conflicts existing within Kakuma and what is lacking for a better integration of the refugees in the Kenyan community (Bhattacharjee, 2012:78-80). It was important to take into consideration that I would be interviewing individuals with different opinions, which might negatively affect the objectivity of my respondents. Due to this it was important to interview both host community and refugees to get both sides of the situation, in order to increase objectivity and perspective I also interviewed staff working in the camp and with the refugees and the host community. The study also included participative observations in order to gain knowledge about both the positive and negative impacts on the host community. The initial idea was to interview around

15 people, ~50/50 host community and refugees. In the end I managed to conduct 22 interviews. The divide between the subjects were important. In order to research the difference in the past four years there was a need to interview refugees who have been living there for over 5 years, but also relevant to interview newly arrived refugees from the past 3 years. Since the refugees in Kakuma originate from around 15 different countries it was important to include informants of different nationalities. Concerning the host community informants, I included informants of different gender, age and occupation in order to get different perspectives included.

#### **1.4 Literature Summary**

Most of the refugee research is understandably focusing on refugees. In order to fully aid the refugees and create a sustainable situation; integration and understanding of the effects of a large influx of refugees on the host community is important. Research in this area have been conducted, however to a more limited extent. Robert Chambers (1986) writes about the hidden losers; the poor host community that might possibly become neglected and have their situation worsened by the influx of refugees in their community. There has been some research conducted on the relationships between refugees and host communities. Beth Elise Whitaker (2002) did research on the influx of refugees in Tanzania during early 1990 due to conflicts in Rwanda, Burundi and The Democratic Republic of Congo. Whitaker talks about both the positive and the negative impact that refugees causes for the host community.

Kandoh (2012) conducted a master study in Ghana, looking for socio-economic implications for the host community. Kandoh points out that research is important regarding creating a sustainable situation for both the refugees' but also for the host community. All studies made within this subject shows that there are both positive and negative implications for the host community. Chambers (1986) talks about the fact that already poor host communities will be disadvantaged due to the influx while the wealthier host communities may have it easier to draw positive benefits from the newly arrived refugees. If the host communities already have money or means of livelihood an influx of refugees might result in better access to labor, a bigger market and more opportunities to expand their business. In 2013 Grindheim published research from Kakuma (conducted the year before) on the impacts that refugees have on the host community. He gained knowledge on both the positive aspects the presence of the refugees have and the negative ones. The camps presence provide, for example, increased job opportunities, access to medical services and access to education. It has however also caused

problems and conflicts between the refugees and the local population like child labour and an increase in violence (the previous literature will be further developed in Chapter 2).

### **1.5 Relevance**

The refugee crisis is effecting the whole world; both the countries people are fleeing from, but also their neighbours. Many of the refugees are also fleeing to Europe and further away from the conflict and their home countries. Wherever people are fleeing there is already a host community present, sometimes rich, sometimes poor. A large influx of people will affect the host community and the risk of conflicts are extensive, especially if the host community is already poor themselves (UNHCR, 2016a). Research on the relationship between the refugees and the host community can help not just the situation in Kakuma, but also other refugee camps/refugee communities and the surrounding host communities. In order to understand the structures and the problems with a large influx of people, conflicts can be prevented and governments and aid agencies can adapt their work and projects in order to promote wellbeing, social interaction between the groups and integration. Kenya is one of the countries that receives the most refugees in Africa and the influx affects them in a prominent way. The future for Kenya is furthermore important for all the region of East Africa, hence the way Kenya manage the refugees and the local population surrounding is important for more people than just Kenyans. The region is full of problems; conflicts in Somalia, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic republic of Congo etcetera. Due to this the refugee movement will most likely continue for several years more and this affects Kenya and the situation with refugees in the country and Kenya will in their turn also affect the nearby region.

Between January and March 2012 the Norwegian Master student Kristoffer Andre Grindheim (2013) researched the relationship between the local Turkana people and the refugees. Since 2012 there have been a large influx of new refugees in Kakuma and the camp now exists of four separated camps with another one in planning. Hence much have happened in both Kakuma and Kenya since then. As well in South Sudan and in Somalia where the majority of the refugees flee from. Due to this there is a relevance of looking closer into the case of Kakuma with an objective and research questions. The research of Grindheim will be further developed in chapter 2.

### **1.6 Limitations, Delimitations and Ethnical Considerations**

One of the major limitations in carrying out the research was the language barrier. The refugees originate from many different countries, hence many different languages are spoken in Kakuma. Due to this there was a need for an interpreter in order to conduct the research. This limited the possibilities to easily access information from the informants and more planning and preparations was necessary. One further limitation was the time available. Due to the limited time available it was not possible to interview as many as one might have wanted. Physical access to informants was an obstacle as well due to remote living and more or less non-existent roads.

I chose to focus on the specific situation in Kakuma, one of two refugee camps in Kenya, even though there are many similarities between both Kakuma and the other refugee camp in Dadaab, which is closer to the boarder of Somalia. However the security situation in Dadaab is more troublesome and the physical access, to the camps and the host community surrounding it, is more limited. Many of the aid agencies working with refugees in Kenya work both in Kakuma and Dadaab hence the idea to conduct research on both areas.

Conducting the research included interviewing people and taking part in their reality. Due to the interaction with people ethical considerations had to be taken into account. Keeping possible anonymity for the informant was important if they would want it. Possible sensitive information could occur when talking to the informants, hence the importance to protect the sources (Creswell, 2009:87). It was also important to know myself and the role I would be playing and the role others would give me and not take advantage of it.

### **1.7 Thesis Outline**

In order to get a good understanding of the research the first chapter consists of an introduction to the case which is followed by the analytical framework and previous research made in chapter 2. Chapter 3 later explains the method used conducting the research hence how the research was performed. Chapter 4 introduces the area of Turkana and Kakuma where the research was made and followed in chapter 5 the findings are presented. The thesis is concluded with a chapter of the analysis in chapter 6, followed by chapter 7 with a concluding discussion and later chapter 8 with the references.

## **Chapter 2: Analytical framework**

This chapter will examine previous research in the area of refugee and host community relationships and other relevant refugee research. The chapter will also provide an introduction to the previous research conducted in Kakuma and the analytical framework chosen for the thesis.

### **2.1 Literature review**

There have been many years of refugee movements and challenges around the world. Many problems need to be addressed in order to give the refugees a tolerable way of life even in a crisis. Hence research on refugees have been extensive. It has addressed how to best manage the situation for all involved and promote peace and a possible repatriation. Research concerning refugees' impacts on the host community has been limited until recently.

It was not until the 1980s that the host community was first introduced in the Refugee aid and development theories (RAD). It was in the First and Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (1981 and 1984) that the host community was first considered. Refugees were then mentioned as something that put a burden on the host communities. At that time issues such as environmental degradation, political strains on an already troubled society and additional costs were highlighted (Zetter, 2012).

One of the first scholars that adapted to this new idea that refugees somehow affect the local host communities was Chambers (1986). Previously when there were discussions about the "host community" it was mainly the hosting country that was in focus and mainly considering the country's economy as such. Chamber managed to slightly change the focus to the more local host community; the people living alongside the refugees, different local tribes and groups that are more affected by the presence of the refugees.

Since Chambers introduced this new way of examining the impact of refugees, others have followed. Despite this, it is still an area where more research is needed, especially now when there are more refugees than ever. All host communities will be impacted in some way depending on how they integrate and handle the refugees given the host communities' level of development (Chambers, 1986). According to Whitaker (1999) the research has previously had focus on the negative impacts on the host community, however research has shown that there are also many positive impacts. In the more recent studies the emphasis on the positive impacts have increased and also who benefits and who does not. Chambers talks about the

hidden losers (1986). That the impact on poor host community is negative, while richer host communities may instead benefit from the refugees' presence.

The majority of the refugees who flee their homes are either Internally Displaced People (IDPs) or refugees in a neighboring country (World Development Report, 2011:2). This means that generally very few of the refugees make their way to Europe or other more developed countries. Despite this we are today experiencing a refugee crisis in Europe. Even though the majority of the refugees are not making their way over the Mediterranean Sea. If the countries in Europe have problems caring for the refugees coming there, how are all the neighboring countries, and the developing countries that are taking in the most refugees coping with the situation?

Many refugees live in camps, camps that are there for their protection and a place to live for the people fleeing. One assumption is that the camps should be temporary. The people living there are supposed to sooner or later go back home when the situation allows or if they find a different more sustainable situation than living in a camp. Despite this, there are many people who have lived their whole lives within the borders of a refugee camp and with no real hope of leaving soon. This is called a protracted refugee situation, a definition that is not fully established. When refugees have lived in exile for more than five years they are generally considered being in a protracted refugee situation and there is no real hope for either local integration, repatriation or resettlement. These refugees are in a difficult situation, having no real opportunity to go back or to start a new life under safe circumstances. The majority of these refugees are found in Africa (Crisp, 2002:1; World Development Report 2011:2).

One of the major reasons for protracted refugee situations are due to long-term conflicts that prevent refugees from returning and the lack of local integration in the country of asylum (Crisp, 2002:2). In a case of a protracted refugee situation there are an increased pressure on the local community. Refugees and locals live side by side for many years and camps have been present for a long time with no real chance of dissolve. This may cause further problems but can also be a reason for peaceful coexistence if the groups have learned to live with each other (Crisp, 2000:42). The case of protracted refugee situations is not exclusive to Africa but it is a reality and a problem over the continent. Given many other problems facing a majority of the African states an excessive presence of long-term refugees can cause further problems in already poor, underdeveloped or neglected areas (Crisp, 2002:2-3; UNHCR, 2004:1-3).

In many of the developing countries the local host community are already poor and neglected by the international community and often their own governments. They often live in harsh areas with a lack of resources (Crisp, 2000). Since the majority of refugees are found in neighboring countries, it puts an immense toll on the hosting countries. The majority of the hosting countries are also middle-income countries, but the refugees often live in border regions and low-income areas. Countries that host long-term refugees experience social, political, economic and environmental effects. Refugees increase the need for infrastructure, medical services, schools, water and sanitation. However the impacts of refugees are both positive and negative depending on the circumstances of that specific situation (World Development Report 2011:7).

A large extent of the research done on the effects on the host community has focused on the refugees' impact on the environment and the access to resources. Such impacts are a major problem simply due to the fact that a high influx of people will affect the environment, especially in areas with already limited access to resources (Martin, 2005). Martin (2005) researched the refugees' impact on the environment. Firstly the refugees take up a lot of space for living and they use the local resources that are found in the area. If there are already host community living in the area this will affect them. They now have to share both space and resources, two things that might be lacking. This can lead to deforestation, soil erosion, water scarcity and land shortages. These problems have especially been present in Sub-Saharan Africa and can be a major source of conflict between the local host community and the refugees.

Alix-Garcia and Saah (2009) researched the refugee influx in Tanzania from Rwanda and Burundi in early 1990s and the economic impact the refugees had on the hosting community. This influx was unexpected and took place in one of the poorest areas in Tanzania. In western Tanzania the focus of the study was on the economic impacts and the prices of goods and food. Access to food aid can be a benefit for the host community too and the refugees can be a source of cheap labor for the hosts in order to produce more. This can however also lead to a decrease in food prices which can be both positive and negative on the local community. In the case of Tanzania, the results showed that prices increased closer to the camps due to the refugees. This depended on the diets of the refugees and whether the hosts grow the crops the refugees wanted to buy. Research have shown that if the hosts and the refugees have similar culture and belong to the same linguistic groups the integration and coexistence is easier



(World Development Report 2011:11). Access to cheap labor is considered being one of the most positive impacts for the hosting community during a refugee crisis. Refugees might not always have good opportunities for employment and taking a low paying job from the hosts might be their only option. This provides possibilities for the hosts to increase production of their goods and develop their businesses. In the case of Tanzania both Burundi and Rwanda had lower GDP and western Tanzania was heavily dependent on agriculture providing good job opportunities for the refugees and access to cheap labor on the fields for the host community. The market for the goods also increased due to a large population of refugees in the area (Alix-Garcia & Saah, 2009).

Dzimhiri (1993) did research on the effects of the Mozambican refugees in Malawi. During the peak of refugee influx the number of refugees were around 1 million. The author shows an increase in employment opportunities for the hosts in and around the camp. The presence of the refugees provide employment opportunities such as medical assistance, camp administrators and watchmen. The employment opportunities benefitted both the individuals but as well as the communities development as a whole. The presence of the NGOs also included access to schools, medical service, water and sanitation. However there have been negative impacts for Malawi as well. There has been environmental damage due to the presence of a large number of refugees. The loss of agricultural land is also a reality however it is difficult to predict how much it has effected the host community. The pressure on the natural resources is also a reality just as the decrease in security. In Malawi, as in many other places where similar research have been carried out, these are the kind of outcomes that are most common (World Development Report, 2011). In Uganda there have been research focused on the land conflicts and the livelihoods of the refugees and the host community (Ahimbisibwe & Edward, 2011). One finding was that conflicts occurred due to that hosts felt that refugees had better access to livelihoods and land in comparison to the local population. In Uganda the refugees were restricted to move and settle outside the camps which prevented refugees to spread evenly over the country and hence impacted the local host communities more (Ahimbisibwe & Edward, 2011:27).

To summarize the most common impacts that are being discussed in regards to the relationship between the host community and the refugees are access to resources, food availability and natural resources and access to land and livelihoods. Discrepancies in this can lead to conflicts between the groups, which in turn can lead to security issues and an unstable

situation. This may result in lack of integration and more problems for both the already affected refugees and poor host communities (Chambers, 1986; Kandoh, 2012; Martin, 2005; Whitaker, 2002). This forms the focus of the present study; how the social and security situation in Kakuma is affected by the influx of a large amount of refugees. This will be done within the theoretical framework provided by the research done by Chambers.

## 2.2 Previous research in Kakuma

The impacts of the refugees on the host community in and around Kakuma town was studied by Grindheim in 2013. He looked into what is affecting the situation and the sources of conflict, but also what promotes a positive co-existence. The results Grindheim gathered shows that there have been quite a big shift in the livelihood opportunities since the establishment of the camp. Before the presence of the camp people lived far away from each other and hence trade was limited. Today more people live closer to town and the population has increased significantly. Possibilities to sell charcoal, firewood and other goods have increased and the host community now have a possibility to work for money, or in many cases for food instead of using the whole day to search for it. Grindheim has also learnt that due to the presence of the refugees there has been an increase in conflicts and insecurity. In this case conflicts include: robberies, fighting, rapes and even killings between the groups. Just as the refugees have to adapt into their new situation so must the host community. Grindheim explains that this is part of the basis of the conflicts. There are many positive aspects of the refugee influx but it is forcing previously unrelated people to interact and hence conflicts may occur.

## 2.3 Analytical Framework

Robert Chambers talks about five dimensions of refugee impacts on the host communities: food; land, labour and wages; services; common property resources (CPRs) and economic development. All these dimensions can be effected both positive and negative from the influx of refugees and depending on the host communities' level of development the implications might be different (Chambers, 1986).

- **Food** – Chambers describes a situation where at first the influx of refugees will drive up food prices, which may be especially troublesome in areas where food is scarce. With the access to aid food, the situation might in other circumstances improve for the local

population, however if there is an abundance of food this might lower the food prices making it difficult for the local population to earn their living.

- **Land, labour and wages** – If there is an abundance of land an influx of refugees might be beneficial due to an increase in possibilities to use the land. Access to labour and a need for more products can have a positive economic impact. Refugees can form a useful market of cheap labour. A large group of people in need of work to start a new life or occupy themselves while waiting to return home can support the local population in developing their own business. This might, however be most beneficial for richer host communities who have resources to employ.
- **Services** – The most common result concerning services in a refugee influx is access to education and health services for the local population. These services are both necessary for the refugees but are also promoting integration between the groups and quite easy to procure funding for. However if the locals do not get access to the services while the refugees do this can be a cause for conflict.
- **Common property resources** – The poorer hosts are usually more dependent on the resources available and a large influx of refugees and hence more people to share them can cause real problems. This is according to Chambers the prime cause of conflicts.
- **Economic development** – A refugee influx might prove to be beneficial for the economic development through trade, aid food and cheap labour. The refugees can however also provide a negative impact on the economic development over straining supplies of food and services and intensifying environmental degradation.

Using these dimensions give a better structure to the thesis and to understand the implications of the refugee influx in the case of Kakuma, Kenya. However to fully comprehend the situation a security category has also been added. Looking in to the security of both the refugees and the local population and how they perceive their own security. With using these dimensions both the refugees and the host communities will have a chance to argue for how their lives are effected and what could possibly be improved. The outline provided by Chambers will guide the research and the questions but the objective is not to test it as a theory as such. This will mean that the theory will be a point of departure, a framework, in order to get a better structure and understanding but it will not control the execution of the thesis. This meant that I used an abductive approach due to my pre-understandings of the case and the desire to not fully use the theory but to let it guide me during the research, which is

something an abductive approach allows me. Chambers is being used in this thesis due to his standing within the field. Many other researchers have had a point of departure in Chambers theory looking into the relationship between refugees and local populations around the world. Grindheim also used Chambers in his research in Kakuma which motivated the use of Chambers in this case. When looking into the situation since Grindheim conducted his research.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology Framework**

This chapter includes a presentation to the chosen method and the execution of the research. The chapter also includes a discussion of validity and reliability, analysis of the data and ethical considerations.

### **3.1 Methodology**

In order to explore the situation in Kakuma between the refugees and the host community I have chosen a qualitative case study. A case study allow me to get in-depth in the situation and to better understand the relationship between the groups. This means that I have a small sample size, hence a limited number of cases to study (George & Bennet, 2005:19). This allowed me more time to research the specific situation in Kakuma refugee camp and host community. The objective with the research was to get a good and sufficient understanding of the refugees' impacts on the host community and the relationship between the groups. The objective was not to compare to situations in other cases. However with a good understanding of the conditions in Kakuma it could be used and compared with other cases in a later state. It could also be used to examine the changes over time in the case of Kakuma.

### **3.2 Method**

#### **3.2.1 Choice of Method**

The field study was conducted in Kakuma during February and Mars 2016. By visiting Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kakuma Host Community I was able to get a more direct understanding of the situation. Lutheran World Federation (LWF) who assisted in the research work mainly with the refugees but is also one of the organizations working with the host community which allowed access to this group as well for the research. There have been previous research done in Kakuma (Grindheim, 2013) but additional research can provide a more comprehensive picture and also address any resent changes. For this field study, semi-structured interviews were chosen as a mean to gather information. This because of the possibility to be more flexible during the interview for both the interviewee and the interviewer (Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oscarsson & Wängnerud, 2012:264-265). A case study permits a more in-depth learning of the specific situation. The conceptual validity increases and the risk of conceptual stretching decreases when the focus is on one case and situation only (George and Bennet, 2005:19; Creswell, 2003:15). Information gathered for the study also includes direct and indirect participation and previous research by both independent researchers and organizations working in the area.

### 3.2.2 Preparations

Before conducting the field work preparations were made in order to gather information in a structured way. Reports by organizations working in the area were read together with previous research done in Kakuma (mainly Grindheim, 2013 and Aukot, 2003). One important preparation was to collect information on the international refugee law and the Kenyan Constitution (new from 2010, currently being implemented). This was made in order to get a good knowledge about the relevant laws and the rights of the refugees.

Contact was made with relevant staff at the organization LWF in both Nairobi and Kakuma for assistance with transportation and accommodation in Kakuma and assistance with finding relevant interview subjects. The interview questions were prepared ahead of time, however during the interview process they were slightly changed in order to be more appropriate. The questions were prepared with assistance from the knowledge gathered ahead of time and the situation in Kakuma. The questions were also inspired by previous research made between refugees and host communities (see Appendix 4-6).

### 3.2.3 Carrying out Information Gathering and Analyzing.

To gain broad information representing different aspects, both refugees and host community members were interviewed and acted as respondents. In total 22 people were interviewed. Of these, 13 respondents came from the refugee community and seven respondents from the host community. In addition, I also had two informants from LWF staff working with projects aimed at both refugees and the host community (more information in Appendix 1-3). The LWF staff informants were both originating from Turkana County. One of the informants were the Senior Livelihoods and Community Services Officer<sup>1</sup>, hence one of the staff working closest with the projects directed towards the host community. The other informant was an Accountability Assistance<sup>2</sup>, hence working within accountability directed towards both the refugees and the host community. These two informants selected based on their work within the organization and since they were originating from Turkana County and hence having knowledge of the area even before they began their work for LWF.

With the assistance from LWF I was able to come in contact with relevant respondents. Around 50 % of the refugees were interviewed at a religious leader meeting and the other half

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<sup>1</sup> A livelihoods and community services officer works with the projects directed towards the host community and projects with a focus on livelihoods, both for refugees and host community members.

<sup>2</sup> The accountability departments focus lies on supporting the communities affected by the projects and provide an opportunity for the people to raise complaints and opinions.

were interviewed at Field Post 1<sup>3</sup>; one of the field offices out in the camp. The members of the host community were interviewed at a training on credit and loans to promote business among the host community members. The respondents were partly selected by convenience, especially as host community members are more difficult to access. I also used respondents that were familiar with LWF in order to gain an easier access to people who might want to participate. It was also important for me to only interview people who wanted to participate voluntarily and not anyone who felt forced. In the cases where an interpreter was not necessary I made sure we did not get disturbed or could be heard, in order to promote a feeling of security. Beyond this I also made sure the respondents were aware of their right to be anonymous and they only told me their names if they wanted to. The respondents from the refugees were selected among different nationalities, ages, gender and time spent in the camp in order to get a sufficient representation of the population in the camp. This was done on location for the interviews. I received assistance with this from NGO staff due to language barriers and due to their knowledge of some specific people from different countries and their time spent in the camp. This helped in order to get a better understanding of the situation. In the case of host community I aimed to include respondents of different age, gender and occupation. This was also done on location since there were many people present and hence a selection on site was possible. In 3.2.4 I will further comment on the problems and benefits of the sampling of interview subjects.

The interviews were recorded with the approval of the respondents and in the cases of the host community interviews and a few of the interviews with refugees, an interpreter was used. Since all the interviews was recorded I could give all my focus to the interview subject without concentrating on taking written notes. The interviews were semi-structured in order to give the respondents the freedom to give their view and allow both the interviewer and the interviewee the flexibility to change questions and answers or change direction of the interview if necessary.

After carrying out the interviews the process of analyzing the information began. In order to get a comprehensive understanding of the information it was important to structure the answers to know in which cases the respondents gave matching answers and in which they

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<sup>3</sup> There are several offices out in the camps in order to bring the assistance to the refugees closer to the people. These offices are used by all the agencies working in Kakuma.

gave conflicting answers. This later helped in the process of analyzing the data and further writhing of the thesis.

#### **3.2.4 Validity and Reliability**

In February 2015 I spent two weeks Kakuma during my internship with LWF in Nairobi. Due to this I decided to use an abductive approach in my research. I had pre-understandings of the situation, I had been there before and had knowledge of the situation. This helped me during the process. It made it easier for me to know what to study, who to talk to and what to search for. However it could also have had a negative influence. Due to the pre-understandings I might have gained a biased perspective and thought I already knew what the case was and the problems and benefits. Using my already gained knowledge was important and an advantage but it was also important not let the knowledge guide me too much. I tried to make my questions open and not put too much of my own knowledge into them, although sometimes I did choose question derived from my own pre-understandings in order to gain extra knowledge or to clarify an answer.

In the case of the interviewees from the host community, the respondents I gained access to were people who participated in a training by LWF. This could have effected their answers in a more positive tone towards the refugee community. This since their businesses were directed towards the refugees and the camps. In order to try to get around that issue I included questions about the situation in general and not just their own perception even if that is an important note too in the study. The reason I could only get access to host community members affected by LWF projects was because of the help and assistance I received from the organization which was necessary in order to get access to the camps and members of host community and interpreters. The use of interpreters could have affected the answers and the result due to a misleading interpretation, either because of a willingness with the interpreter to give a different answer or due to difficulties in the translation. However in comparison to the interviews conducted without interpreters the answers are in agreement.

#### **3.2.5 The Role of the Researcher**

As an outsider it was important to understand my own role as a researcher. There were more than once I had respondents thinking I represented an aid agency and hence they came to me with all their problems, like lack of food, medical issues and questions of resettlement. This made it clear to me how important it was to get the respondents to understand that I was a researcher, something I obviously failed at those times. I could not do any more for the



respondents other than to listen to their stories. It was also important for me to not try to influence the respondents in their answers. I wanted their opinions, not what they thought I wanted to hear. This was another important reason why it was crucial to make the respondents understand that I did not represent any aid agency or any donor country or organization.

## **Chapter 4: Background**

This chapter will provide an overview to the study area, Turkana County and Kakuma town. In order to better understand and be introduced to the topic and research conducted, I also include a brief introduction to the regional situation in East Africa.

### **4.1 East Africa**

The majority of the refugees making their way to Kenya originates from Somalia and South Sudan. This is due to the long term conflicts roaming the countries. Among the first refugees in Kenya made their way there from Somalia and Sudan. The same countries are today producing refugees arriving in Kenya (UNHCR, 2016c). The situation in South Sudan is worse than ever and Somalia is far from stable enough for all the refugees to return. This means that the regional situation in East Africa affects Kenya and the refugee situation. As long as the situation in the refugees' countries of origin is not improving, they have few options. This suggest that Kenya might find itself as a refugee hosting country for a long time to come. One issue is Kenya's skepticism to continue to assist the refugees, they are for example not allowed to build permanent structures. They have no real wish to assist the refugees or have them stay in Kenya. Due to this it is hard to predict the future of the refugees or what the Government of Kenya might do (UNHCR, 2016b). Kenya has the last few years been the victim of several terrorist attacks originating from Somalia and Al-Shabab (BBC, 2014 & 2015). Many are of the opinion that some of the terrorists are refugees and the camps are a place of recruitment. This has resulted in a wish by the GoK to close the camps (CNN, 2016).

### **4.2 Turkana County and Kakuma Host Community**

Turkana County is situated in the North Western Part of Kenya in close proximity to the boarder of South Sudan. It is one of the most remote areas in Kenya and is bordering both Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda. Turkana is semi-arid which reduces the possibilities for agriculture in large areas of the county. The Turkana people, about one million, are mainly a pastoralist people just like many of the neighboring tribes in both Kenya and the other surrounding countries. This means they live of the land, whether it is through cattle, fishing or farming (Aukot, 1999; Crisp, 2000:5). Turkana is one of the poorest areas in Kenya and after hardship associated with drought periods during the 1980-1990s, many experienced famine and moved into settlements for protection and food supply. The situation today is better, however there are still many living in poverty; struggling to provide for their families. The

main livestock in Turkana are: cattle, goats, camels, sheep and donkeys, with a large number of people making their living of these animals. The pastoralist life is difficult especially in an area like Turkana where the climate is dry and hot, and during the raining seasons flooding is common. Flooding causes damage on houses, infrastructure, farms and livestock. During the colonial period Turkana was called the most worthless district in Kenya (McCabe, 2004:39-45).

The Turkanas are dependent on their land. They use the land for agriculture, keeping cattle and moving around. Many still live according to old traditions, although changes are increasingly occurring due to recent development. Turkanas are a people who unfortunately have experience with violence. Both the Turkanas and the neighboring tribes have been active in cattle raiding throughout the years. The Turkanas do not just live in a geographically isolated area, they are also to some extent underdeveloped in comparison to the remaining Kenya and they are underrepresented politically and have few economic resources and possibilities. Hence the Turkanas are a marginalized people (Aukot, 1999; Crisp, 2000:5). The Turkanas are to some extent discriminated by the Kenyan society. Due to underdevelopment and lack of infrastructure education and medical facilities are lacking. This has resulted in a view of the Turkanas as an underdeveloped people with a general bad reputation among many in Kenya (Crisp, 2000:5).

Kakuma Town was before the creation of the refugee camp a small town. Only about 9000 people lived within the town and the majority of the Turkanas lived a traditional life in small villages or in a pastoralist way of living. The majority of the population made their living on cattle herding and due to this moved around in the area (Aukot, 2003). Since the beginning of 1990s more and more locals have moved away from the villages and made a life for themselves in Kakuma town due both to a general development but mainly due to the establishment of the camp. It is hard to estimate the amount of people currently living in and around Kakuma but estimates suggest about 100.000 people. Many of the people work directly or indirectly with the refugees or in the camps, both for agencies working in the area but also with trade or other occupations (Grindheim, 2013-26:27).

While other tribes in Kenya have moved towards a more modern life, many of the Turkanas are still keeping to their more traditional way of living. This is slowly changing since the establishment of the refugee camp and the associated influx of people, both refugees and aid

workers. As a result there is an increased development of Kakuma Town and Turkana County as a whole. The more traditional life style is becoming rarer, for better and for worse. Traditions and cultures are disappearing, but at the same time more people have access to working possibilities, education and medical services that were not present before the development of Turkana County started (Grindheim, 2013:27-28).

#### **4.3 Kakuma Refugee Camp**

2015 was the third year in a row when Kakuma received a record number of arriving refugees. Kakuma is today hosting about 180.000 refugees, far more than the original plan. Kakuma refugee camp is now consisting of four separated camps (with one more in process). The camp has now become more of a town within a town. The camps are packed of business, schools, jobs and people who are trying to live as normal lives as possible under un-normal circumstances (UNHCR, 2016b). Kenya is neighboring both Somalia and South Sudan which are the countries generating the third and fifth most refugees in the world. Fifty % of the refugee population in Kakuma consists of children. Many of these children are born in the camps, in exile. This is a quite normal situation in protracted refugee situations. The majority of the people who remain in the camps are those who are unable to leave for example due to long time ongoing conflicts or lack of resources. In situations where there is a need for long time assistance to refugees the need are usually larger due to an overrepresentation of special needs people, like people with disabilities or unaccompanied minors (Crisp, 2000:6).

Kakuma refugee camp was established in 1991 at a time when Kakuma town had about 9000 inhabitants, in 2000 the population of Kakuma town was estimated to about 40.000 and today about 100.000. Kakuma Refugee camp is situated west of Tarach River which is considered the dividing line between the camp and the host community. Due to the conflict in Sudan and the associated refugees that were generated in early 1991, the Government of Kenya asked for assistance from UNHCR to tend for the refugees. Since then Kakuma refugee camp has grown rapidly into what it is today (Grindheim, 2013:26-28). The majority of the refugees living in the camps are from South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia. However there are about 15 nationalities living side by side in the camps today. The number of refugees in Kakuma are exceeding the local population. The Turkanas are a minority in Kakuma today. However life in as a refugee in Kakuma is not easy either. Bartolomei et al (2003) describes a situation

where the refugees are totally dependent on international aid and the majority of them have no real possibilities to return home, being resettled or being properly integrated in Kenya.

Visiting Kakuma gives you an interesting view of a bustling town and camp. The town has one major road going through it with small shops on each side of the road. Following this road leads you to the entrance of the camps, where the aid agencies compounds are located. The inside of the camp is busy, with lots of people moving around, going from one side of the camp to another, for business, visiting an agency or transport to schools and work. The camps are also full of local Turkana trying to sell or buy goods for the day.

## Chapter 5: Findings

In this chapter the findings will be presented. This will partly be based on the dimensions that Chambers introduced in 1986. However in order to get a better understanding of the respondents and informants answers and connect to the research questions I have added a few more categories. The answers from both host community and refugee respondents as well as the key informants from a NGO are here presented. Interviews with refugees will be referenced with Ref, host community members with Host, and external actors with NGO, followed by the interview number. Some of the finding have been acquired by me through direct and indirect participation both in 2015 and in 2016 during my visits to Kakuma.

### 5.1 Security

The majority of the respondents claims that the security situation has improved significantly over the last years. During the 1990s the problems and conflicts were greater. To improve the relationship the organizations and the GoK have introduced peace committees to manage the conflicts when they occur. The GoK have also increase the security staff in the camps to create a more secure environment for the refugees alongside those visiting the camp. The NGOs have also increase the number of service facilities and field offices in the camps for easier access to assistance during both conflicts and other needs the refugees might have (NGO 1, 2016). This means that when conflicts occur they can be managed faster and hopefully resolved easier. The GoK primarily address the legal aspects of the conflicts while the NGOs (in this case LWF) work with more social aspects helping to resolve the problems so people can live side by side in peace. One other aspect of the improved relationship between the hosts and the refugees are the fact that they have lived together for a significant amount of time now (NGO 2, 2016).

The major security problems experienced in Kakuma host community and Kakuma refugee camp are rapes and fighting's, there has even been killings taken place between refugees and hosts. One respondent claims that a host community member got drunk and met a refugee child in the dried out river, he attacked and killed the child. According to the refugee, the family of the child later took measures into their own hands and killed the host community member. This was a situation where both the police and the NGO stepped in to manage the situation (Ref 1, 2016). Knowing what stories are true and which are not is not always easy, although according to several of the respondents there are thieves both among the refugees and the host community. There are also reports of killings between refugees and host

community members (Standard Media, 2016). However, not all conflicts are between refugees and hosts. There are several incidents where the refugees have brought the conflicts from their homes to the camp, for example the hostilities among the South Sudanese tribes, Dinka and Nuer (UNHCR, 2014).

When conflicts occur it usually takes place in connection to the river that separates the camp from the host community. This river is dried out most of the year, which means people are walking across it without a need to use the bridge heading into Kakuma town. The refugee children sometimes use the river to play, people herd their cattle there and many refugees walk across to collect firewood. The river is a place where the refugees and the host community come in contact with each other which sometimes results in conflicts. This especially when refugees walk across into the host community area, and particularly if the refugees collect resources that the host community feel belongs to them. Women and children are in these cases often in risk of getting attacked and raped which several refugees and host community members give examples of (Host 2, 2016; Ref 1, 2016). Firewood is needed by both communities and hence a source of conflicts. One other security concern affecting children in the area is the child labour taking place. There are today many street children living in Kakuma due to the development and rapid growth of the area. These children and many other host community children work in the camp. Several host community members mention that the children are often being taken advantage of by adults and are often given too much and heavy work. They also claim there are many cases of sexual abuse of the children which can start larger conflicts between relatives to the children and the perpetrators (Host 1 & 3, 2016).

Even though they have fled to Kakuma there are still some refugees living under threat from inside the camps as well, for example due to political reasons. There are several high profile cases, for example lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) refugees from Uganda. Conditions are not safe for them in the camp, which creates problems. They can feel they are under threat from the host community. In the case of the Turkana people and their neighbors on the other side of the border of Uganda, there are more or less the same people with the same history. This means that the original threat from Uganda can easily follow the refugee into Kenya. Also in Kenya there are many people opposing LGBT, which can also be a reason for insecurity for some refugees (Ref 11, 2016).

There are security issues connected to the presence of the camp both for the host community and the refugees. Despite this the senior livelihood officer I interviewed claimed that GoK and the NGOs have increased their focus on the co-existence between the groups to create a more sustainable situation. Through awareness rising, community building and peace committees fewer conflicts occur and the ones that do are being managed faster (NGO 1, 2016). The respondents tell the same story of a more stable situation now than previous years and a better co-existence between the groups (Ref 6, 7, 13, 2016; Host 3, 4, 2016).

## **5.2 Land and Labour**

A lot of the previous research (see Chapter 2) show that refugees can be a good source of cheap labour, benefitting the host community living in close proximity to the refugees. However, this is not entirely the case of Kakuma where it is more the host community that constitutes cheap labour force for the refugees than the other way around. This is mainly due to the lack of economic development in Turkana County. Few of the refugees have large economic resources but they have a steadier source of food and services that can work as payment for the hosts instead of money. The host community can provide help in transportation of both people and goods, assistance in building, cleaning and more within the camp. Since there are many services that are limited in Kakuma and the infrastructure is inadequate, the need for workers is high.

The majority of the host community members I interviewed conduct business within the camps. They buy and sell cattle, firewood, and charcoal etcetera to the refugees. This offers them a chance to provide for their families in a more secure way in comparison to the time before the camp establishment when the access to work was more limited (Host 1, 3, 6, 2016). Many of my host community respondents lack education and many of them more or less only speak the local language. Many in the host community lack the funding required to study since there is a major shortage of schools in Turkana, both primary and secondary schools. This means that start working at early age is more or less the only option in creating a more sustainable situation for your family. All the jobs available are important for the development and survival of Turkana and the people living there whether it is cleaning houses, washing clothes or collecting water. The lack of education is not only affecting the adults living in Kakuma but also the children. Instead of going to school many of them work in the camps, for small amounts of money or food. The children are easily taken advantage of by the adults providing them with work, and the work is keeping them from going to school.



Since the camp was established, Kakuma has grown rapidly, something the people who lived there for a while confirms, both refugees and host community. This has been positive for many host community members who now have better access to employment and an easier time to provide for their families. However since the development has been so rapid not all have gone smoothly. The infrastructure is inadequate for the amount of people living there and there is still a lack of access to for example education and medical services. It is not just the refugees who provide work opportunities for the hosts. The NGOs working with the camp also employ many host community members, some from other places around Kenya, but also many local Turkanas (Ref 12, 2016). These employees are also being provided with additional trainings and education which is benefitting many more than just the people receiving them.

The land around Kakuma is owned by both the government and the local population and it is used by the Turkanas. The pastoralist people used the land for moving around, herding cattle and in some cases for agriculture. The previous route for herding the cattle cross right through the middle of the camp. The Turkanas are in the majority of cases still making their living of the land beneath their feet. This is today restricted due to the large area the camp and refugees use. There are today more people, living on less land and the hosts are restricted in their accustomed way of using the land around them (NGO 1, 2016). This could be a source of conflict especially since there are plans to establish another camp, Kakuma 5. This camp is meant to focus more on agriculture and a more sustainable and possibly more long-term living. This could possibly cause more conflicts and effect the host community further.

### **5.3 Services, Food and Common Property Resources**

Due to the development of the whole region since the early 1990s there are now far more schools and medical facilities than before the refugee influx. This is partly due to an overall development of the whole of Kenya but also due to the refugees who are now also a part of the population in Turkana. According to one host community member “Development is a result of the refugees” (Host 2, 2016).

This development is generally seen as positive and is something the majority of the respondents mentions alongside the informants. The improvements in access to medical services and education have been an immense possibility for a more sustainable and improved way of life for the Turkanas. Since the host community are allowed to access both schools and medical facilities within the camp this has improved the hosts’ lives, but also the co-existence between the local community and the refugees. Refugee and host children go to school

together which forces people to interact and integrate, which increases the possibilities to become friends.

The medical facilities in the refugee camp are, unlike the one in town, free both for refugees and hosts. This means that many members of the host community also access the medical facility within the refugee camp, since money and insurance is lacking in many cases. Several of the respondents, both refugees and host community members, feel that it is important for the NGOs to also provide services for the host community (Ref 11, 2016). One respondent describes Turkana as an underdeveloped and desperate tribe, secluded from the rest of Kenya, in need of assistance just as much as the refugees. A majority of the respondents feel the need to provide the host community with the same services as they give to the refugees to minimize the risk of conflicts and feelings of discrimination (Ref 1, 3, 11, 2016; Host 2, 3, 2016).

One problem that several respondents mentioned is the lack of food for the host community. The refugees are being provided with food while the host community are not, even though they in many cases are in the same need for food. One refugee thinks that the relationship between the groups would be better if the host community was also given food (Ref 10, 2016). One problem is the fact that the relief food provided to the refugees have been reduced lately, many refugees are complaining that they are not receiving enough food to support their families.

The interaction between the refugees and the host community creates capacity building of both groups. Furthermore this promotes a functioning co-existence just as the other interactions taking place between the groups like within religious services. In Kakuma there are two communities being served, however this is difficult due to several reasons, partly due to lack of funds but also due to the inaccessible area. The infrastructure is bad and some routes to Turkana are under threat which demands police escort for both people and goods.

Since Turkana is a more or less barren part of Kenya there is a great lack of access to resources like wood. In Kakuma the wood is used by both host community and refugees to cook food and building for example houses and fences. The wood used can be found on host community territory which means that access to it by the refugees are problematic. Many refugees cross the river to collect firewood for cooking, while at the same time many members from the host community collect and sell the firewood in the camps to receive money or food. When the refugees collect the wood themselves outside the camp conflicts

arise. For many host community members the wood is a source of livelihood and many Turkana feel it is theirs to use and collect. At the same time many refugees are desperate for firewood to cook food for their families and wood to build fences for security (Ref 4, 6, 2016). The access to limited resources is one of the biggest triggers for conflicts between the refugees and the host community. The lack of wood is not just a problem for the people living there today. It puts an immense toll on the environment and land degradation is a fact around Kakuma. There is not enough being done to protect and restore the environmental impacts that the large number of people have on the area. There are NGOs working towards the environment and the replanting of trees but that takes time, far more time than cutting down a tree. Trees are important not just for the environment but they also provide important shade and protection for the people living in the harsh and hot Turkana climate (NGO 2, 2016).

Due to many years of repeated drought and famine in Turkana, the people living there have lived without sufficient food and water. Since the establishment of the camp, NGOs have worked hard with supplying people with water by building wells. This service and resource have been vital to provide well-being to the host community. There are now many wells within the camps but there are also many being built far away out in the county to provide people with lifesaving fresh water. This have resulted in better access to water which is important for the food supply as well. Yet in some areas in Turkana the water and food supply is still far from sufficient despite the work done.

#### **5.4 Other Cases of Integration**

The purpose of the refugee camp is that it is temporary. Officially the refugees are supposed to either go back to their countries of origin or being resettled to a third country. There are many refugees who have lived in the camp for around 20 years with no real outlooks on going anywhere any time soon. One refugee said “most people come here, live here and die here” (Ref 11, 2016). Despite this there is no formal integration going on in Kenya. The GoK have no integration program or guidelines since the idea is that the refugees are not staying permanently in Kenya. The refugees are more or less restricted to the camps with limited access of traveling or possibilities to settling down somewhere else within the country. The refugees need permission from the Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) to travel within Kenya (Ref 7, 2016). This permission is most common for students going to boarding schools. The refugees in Kakuma are only allowed to do business within the camp or in Kakuma town. These restrictions, together with the fact that the GoK do not give citizenship

to refugees, prevents the refugees from fully integrating in the Kenyan society. Despite this, there is informal integration taking place. One of the most important aspects of this is the intermarriages between refugees and Kenyans. This is a way for the refugees to make their way out of the camp and receive a chance to integrate in the society. The intermarriages also creates understanding between different cultures and ethnicities when two families become one (NGO 2, 2016). On the other hand, intermarriages could also be a source of conflicts because people are more or less forced to interact with each other.

There are people who are worried for the Turkana culture due to the influx of refugees. One respondent fears that his culture, tradition, history and language is being eroded because of the influx of people with other backgrounds. He claims that Turkana youth no longer respect the elders, they drink illicit brews and visit prostitutes within the camps and they have abandoned the Turkana culture. He also feels that there are refugees who do not respect the Turkana culture and have no understanding for it. In the same time he is careful to explain that a large part of the positive development is due to the presence of the refugees (Host 2, 2016).

## **Chapter 6: Analysis**

In the following chapter the research questions will be answered through looking at the specific positive and negative impacts the refugees have had on the host community and how the co-existence and integration work. This will be done with a point of departure from the analytical framework by Chambers (1986). The analysis will partly include a discussion on the five dimensions that Chambers mentions in regards to the relationship. These dimensions will be included in the negative and positive impacts on the host community.

### **6.1 Negative aspects of the refugee influx**

Taking care of 180,000 refugees when the host community themselves are outnumbered, poor and neglected is difficult. Living in one of the most remote areas in Kenya, with very little economic or infrastructural development, with a lack of education and medical services is a challenge in itself. On top of that hosting an immense number of refugees, with different cultures, languages, histories and traditions might sound impossible. Just so it has created problems. The Turkana people are in many cases discriminated by the rest of Kenya, seen as an underdeveloped and uneducated people. Opening up their home for refugees are far from certain. There have been a large opposition towards the refugees. In many cases the host community is in more need of assistance than some of the refugees, yet they are often neglected. The refugees are being provided with food, shelter, a place to live, water and education and medical facilities, all for free. At the same time the Turkanas must more or less fend for themselves in a harsh and excluded area with very little resources.

The host community are today a minority in Kakuma. They are greatly outnumbered by the refugees and provided with less support, even though it is their land and resources the refugees live off. Since international NGOs tend for the refugees and the work to care for the Turkanas fall on the GoK, this can easily become an unequal situation. The frustration that many host community members feel is understandable. They have to some extent been limited in their own lives since the refugee influx, life is not what it used to be. They now have to live side by side with people they did not choose or know, furthermore they are from different ethnicities, cultures, traditions and countries. No wonder there are conflicts and problems between the groups. The area have gone through an environmental degradation, rains fall less regularly, there are less trees that give resources, shelter, shade and stability to the soil. The difficulties of conducting agriculture have increased even more due to loss or regular rains and less access to land due to the size of the camp. The possibilities to herd cattle

have decreased also due to loss of land but also due to problems with cattle thieves among the refugees.

The security situation in Kakuma have worsened, at least in people mind, when the refugee influx began. In the same time the security has improve greatly since the camp was new in 1990s. There are conflicts between the refugees and the host community due to struggles for the very limited resources that are found in and around Kakuma and an increase in people mean an increase in fighting, rapes and killings especially if many of the people are frustrated, neglected and lacking fundamental resources. The last few years there have been an increase in the threat of terrorist attacks. This is something many people in Kenya fear due to previous bad experiences around the country. The refugees have been partly blamed for the attacks, especially the Somalis since the attacks have been carried out by Al-Shabab that originates from Somalia (BBC, 2014 & 2015).

## **6.2 Positive aspects of the refugee influx**

The presence of the refugees have not only been negative. Since the establishment of the camp in the beginning of the 1990s there have been a massive development of the area. Kakuma and its surroundings have developed. There have been a large influx of people, both refugees but also others. Kakuma town has grown alongside with the establishment of more basic services in and around Kakuma. There are now more access to employment, education, medical and other services that a town should provide for its population.

The host community living in and around Kakuma are today experiencing a different kind of life than before the refugee influx. There are far more people who live a more modern life today than the old traditional, hardworking, pastoralist life that includes more struggle to provide food and other lifesaving necessities.

Since Turkana is one of the poorest area in Kenya and many live in extreme poverty, with regular experiences of drought and famine, the development have been vital. The development of the area is partly due to an overall development of Kenya but most because of the establishment of the camp. The large influx of people, in desperate need for refuge and assistance, demanded aid from the international society. This created a situation where a large number of NGOs astablished in Kakuma to provide assistance to the refugees. Even if the focus is to aid the people fleeing from their homes, the host community has also benefitted from the presence of the NGOs. Many people from the area have had opportunities to be

employed by the NGOs since they need people familiar with the area and people living there. There are also many people from other parts of Kenya that have been employed due to the need to have workers within the camps and with projects directed towards the refugees. There are not only Kenyans or international staff being provided with work. There are also refugees who get employment from the NGOs. The organizations need their knowledge of cultures, traditions and languages and it provides the NGOs with more respect from the refugee community. With staff from both the host and refugee community, the projects and implementation of new ideas can give the people affected an increased feeling of ownership of the projects. This is vital for the sustainability of the relationship between the hosts and the refugees, for the projects, the camp and the continuation of the valuable contributions by the organizations. If the people have a feeling of ownership they take more responsibility themselves to make the situation work. When the organization employ local workers both from the host community and the refugees, this increases the NGOs accountability towards the people they serve. The possibilities, for the people affected, to complain and make a difference could increase if they have representatives within the organizations.

The influx of refugees and aid workers have also opened up the situation of the Turkanas for the rest of the world. The Turkanas are not as secluded and unknown anymore. The presence of the refugees have also provided the Turkanas more knowledge of other people, cultures, languages and more, something that before the influx of the refugees was far more limited.

Due to the amount of time the refugee camp has existed the relationship has had time to develop and improve. Both the refugees and the host community have had time to get used to each other and gotten to know one another. This has improved the relationship to what it is today. In the early ages of the camp the relationship was mostly negative, there were more fighting between the groups and the host community were not benefitting from the presence of the camp. Since the start of 2000s the relationship have become better and better with a few setbacks. This due to an increase in the work directed to both the refugees and the host community and because the hosts can now also see the positive aspects of the refugees and not only the negative ones. The general feeling now is that the relationship is better than ever before.

### **6.3 Integration and co-existence**

Since there are no formal integration of the refugees into the Kenyan society, real co-existence will be difficult to achieve. The refugees and the host community will continue to

live divided and separated by their status as a Kenyan or as a refugee, despite the fact that many have lived side by side their whole lives. The refugees are more or less restricted to the camps. They are only allowed in the camps and around in Kakuma town, only with permission from the DRA are they permitted travel elsewhere. If the refugees were allowed to settle and move in Kenya integration might be easier. There are several tribes around Kenya with a background from other areas in neighboring countries. This means that for example there are tribes in the south of Kenya originating from areas in today's Sudan, the same origin as some of the people fleeing from South Sudan. Even though this is hundreds of years ago these refugees might have it easier integrate with the tribes sharing similar cultural history. The mobility to move as a refugee might provide them with an increased wish to remain in Kenya and become a part of the Kenyan society. Being restricted to the camp is no bright future for them. The majority of the refugees want to be resettled in a third country. They see no future for them in Kenya or their countries of origin. The refugees' reluctance to remain in Kenya might make them a little more skeptical towards the Kenyans. Especially since Kenya is not integrating them or providing them with a real chance of a future in Kenya away from the camps.

Through access to education and services needed for reasonable life, the co-existence between the groups have an increased possibility to function well. There are interaction between the groups through intermarriages, education, trade, business, religious services, work and more. Integration is taking place even though there is no official integration going on. But people live side by side, they interact, make friends and that will make people come together and respect each other even through difficult times.



## **Chapter 7: Concluding Discussion**

This chapter will focus on a conclusion of the situation in Kakuma in regards to the relationship between the refugees and the host community. It will also include a concluding discussion on the analytical framework by Chambers (1986) and the previous research by Grindheim (2013). There will also be a discussion on the method used for the study, the benefits and the limitations. In the end there will be a brief look into the future and what might happen with the people living in Kakuma with the changings in Kenya and the region.

### **7.1 The situation in Kakuma**

According to my findings the conflicts occurring between refugees and host community members are more between people and smaller groups and not between the refugees and the host community as a whole. The relationship is far better now than in the beginning of the refugee influx, despite that soeme conflicts still occur. These conflicts are more individual cases than between the whole communities.

There is a combination of positive and negative impacts for the host community since the refugees arrived in Turkana. The problems that arise are more a result of many people sharing few resources with a lack of opportunity and money, than the fact that some of them are refugees and others are host community members.

In order to minimize the conflicts it is important to improve infrastructure, education possibilities, and access to sufficient food and water. Kakuma needs to develop into a city capable to sustain the large amount of people living there, including both refugees and host community. This is not the case today. If this can be done it is possible to secure a good relationship between the refugees and the host community.

Both the key informants and the respondents say that Kakuma has developed rapidly over the years. They say this is because of the refugees. The town might have had developed anyway however it is very unlikely that so many people would live in and around Kakuma if not for the refugee camp. The general view is that the development is positive even if the traditional Turkana culture might be under pressure. With the present situation the refugees and the host community are dependent on each other. They need one another to sustain.

### **7.2 Chambers and Grindheim**

The findings of the research shows that the theoretical framework based on the work by Chambers shows that much of his ideas and theories are still relevant. One aspect that

Chambers do not mention, but is important in the case of Kakuma is the security situation. For the security the refugee influx has been negative. The host community feel that the area now is more exposed and the risks of conflicts including fighting's and especially terrorist attacks have increased. Neither does Chambers mention other cases of interaction between the groups like intermarriages. Chambers discusses interaction like trade and other cases of business and education; this is also the case of Kakuma. The most important interaction takes place due to trade and business between adults and in school for the children. These generate better living conditions and has the opportunity to support a well-functioning co-existence between the refugees and the host community. Chambers ideas are still relevant however there are more aspects of impacts of the refugees on the host community than the five dimensions that he identified.

According to Grindheim there are both positive and negative impacts on the host community. He mentions trade and other socio-economic impacts that have been positive like access to education and medical services. The negative impacts he mentions are connected to the interaction between the refugees and the host community. He claims that the conflicts that have occurred are due to the interaction between the groups. Without the interaction the number of conflicts would be reduced. He also identified environmental difficulties like lack of resources and the degradation of the environment and reasons for conflicts. Hence, the result Grindheim found is very similar to the result of this thesis. Several respondents mention that they feel there have been an improvement of the relationship the last few years which would mean an improvement since Grindheim conducted his research. It is however difficult to know if this is a long-term improvement of just a temporary one. There might be further improvements the coming time or there might be a decline in the positive impacts and more conflicts might arise.

### **7.3 Method**

Using a qualitative case study for the thesis was good. It was important to conduct a field study in order to gain a better understanding of the situation. With 22 interviews I gained a good understanding of the situation, however more interviews would have resulted in even more information and maybe other perspectives as well. Especially interviewing more host community members might have been beneficial for a more comprehensive result. It would also have provided more information to interview a representative from the GoK to get their view of the situation and possibly a better understanding of the politics at hand. Incorporating

some quantitative aspects could have provided interesting information about, for example, food prices, number of people employed and the influx of host community members in and around Kakuma town and number of crimes reported over time. These could all have been interesting additions to the people opinions and feelings about the relationship between the groups and the situation in Kakuma.

#### **7.4 The Future**

There are many scenarios for the future for the refugees, the host community and their co-existence. There is currently a fifth camp in progress proposed to open during 2016. This camp would have a larger focus on food production, agriculture. The refugees would get access to a larger piece of land when they arrive and possibilities to grow crops. How this will influence relations with the host community is hard to say at the moment. There are many aspects that need to be addressed the largest one the problems of cultivating crops in the semi-arid Turkana. However if the project would work and the refugees could grow their own food this could be a major achievement. The World Food Program (WFP) would not have to hand out as much food, people would have a stronger feeling of ownership and independence and there might be possibilities to sell food to other refugees and/or host community.

However, the most urgent issue for Kakuma is the threat of Kenya closing the refugee camps and no longer providing assistance for the refugees. This is something that have been discussed for some time in Kenya however now it seems that they have made their decision. In May 2016 Kenya made the announcement that they would no longer provide assistance to the refugees. This because of heavy strains on their economy, environment and due to security risks they feel the refugees represents. Kenya has already started to disband the Department for Refugee Affairs, it is however not decided yet when the camps will close. This decision will affect the 600.000 refugees in Kenya and the host communities surrounding the camps. The UNHCR and the rest of the international community is working hard in changing Kenya's mind, which they have succeeded with before. Only the future can tell how the people effected will handle a new situation (CNN, 2016; UNHCR, 2016d). The future of the camps will not only affect the situation in Kenya and the people living in or near the camps. It will also affect the whole region. Many surrounding countries are experiencing problems with conflicts, poverty and corrupt leaders. Kenya is one of the major player in the region and an

important actor. How they will handle the situation and their actions will affect not only themselves but also others.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1

<b>Resp. no.</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Household Size</b>	<b>Camp</b>	<b>Time in Kakuma</b>
1	South Sudan	Male	31	13	Kakuma 1 Zone 2 Block 3	17 years
2	South Sudan	Male	46	12	Kakuma 1  Zone 4  Block 4	2 years
3	Uganda	Male	63	8	Kakuma 1  Zone  Block 5	22 years
4	South Sudan	Female	39	15	Kakuma 1  Zone  Block	23 years
5	South Sudan	Male	41	7	Kakuma 1  Zone 1  Block 9	3 months
6	Sudan (Darfur)	Male	22	5	Kakuma 1  Zone 1  Block	5 years
7	South Sudan	Male	30	9	Kakuma 1	15 years



					Zone 2 Block 3	
8	Somalia	Female	29	15	Kakuma 1  Zone 1  Block 6	7 years
9	Congo	Female	43	8	Kakuma 1	6 years
10	South Sudan	Male	28	3	Kakuma 1  Zone 3  Block 3	24 years
11	Uganda	Male	45	1	Reception Centre	2 years, then 11 years in Nairobi. Now 3 months
12	South Sudan	Male	23	9	Kakuma 1	10 years  (have spent some of those years in boarding school)
13	South Sudan	Male	33		Kakuma 1	24 years

## Appendix 2

<b>Resp. nr.</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Household</b>	<b>Time in Kakuma</b>
1	Male	35	5	Since 2002
2	Male	45	7	Since birth
3	Female	~40	7	Since 1992
4	Female	35	9	Since birth
5	Male	72	6	Since 1972
6	Female	-	7	After camp establishment
7	Male	29	8	Since 1992

### Appendix 3

<b>Name</b>	<b>NGO</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Origin</b>
William Losengea	LWF	Senior Livelihoods and Community Services Officer	Turkana born
Emmanuel Kura Lomodo	LWF	Accountability Assistant	Turkana born

## Appendix 4

### Refugees:

- Gender/age of respondent?
- How many members of your family/Household?
- Country of Origin?
- Time spent in Kakuma? How has it changed? More refugees now? After/before influx?
- Which camp?
- In which circumstances do you interact with the host community?
- How is your perception of the relationship? In general/yours specific?
- How are the host community affecting your everyday life?
- Any specific negative situations?
- Any specific positive situations?
- Have the relationship changed during your time in the camp?
- Could the relations be improved?
- What could the refugees/ host community/aid agencies/Kenyan government do?

## Appendix 5

Host community:

- Gender/age of respondent?
- How many people in your family/household?
- How long have you (your family) lived in Kakuma?
- Name of the village?
- In which circumstances do you interact with the refugees?
- How is your perception of the relationship? In general/yours specific?
- How are the refugees affecting your everyday life?
- Any specific negative situations?
- Any specific positive situations?
- How have the situation in Kakuma changed since the establishment of the camp?  
Access to water, firewood etc. Have your situation worsened?
- How have you (your family) adapted to the presence of the refugees?
- Have the relationship changed during the last few years?
- Could the relations be improved?
- What could the refugees/host community/aid agencies/Kenyan government do?

## Appendix 6

External actors:

- Place of work/title?
- Time spent in Kakuma (you or your NGO)?
- Describe the relationship? Both positive and negative.
- Which situations do the refugees and the host community come in contact with each other?
- Which are the biggest problem?
- Which are the biggest benefits?
- How are the refugees affecting the lives of the host community?
- Have the relationship changed the past few years?
- Are the host community adapting to the presence of the refugees? How?
- Are there any specific refugees (from a specific country) that are integrating better with the host community than others? The other way around?
- How are the host community affecting the refugees?
- What are your NGO doing to promote good relations between the refugees and the host community?
- What could be done further? From NGOs/Refugees/Host community/Kenyan Government?
- How are the refugees allowed to move/work etc?