

**HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND THE REFUGEES WELLBEING IN NAKIVALE
REFUGEE SETTLEMENT CAMP IN UGANDA**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL
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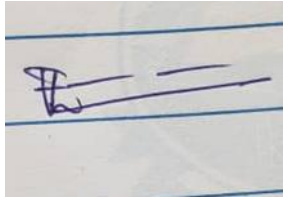


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DECLARATION

I, Enos Kusiima, hereby declare that this research dissertation entitled “**Humanitarian Response and the Refugees Wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp in Uganda**” is my original work, and has never been presented for any award at any institution.

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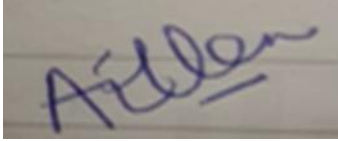
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APPROVAL

I hereby certify that this research dissertation titled “**Humanitarian Response and the Refugees Wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp in Uganda**” is work done by Enos Kusiima under my supervision.

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Ellen Asiimwe Kasoma

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AHA The Africa Humanitarian Action

ANC	Antenatal Care
CVI	Content Validity Index
ERP	Education Responses Plan
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
HIV	Human Immune-Virus
IDPs	Internally Displaced People
ICARA	International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GHD	Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RCS	Red Cross Society
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRS	Self Reliance Strategy
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the effectiveness of humanitarian response on the wellbeing of refugees residing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp in Uganda. Employing a cross-sectional research design, the study utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data from refugees and key stakeholders within the camp. Findings revealed that while certain humanitarian interventions, such as food distribution and medical support, had a positive impact, significant gaps remained in areas including psychosocial support, land distribution, education, and consistent availability of medical supplies. Challenges such as overcrowded schools, land conflicts between refugees and host communities, corruption among camp officials, and limited health services were identified as major barriers to improving refugees' wellbeing. The study concluded that despite efforts by humanitarian agencies, the overall response remains inadequate and ineffective in fully addressing the complex needs of the refugee population. Constraints such as limited funding, administrative challenges, and resource shortages contribute to these shortcomings. The study recommends enhanced coordination among stakeholders, increased funding, and targeted programs to improve education, healthcare, and land management. Further research is suggested on the economic impact of refugees on host communities and sustainable land use practices within refugee settlements. This research provides valuable insights for policymakers, humanitarian agencies, and development partners aiming to strengthen refugee support systems and promote self-reliance.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Globally, up to 70 million people around the globe have been displaced from their homes by war, persecution and violence (Opitz, 2015). And it has been termed by the record number of refugees ever recorded ever reported by the United Nations relative to figures of the current Syrian refugee crisis (UNHCR, 2018; UN, 2021). Lili asserts that refugees escape persecution and brutality and end up in the nearest country they can access, usually a neighbouring country of the conflict state, and their improvement in health is taken to be an international public good that goes beyond the host country's responsibility (Lili, 2018; ODI, 2020; World Bank, 2023). Refugees' health is largely taken to be positive when all the social services are fulfilled suitably and are pertinent to that particular refugee' requirements, and such requirements can be: health, education, employment and livelihood (FAO, 2024; UNHCR, 2022). She also states that wellbeing and stability of refugees is an international public good and that there ought to be an established link between wellbeing of refugees and humanitarian response in the event that the intervention is to achieve tangible results that will serve to enhance the refugee's standard of living (UNHCR, 2023; UNGA, 2025).

Wellbeing of refugees in Uganda has never been wished for. A survey by UNHCR had shown that the problem of malnutrition, famine, overcrowding, and poor facilities to accommodate refugees continues to remain largely high (UNHCR, 2018; UNDP Uganda, 2020). This has enormously expanded the role of non-state actors, individuals as well as corporate entities, as the private sector takes an important role in addressing the ever-increasing humanitarian needs as well as helping refugees settle and integrate (UN, 2018; Uganda OPM, 2023). Humanitarian organizations operate in economic development and job growth also plays a gigantic role of the long-term solution that rivals the refugee situation in total (ILO, 2021; GIZ Uganda, 2022). As Syrians who try to flee to Europe has taken so much room in the headlines, there are some other different gargantuan populations of refugees from so many different countries. There were 20 million people made into refugees, the most in over two decades (Global Compact on Refugees, 2025; UNFPA, 2016; World Refugee Report, 2024).

As hinted in this work, UNFPA noted that humanitarian work actors have been more active in Africa in recent years (UNFPA, 2018). Refugee camps have also been established in Sudan, Uganda, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Africa, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, among others, as a result of ongoing unrest and civil wars—most noted being the long wars in Somalia and the DRC that have been ongoing for more than two decades (Opitz, 2015; UNHCR, 2020; AU, 2023). Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) helped individuals by relief to humanity, providing development assistance to affected refugee populations in Sub-Saharan Africa, empowering displaced persons and refugees with the ability to cope with disaster, and building local capacities for the prevention of disaster, preparedness in relief, and recovery (AHA, 2019; WFP, 2022). The interventions include helping autonomous, non-sectarian, not-for-profit, and not-governmental bodies with humanitarian goals in AHA (Opitz, 2015; IOM, 2024). In Somalia, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP, and UNHCR, alongside the Red Cross Society, have all been involved in facilitating quick response to refugees prior to government and development stakeholders offering lasting solutions (OCHA, 2021; UNHCR, 2016; UNICEF, 2023).

Humanitarian actors perceive their work as a lasting testament to shared values, underpinned by moral obligation and international solidarity (IFRC, 2021; UNHCR, 2019). Currently, Uganda hosts over 250,000 refugees from neighboring countries such as Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan,

and the DRC (UNHCR, 2016; UNHCR, 2022; World Bank, 2024). Humanitarian organizations have also been key to responding to crises, particularly in such settlements as Nakivale, whose bodies such as the Red Cross, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, and others provide emergency aid until such time the government and other actors implement more long-term interventions (UNHCR, 2016; UNDP Uganda, 2020; Save the Children, 2025).

Furthermore, Sebba has demonstrated that Uganda, like the majority of African nations, has been interested in humanitarian agents' contribution toward responding to the refugee issue (Sebba, 2015; UNHCR, 2019). Ugandan refugee camps include Oruchinga, Nakivale, Kyaka I and II (Southwestern Uganda); Imvepi, Rhino Camp, and Ikafe (West Nile); Palorinya, Achol-Pii, and Adjumani (Northern Uganda); and Kyangwali and Kiryandongo (Central region) (Sebba, 2015; UNHCR, 2021; OPM Uganda, 2023). Uganda is such a south-south refugee hosting model in that it has had inclusive policies under the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) since 2017 (World Bank, 2023; UNHCR, 2018).

Based on global responses to dealing with large-scale, protracted displacement, Uganda is an experiment case in many aspects. The country had decades of experience in refugee hosting and had over 1.3 million refugees as of October 2017 (IRC, 2020; UNHCR, 2018). By Mukasa, South Sudanese civil unrest and famine drove nearly one million South Sudanese refugees, two-thirds of whom sought refuge in Uganda (Mukasa, 2016; UNHCR, 2019; Brookings, 2024). Uganda's visionary refugee policy has made it a global model, but delivering services and allocating resources are areas of difficulty.

Additionally, as of 1st October 2017, Uganda ranked among the top ten countries hosting refugees worldwide and had registered a total of 1,381,207 refugees, its highest number ever (Refugee Law Project, 2017; UNHCR, 2022). The women were approximately 86% of the population, comprising children aged under 18 years, forming a vulnerable group (UNFPA, 2018; UNICEF, 2021). UNFPA plays a key role in ensuring sexual and reproductive health (SRH) safety net interventions, informing gender-based violence (GBV) response, and strengthening women and youth refugee-hosting districts (Sebba, 2015; UNFPA, 2021; UN Women, 2025). Uganda currently has about 1,444,856 refugees, of which more than 1 million are from South Sudan, 276,570 are from the DRC, about 40,500 are from Burundi, and close to 37,100 are from Somalia (Mukasa, 2016; UNHCR, 2023; OPM, 2024). With growing numbers of refugees and limited capacity to fully review needs in the host and refugee populations, humanitarian needs in Uganda continue to be pressing and complicated (IRC, 2023; UNHCR, 2025).

Nakivale refugee camp was first opened in 1958 and was officially recognized as a refugee settlement in 1960 by Uganda Gazette General Notice No. 19. Refugees were mainly b Congolese, with some Burundians, Rwandese, South Sudanese and few Somalis (UN, 2018). There are seventy-nine villages that constitute the settlement with an average population of 800 to 100 individuals per village. Immediately from the settlement, there are approximately 35,000 or more nationals residing within the refugee settlement area that get directly benefited from water, education, health and nutrition interventions. Moreover, in accordance with this study by Dhakal, it was also revealed that with humanitarian reposes in Uganda, refuge crises have remained a major challenge.

For instance, Uganda's government, Development partners, NGOs with UN agencies such as Save the Children with its executed Plan providing quality education to a half-million refugees and host children within communities in Uganda (Dhakal, 2016). Iconic to the giant leap for refugee education globally is the Education Responses Plan (ERP) the world's first ever. Most of the refugee children in Uganda and refugees in the host districts are denied an education. Especially in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, periods of famine, malnutrition, crowded and unhygienic housing conditions have been common (UNHCR, 2018). Despite having the highly structured humanitarian assistance in Uganda, the crisis of refugees has posed a first-class challenge in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp. At the Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, the research sought to quantify the impact that humanitarian response has on the welfare of the refugees.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Globally, refugee camps continue to experience massive humanitarian crises such as shelter, access to food, clean water, sanitation, and general hygiene status. All these deficits contribute to increased mortality, stunted child growth, and internal conflicts among the displaced population (UN, 2018; WHO, 2021; UNHCR, 2023). In spite of several humanitarian interventions, the mismatch between humanitarian interventions and needs remains an ongoing problem, considering that interventions have not been established to keep up with dynamic realities and demands on the ground (WFP, 2015; IOM, 2022; OCHA, 2024).

In 2003, the Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) attempted to address some of the shortcomings, but there was immense suffering, life under threat, and death still witnessed among refugee camps (AHA, 2020; Teresa, 2016). This persistent humanitarian crisis demands more appropriate, inclusive, and responsive policies (WFP, 2015; UNHCR, 2021). The Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Uganda, which is one of the largest and oldest camps, the humanitarian organizations such as UNHCR, WFP, and others have received relief in the form of shelter materials, food aid, and basic services (Omach, 2014; UNHCR, 2018; OPM Uganda, 2023). And then there are issues. Nakivale refugees are plagued by chronic malnutrition, cyclical famine, shelters overcrowding, and limited access to formal education, with more than 66% of children reported out of school (UNHCR, 2018; Save the Children, 2022; World Vision Uganda, 2025). The above facts demonstrate that despite continuous humanitarian interventions, the refugee crisis is still protracted and static, as if nothing has ever been resolved.

1.3 General Objective

To assess the effectiveness of humanitarian response in enhancing the wellbeing of refugees in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, Uganda.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

- i. To identify the types of humanitarian responses that contribute to the wellbeing of refugees.
- ii. To examine the challenges faced by humanitarian agencies in improving refugee wellbeing.
- iii. To propose strategies for enhancing the wellbeing of refugees in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What forms of humanitarian response are most effective in meeting the needs and improving the wellbeing of refugees?
- ii. How do resource related constraints affect the ability of Humanitarian agencies in their efforts to improve refugee wellbeing?
- iii. To what extent can context-specific and participatory strategies enhance the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving refugee wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp?

1.5 Scope of the study

The study was mainly on the scope of geography, time as well as content. The scope of geography was detailing the location where the study was carried out, the scope of time was detailing the time frame of investigation while the content scope was put emphasis on the study objectives.

1.5.1 Geographical scope

In 1958 Nakivale refugee settlement was established and officially recognized as a refugee settlement in 1960 through Uganda Gazette General Notice No. 19. With most of the refugees in the settlement b Congolese, followed by Burundians, Rwandese, South Sudanese and few Somalis (UN, 2018). Seventy-nine villages make up the settlement with an average of 800 to 100 people per village. From the settlement its estimated that a population of over 35,000 nationals surrounding the refugee settlement directly benefit from water, education, health and nutrition programs. The population in

Nakivale is a mixture of various cultures and groups from various countries with a population of about 62,000 people. (UBOS, 2017).

1.5.2 Scope of content

The concentration was on humanitarian agencies, challenges faced in humanitarian response and their response to refugee wellbeing, specific attentions was devoted on underscoring the effectiveness of humanitarian response on the refugees' wellbeing, the kind of humanitarian response, challenges facing the humanitarian agencies and the ways of improving refugees' wellbeing at Nakivale.

1.5.3 Scope of time

The period from 2015 to 2018 was covered by the study. At this point, the refugees in Nakivale refugee settlement camp significantly increased from 74,000 to 106, 592 due to the crisis in Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo (Mukasa, 2016), (UNHRC, 2015).

1.6 Justification of the study

Humanitarian responses are of great importance towards progress, growth and development of refugees. They are supposed to give refugees social, economic and psychological support in terms of counseling and medical services, food, shelter, protection, and provide them with good water for domestic use (Teresa, 2016).

However, in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, there has been a gap as UNHCR Operation Update (2018) stated that there is deterioration in health status, shortage of clean water, internal conflicts and political interference amongst the immigrants which has raised concerns on the impact of humanitarian response in refugees' settlement in Nakivale refugee settlement camp. Therefore, this study is appropriate to inform humanitarian agencies on the appropriate humanitarian responses.

1.7 Significance of the study

From the study, it informs Humanitarian Agencies about the kind of humanitarian response that is appropriate for refugees and documents suggested ways of improving refugees' wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp. This was help humanitarian agencies to mobilize for the adequate and timely aid to improve lives of the refugees in Nakivale.

This study through the Office of Prime Minister can inform the Uganda's government on having legal regulatory framework that can help the refugees in the settlement camp to have the required humanitarian services essential to their wellbeing. This was accomplished through the use of the study's conclusions and recommendations as a referenced necessity in mitigating the potential legal loopholes in the humanitarian response.

The study can also inform policy makers on the challenges facing the humanitarian agencies in serving the refugee community, thus be able to suggest ways of improving refugees' wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp. More policies can be designed and formulated basing on this study.

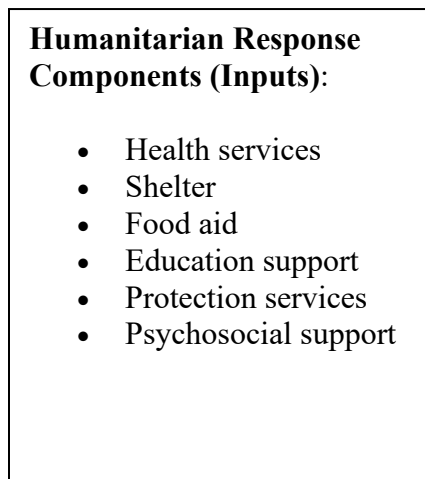
1.8 Theoretical framework

The study adopted the Resource-Based Model of Migrant Adaptation, this segment draws and builds upon the work of Berry (1997) Hobfoll (1998, 2001), and Lazarus and Folkman (1984) indicate a model of migrant well-being. The satisfaction of these needs requires resources and human survival depends on certain basic needs being met much as most of the material is relevant to migrants generally.

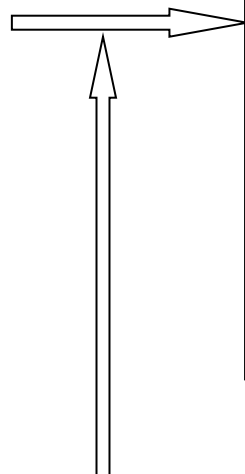
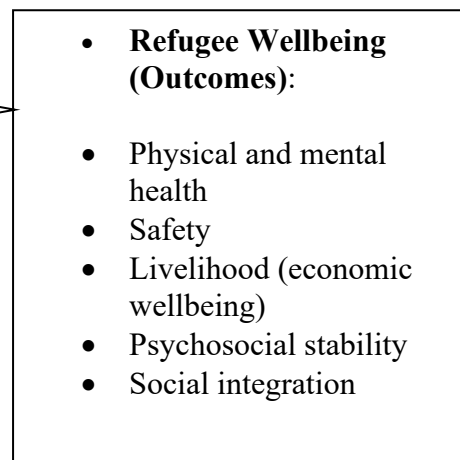
We used the word “migrant” adaptation to explain the process by which individuals meet their needs, follow through their goals and manage demands faced with after finding themselves in a new society so as to better their wellbeing. The means by which individuals satisfy needs, pursue goals and manage demands is termed Resources. Physical or psychological makeup personal resources. (Lazarus and Folkman 1984). Physical resources include health, mobility, energy and physical attractiveness. Both skills and personal traits constitute psychological resources whereas skills-based resources entail problem-solving and social skills. Material resources are made up of property, money, transport means and personal belongings generally. The beneficial aspects of personal relationships are the social resources. This theory informs that extent to which the refugee’s wellbeing is considered as good or bad. It was then to be used to provide a basis for humanitarian responses being provided to improve the refugee’s wellbeing in Nakivale refugee settlement camp in Uganda.

1.9 Conceptual framework

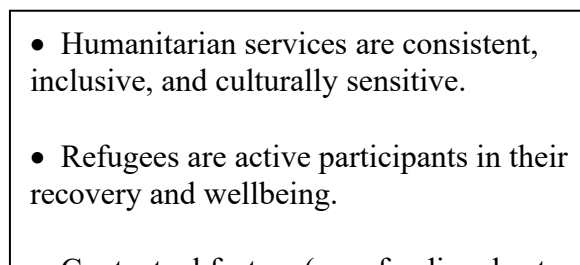
Independent Variable



Dependent Variable



Intervening Variables



This conceptual framework articulates the pathway through which humanitarian response components influence refugee wellbeing outcomes, highlighting the critical role of intervening variables that mediate and moderate this relationship.

Humanitarian response components include health services, shelter, food aid, education support, protection services, and psychosocial support which serve as foundational inputs in emergency and displacement contexts. These components aim to address the multifaceted needs of refugees, ranging from immediate survival to long-term recovery and integration.

However, the effectiveness of these inputs in producing positive refugee wellbeing outcomes such as improved physical and mental health, safety, livelihood (economic wellbeing), psychosocial stability, and social integration may not be achieved automatically. Instead, it is contingent upon key intervening variables that shape the delivery and reception of humanitarian assistance.

First, the consistency, inclusiveness, and cultural sensitivity of humanitarian services are pivotal for maximizing impact. Consistency ensures that services are reliably available over time, reducing uncertainty and promoting trust. Inclusiveness guarantees equitable access across different demographic groups within the refugee population, including vulnerable subgroups such as women, children, elderly, and persons with disabilities. Cultural sensitivity fosters respect for refugees' values, beliefs, and social norms, which enhances acceptance and appropriateness of services, thereby improving outcomes.

Second, the active participation of refugees in their recovery and wellbeing functions as a critical empowering mechanism. Engagement of refugees in decision-making, program design, and implementation fosters agency, dignity, and ownership. This participatory approach not only improves the relevance and effectiveness of interventions but also strengthens psychosocial resilience and social integration by reinforcing a sense of control and belonging.

Finally, contextual factors, such as availability of funding, host government policies, security environment, and social attitudes, significantly influence the quality and scope of humanitarian responses. These external factors can facilitate or constrain the capacity of humanitarian actors to deliver comprehensive and timely assistance, thereby indirectly affecting wellbeing outcomes.

Conclusively, this framework underscores that achieving holistic refugee wellbeing requires not only the provision of core humanitarian inputs but also attentiveness to the quality-of-service delivery, meaningful refugee participation, and the broader contextual environment. Integrating these dimensions is essential for designing effective, sustainable humanitarian programs that support refugees' recovery and long-term integration.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter has in caption the views, ideas and opinions of various researchers as well as writers. The content in this chapter was reviewed in accordance with the study of objectives, and research questions using themes like: Humanitarian response aligns to meet refugee needs of Nakivale, the ways in which humanitarian responses can impact refugees' crisis, the challenges facing the humanitarian agencies in serving the refugee community and ways of improving refugees' wellbeing and humanitarian response.

2.1 Humanitarian response and refugee wellbeing in Nakivale refugee settlement camp.

The study adopts the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) to analyze refugee wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp (Department for International Development, 1999). The SLF provides a comprehensive lens for understanding how refugees' access to five key livelihood assets like human, social, financial, physical, and natural capital which interacts with the broader vulnerability context characterized by displacement, limited economic opportunities, and environmental pressures. In Nakivale, humanitarian agencies play a central role in shaping access to these assets through the provision of services such as education, healthcare, livelihood support, and infrastructure. However, institutional processes, policies, and power dynamics may constrain the effectiveness of these interventions. By applying the SLF, this study examines how such structural and operational factors influence refugees' ability to pursue sustainable livelihood strategies and achieve improved wellbeing outcomes.

Sebba defines that there are several humanitarian groups such as Oxfam, Plan, GTZ, Red Cross, UNHCR, WFP, AHA, UNDP, Save the Children, etc. (Sebba, 2015; UNHCR, 2023; OCHA, 2024), and all are heading towards the community refugee camp. Just like making refugees independent, providing employment opportunities, infrastructure facilities, safe water and sanitation facilities for the development of refugee settlements (UNDP, 2022; IRC, 2023). All of these different agencies have something that their not-for-profit status does not limit their short-term financial objectives. Issues that occur on long spans of time, such as climate change, the elimination of malaria, or an international ban on landmines are easily committed by such agencies (OCHA, 2024; UN Environment Programme, 2023). Based on public opinion surveys, humanitarian agencies enjoy a high level of public trust that makes them—albeit not always in abundance—apt for effective representation that counts with

stakeholders and society at large (Transparency International, 2022). Precisely, writers and scholars must identify the information gap and suitably fill it. This study sought to bridge the gap.

Mukasa (2016) argued that humanitarian agencies provide humanitarian assistance in the form of food provision, shelter centers, health services, and access to education, protection, and social well-being of refugees in Uganda for the sake of preventing refugee well-being (Mukasa, 2016; UNHCR, 2024; World Bank, 2023). For instance, the Ugandan government, in collaboration with UN agencies and nongovernmental organizations like Save the Children, launched a new approach to provide half a million host community and refugee children in Uganda with quality education (Save the Children, 2023). The Education Response Plan (ERP) is the first in the world and a colossal policy breakthrough for refugee education worldwide (MoES & UNHCR, 2022). The majority of the refugee children in Uganda and host local children in communities of the refugee-hosting districts remain with limited access to quality education in the refugee settlements (UNHCR, 2024; UNICEF Uganda, 2023).

Moreover, Pawel (2016) contended that UNHCR offers security and aid not just to immigrants, but even to other types of evacuated persons, among which are the refugee seekers, immigrants who have returned home but yet continue to need aid in exchange for their means of livelihood, resident citizen communities wholly impacted by immigrants' efforts, homeless individuals and the so-called internally displaced persons (IDPs) (UNHCR, 2024; IOM, 2023). IDPs are individuals who were forced to leave their homes but did not cross an international border and thus are not covered under international refugee law and cannot receive any type of support (Klein et al., 2009; NRC, 2022). The dynamics of war have also shifted in the recent past, with intra-state conflicts increasingly substituting for inter-state conflicts and the IDPs expanding exponentially to about 5 million individuals globally (IDMC, 2024; OCHA, 2023)..

In establishing the link between humanitarian response and the needs of the refugee, the UNHCR was tasked by the UN to supervise and safeguard homeless individuals globally, supporting nations and persons (UNHCR, 2018; UNHCR, 2023). UNHCR is also a major actor in the UN's cluster system, covering an array of organizations that support millions of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have historically not had a particular organization fully committed to their welfare, distinct from refugees (UNOCHA, 2024). Given its established working knowledge, UNHCR has a great and further unswerving duty in nations where displacement is ongoing by assisting returning refugees to resettle into their home areas and through other activities on behalf of IDPs in these nations (UNHCR, 2023; IOM, 2024).

Internationally, UNHCR has also supported major global aid operations to help victims of natural hazards such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 Pakistan earthquake, and China's 2008 Sichuan earthquake (UNHCR, 2018; UNDRR, 2023).

In relation to the above, recent assessments show that together with NGO partners, humanitarian agencies like UNHCR promptly expand this aid to encompass the upgrading of particular homes and societal setups such as schools, clinics, wells, roads, and bridges (UNDP, 2022; CARE, 2023). These programs are usually planned to aid refugees and the local people in host societies. In addition, refugees who cannot return to their home countries may intend to be self-reliant in their asylum countries and locally settle. It is a difficult and steady procedure that ideally leads to full integration into the host society, with the enjoyment of rights and freedoms equal to those of citizens (UNHCR,

2023; World Bank, 2024). Over time, this process should permit permanent settlement and even the acquisition of nationality in the country of asylum (Refugees International, 2023).

Emergency response operations are delivered by a number of government departments, including those responsible for public works (water and sanitation), education, health, and home affairs (safety and security), which often also oversee local government institutions (Office of the Prime Minister Uganda, 2023; Ministry of Health, 2022).

Besides, recent literature acknowledges that humanitarian agencies are recognized as significant organizational actors in mobilizing refugee-community resources, empowering refugees, and applying refugee social-wellbeing programs effectively at the grassroots level (Gulu & Aleper, 2023). Humanitarian actors opened the way for progressive action within refugee communities. Prior to their involvement, refugee communities were largely deprived of basic human rights such as access to education, health services, political inclusion, and economic opportunities. Gender-based disparities were also widespread (UN Women, 2024; IRC Uganda, 2023). However, after the involvement of humanitarian agencies in refugee development processes, the livelihood strategies and resilience of such communities have significantly improved (UNHCR, 2024; WFP Uganda, 2023).

Furthermore, Mukasa (2016) noted that the new wave of immigrant movement within Africa, like in other low-developed regions, began to intensify particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1960s–70s and the 1980s. UNHCR responded by founding large-scale agricultural settlements on land provided by host countries. The humanitarian community focused on emergency assistance to meet immediate needs such as health care, food, water, and shelter (UNHCR, 2023; IDMC, 2024). In the early 1980s, efforts to recommend more sustainable solutions were made to humanitarian agencies. Two international conferences—ICARA I and ICARA II (International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa)—were organized in response (UNHCR Archives, 2024). ICARA I was primarily focused on resource mobilization to support African refugee-hosting nations and alleviate the burden of large refugee populations.

Additionally, Opitz’s approach is supported by more recent findings which show that humanitarian agencies have continued to address refugee welfare and self-sufficiency through structured approaches, focusing on the design and implementation of initiatives such as income-generating projects, microfinance schemes, agricultural ventures, and vocational training programs (UNHCR, 2023; ILO, 2024). While the practical and economic dimensions are vital, there is increasing recognition that linking sustainability with the protection of human rights is equally critical for refugee integration and durable solutions (Refugee Law Project, 2023; OHCHR, 2024).

2.2 The Challenges Faced by the humanitarian agencies in improving the Refugee wellbeing

Resource Dependency Theory (RDT), originally advanced by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), provides a useful framework for understanding the constraints faced by humanitarian agencies in improving refugee wellbeing. The theory posits that organizations are not self-sufficient but depend on external actors—particularly donors and funding institutions for critical resources, which in turn shapes their behavior, priorities, and decision-making processes. In humanitarian contexts such as Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, agencies rely heavily on international donors for financial support, creating conditions where program design and implementation are often influenced by donor agendas rather than locally identified needs. This dependency can lead to short-term, project-based

interventions that prioritize measurable outputs over sustainable wellbeing outcomes. Furthermore, uncertainty and fluctuations in funding streams may result in interruptions in service delivery, staff turnover, and limited long-term planning. Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) therefore, helps to explain how external resource constraints and power imbalances between donors and implementing agencies can hinder the effectiveness, consistency, and sustainability of humanitarian efforts aimed at enhancing refugee wellbeing. Ultimately, this creates a structural tension between accountability to donors and responsiveness to refugee-identified needs, which can weaken holistic wellbeing outcomes in protracted refugee settings such as Nakivale.

Sebba (2015) stated that significantly, refugees face inaccessibility to banks and financial institutions. Humanitarian agencies have come up with remedies. For instance, in Finland, a partnership between a private company and the government provided prepaid debit cards and mobile payment accounts to refugees to facilitate financial inclusion (UNHCR, 2022). Another similarly critical area of action for humanitarian agencies is long-term development solutions. Microfinance institutions have offered refugees access to the capital needed to launch and sustain their own small businesses, thereby enhancing self-reliance (ILO, 2023; UNDP, 2024).

According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC, 2018), 70% of refugees globally lack access to essential services such as shelter, adequate food, safe drinking water, reliable roads, and electricity. This service gap deepens humanitarian needs.

In support of the above, Pawel (2016) observed that financial constraints remain a significant obstacle to humanitarian response. Uganda has experienced a surge in refugee inflows, particularly from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Somalia, due to ongoing civil conflicts in these countries. As a result, refugee numbers have overwhelmed available resources, exceeding the operational capacity of humanitarian agencies (WFP Uganda, 2023; UNHCR, 2024). Humanitarian operations, regardless of scale, require substantial funding, and budget demands vary by agency and context.

Furthermore, Teresa (2016) emphasized the challenges tied to the hardships of repatriation. Approximately one million refugees worldwide have refused to return to their countries of origin due to fear of persecution based on ethnic or religious affiliations. A notable example is the Rwandan refugees in Nakivale Settlement in Uganda, who remain in exile due to fear of political repression if they return home (Refugee Law Project, 2023; HRW, 2024).

Historically, this phenomenon has repeated itself globally. After World War II, numerous Jews (Sh'erit ha-Pletah), Ukrainians, Poles, Czechs, Estonians, Lithuanians, and Latvians refused repatriation to their Soviet-controlled home countries for fear of persecution. Many Croatians, Slovenians, and Serbs similarly feared the authoritarian rule under Josip Broz Tito. During the Cold War, individuals continued to flee communist regimes, seeking asylum elsewhere to avoid repression (UN Archives, 2022).

Fessak (2015) added that many refugees have suffered profound socio-economic and political challenges in resettlement camps. Humanitarian actors have often remained silent on issues of

political manipulation where refugees are exploited and, in some cases, recruited into armed groups. Allegations persist that humanitarian assistance is occasionally misused to finance arms purchases (International Crisis Group, 2023; Amnesty International, 2024).

A specific case in Uganda highlights this issue: some Rwandan exiles living in refugee settlements have allegedly been supported or encouraged by local authorities to militarily oppose the Rwandan government. Uganda has faced accusations of backing dissident elements among exiled Rwandans (African Centre for Strategic Studies, 2024). In some instances, the receiving country's patronage has been used to enable refugees to organize militarily, escalating conflict across borders.

Beyond physical harm and food insecurity, many refugees exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which profoundly affects their daily functioning and coping capacity, especially in already strained environments (WHO, 2023). Suicide rates among displaced populations are also elevated. For instance, Polish nationals who were deported after WWII, particularly those who participated in the 1944 Warsaw Uprising against the Nazis, were often detained, tortured, or executed. Similarly, many refugees forcibly returned to Yugoslavia faced immediate execution or harsh treatment (UNHCR Historical Records, 2022).

Supporting these views, UNFPA (2022) highlighted that immigrant populations often consist of individuals disoriented and removed from familiar environments. Exploitation is common—perpetrated by enforcement officers, local citizens of host countries, and even intermediaries from the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations. Instances of human rights violations, child labor, psychological and physical trauma, violence-related disruptions, and sexual abuse—particularly against children—remain prevalent challenges in refugee contexts.

In numerous refugee camps across war-torn West African countries such as Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and even Uganda, young girls were found trading sex for basic necessities such as money, fruit, or a bar of soap (UNHCR, 2019; United Nations, 2021). Many of these girls were between the ages of 13 and 18. Those who remained in camps unwillingly were often forced into early or involuntary marriages. On average, many became pregnant at just 15 years old. Tragically, parents often overlooked this exploitation, as sexual coercion became normalized as a "means of survival" within the camps.

According to Dhakal (2016), humanitarian agencies face internal socio-economic and administrative challenges such as staffing constraints, unclear task allocations, workforce development gaps, and ineffective daily management. Many agencies lack both financial capacity and structural mechanisms for staff career growth. Budget allocations for staff training are often inadequate, and with rapid organizational expansion, many staff struggle under overwhelming responsibilities. In several refugee camps, people still lack shelter, have limited access to safe drinking water due to insufficient boreholes, face food insecurity, and are denied access to education and basic capacity-building interventions, revealing glaring service delivery gaps (World Vision, 2023).

Across Africa, refugees continue to be victims of grave human rights violations. Repressive regimes have executed, tortured, and dispossessed people of their civil liberties under the pretense of suppressing real or imagined opposition. These abuses often stem from interstate conflicts and internal unrest driven by political instability, authoritarian rule, or contested governance. The proliferation of modern weaponry has fueled tribal and ethnic violence, while religious conflicts—such as tensions between northern Muslim and southern Christian populations—have exacerbated displacement across the continent (UNHRC, 2024). For example, in Sudan and Chad, Muslim-dominated factions rose to power following the withdrawal of Christian colonial authorities, further intensifying religious and ethnic conflicts.

Furthermore, Al-Sharmani (2018) observed that a common governance issue among humanitarian organizations lies in the weak relationships between boards of directors and operational staff. Many board members lack the skills or commitment to effectively provide leadership and oversight. As a result, critical policy decisions are often left to senior staff, with minimal strategic input or support from board members. Mukasa (2020) added that power dynamics in many humanitarian NGOs are complicated, with decision-making concentrated in self-selecting, self-governing boards of directors. Although these boards are not elected by the broader public, they are entrusted to act in the public interest—yet often fall short. Consequently, displaced populations in resettlement camps continue to face significant social and economic hardships.

This underscores an ongoing knowledge gap: while these challenges are widely recognized, they are not sufficiently explored or addressed in mainstream academic discourse. This study aims to bridge that gap by offering critical insight into the complex realities facing refugees and the institutional weaknesses of humanitarian agencies tasked with supporting them.

2.3 Approaches to improving refugees' wellbeing and humanitarian response

Teresa (2020) highlighted that one of the critical challenges immigrants face is limited access to formal banking systems and financial institutions. In response, humanitarian agencies have introduced innovative solutions such as mobile banking and prepaid debit card services, as demonstrated in Finland, where public-private partnerships were formed to offer mobile payment systems to refugees (UNHCR, 2021). Long-term development interventions such as microfinance initiatives have also provided essential startup capital for refugee-led enterprises, enhancing self-reliance (IOM, 2022). Moreover, UNFPA (2023) emphasized that humanitarian agencies can support both refugees and host communities—especially in conflict-affected countries like Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey—through livelihood programs and employment creation projects, which are key to achieving sustainable integration and reducing dependency.

Despite these efforts, funding gaps remain a persistent constraint. According to the World Food Programme (WFP, 2023), these financial shortfalls have contributed to mismatches between refugee needs and the humanitarian responses provided. Sebba (2019) stressed the need for aggressive international and local fundraising strategies to close these funding gaps, noting that main sources of funding include global donor institutions, state governments, membership fees, service sales, and private philanthropy. Furthermore, although humanitarian agencies operate independently, they remain reliant on government support for implementation and refugee protection policies. However, in some contexts, a lack of political will at national and district levels undermines operational efforts (Save the Children, 2024; IRC, 2023).

In Uganda, the refugee response is coordinated through a joint framework led by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), who ensure multi-agency coordination and sectoral alignment (OPM & UNHCR, 2023). At the local level—such as in Nakivale Refugee Settlement—the OPM refugee desk officers oversee operations, working closely with district leadership to harmonize interventions (Natukunda, 2018). Each refugee community is further managed by OPM-appointed commandants who collaborate with UNHCR and other implementing partners to deliver targeted assistance and avoid service duplication (ReliefWeb, 2025).

In addition, refugee education in Uganda remains a critical intervention. According to Pawel (2021), implementing a robust secondary and vocational training agenda should be a top priority, as education enables refugees to harness their potential, compete effectively in the labor market, and overcome limitations imposed by displacement. Denial of educational opportunities reduces refugees' ability to secure improved livelihoods and contributes to cycles of poverty and dependence. Through education, cycles of violence can be disrupted, and refugees can transition into self-reliant individuals capable of contributing to host economies (UNHCR, 2023; IOM, 2022). One key success story in Uganda is the Self-Reliance Strategy (SRS), a joint initiative by the Ugandan government and UNHCR aimed at improving living conditions for both refugees and host communities by allocating land to refugees for agricultural use, enabling self-sustenance while awaiting durable solutions (ReliefWeb, 2024; OPM & UNHCR, 2023).

Concerning human rights, denial of access to land is a key violation that undermines refugee livelihood strategies and Sustainable Development Goals (UNDP, 2023). UNHCR (2024) emphasizes a shift from dependency to self-reliance through land access and inclusive programming, fostering peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities. In Uganda, recent research confirms that secure land access is essential for refugee livelihood development, especially in rural settlements where many rely on subsistence agriculture and livestock (Sebba, 2019; World Bank, 2022). Strong social networks within refugee families have also evolved to manage economic uncertainty and limited income opportunities (ACTED, 2023).

Teresa (2021) reaffirmed that refugee families are comparable to other families in their ability to manage resources and seize opportunities when properly supported. UNHCR and its implementing partners have based their interventions on these household coping strategies, aiming to enhance refugee agency and resilience (UNHCR, 2022). Despite these efforts, categorizing refugee responses remains problematic, as many households engage in multiple survival strategies depending on shifting environmental, economic, and geographic contexts (IOM, 2024). This underscores a persistent knowledge gap that recent scholars have only partially addressed. This study aims to bridge that gap by contributing empirical insights to inform more adaptive and inclusive refugee response models.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the design of research, study area, study populace, sample size, selection methods, sources of data, dimension altitudes, data collection instruments, process for collecting data, quality/error control, data dispensation and examination; ethical consideration as well as approval.

3.1 Research design

This study adopted a cross-sectional study design, which is best suited to gather data at a single point in time in order to assess the existing level of phenomena within a specified population (Amin, 2005). The design was particularly applicable given the need to gather data on the socio-economic status, humanitarian interventions, and livelihood activities of the refugees in the Nakivale Refugee Settlement of Isingiro District, Uganda. The cross-sectional design enabled the researcher to capture a snapshot of the many challenges, opportunities, and responses within the camp context without requiring long-term observation or follow-up data collection. The study employed a mixed-methods design, wherein both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were integrated. The quantitative aspect involved the administration of structured questionnaires to a representative refugee and stakeholder population with a view to collecting quantifiable data on some of the key indicators such as income levels, access to services, and livelihood activity. The qualitative aspect, on the other hand, utilized key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and direct observations with a view to documenting refugees' and humanitarian actors' lived experiences, perceptions, and nuanced challenges.

The case study design was also presented, with the Nakivale Refugee Settlement as the unit of analysis that was bounded. This allowed for the detailed exploration of Nakivale-specific localized dynamics, governance structures, service delivery mechanisms, and host-refugee relations. The case study design allowed for greater contextual insight and permitted the researcher to study complex social phenomena in real-life settings. The choice of Nakivale Refugee Settlement was because it is one of the oldest and biggest refugee camps in Uganda comprising refugees from various countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, and Somalia. The multiculturalism of the refugee population and the long duration of humanitarian intervention in the camp provided rich ground for examining the effectiveness and sustainability of refugee response interventions in Uganda.

3.2 Study Area

This survey was conducted in Nakivale Refugee Camp Isingiro District, Southwestern Uganda. It was found in 1958 and legitimately documented as a refugee settlement in 1960 by the Uganda Gazette General Notice No. 19. Presently, most refugees in the community are Congolese. This settlement is separated into seventy-nine villages each village having about 800 to 1000 people. Nakivale has been purposively selected because it able to provide the information that was lead to the fulfillment of the research objectives.

3.3 Population Study

The population studied were the refugees at Nakivale refugee settlement camp, the total population at Nakivale is 116,198. However, this study used the head of a refugees household as the component of Assessment; there are a total of 34,705 refugee’s households in the three zones of the settlement camp entailing Rubondo, Base Camp and Juru.

3.4 Sample size determinants

The study used Krejeie & Morgan (1970) table to ascertain the model of the study.

Table 1: Sample size for head of refugee’s households (Quantitative sample)

Particulars	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique

Households Heads	34,705	379	Systematic Sampling
Total	34,705	379	

Source: Self Constructed Basing on Krejcie & Morgan (1970)

Note: A total 308 respondents participated in the study.

Note: In each of the systematically sampled refugee's household only the head of the household was participate in the study.

Table 2: Sample size for other key informants (Qualitative Sample)

Particulars	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Head teachers of two Schools and selected refugees	5	3	Purposive
Medical Worker representative	10	5	Purposive
Head of the camp (all three Zones)	3	3	Purposive
RDC of Isingiro District	1	1	Purposive
Humanitarian Agent Representative (UNHCR)	1	1	Purposive
Total	20	14	

Note: The RDC didn't participate in the study because of his busy schedule despite several attempts to interview him.

3.5 Variable and Indicators

The study comprised of two variable indicators including the independent variable being the Humanitarian response whereas the dependent variable represented the refugee's wellbeing.

3.6 Levels of Measurement

Referring to Kothari (2013), thorough level of measurement ought to encounter the trials of legitimacy as well as dependability. Levels of measurement are of four types: nominal ordinal, interval and ratio. The ordinal scale is the ranking of the measure in order of significance. Nominal scale simply measures expressions of names or description of distinct components or types.

Ordinal scales measures value as more or less or larger or smaller but without stipulating the extent of the interludes.

Interval scales gauges in relation to equal intervals or degrees of dissimilar, but with a random established zero point that does not characterize anything. Ratio scales gauges in form of equal intervals and a complete zero point. Additionally, a Likert scale is employed when answering a questionnaire in which respondents stipulate their level of accord or discrepancy to a declaration. It is recognizable when you are asked to indicate your strength of feeling about a particular issue on a 5-1 rating scale. The five-point scale which was included the following kinds of answers was used; 5 = Strongly Agree, 4= Agree 3=not sure, 2=Disagree and 1= Strongly Disagree was used, and the respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement with the statements on humanitarian responses and refugees crisis. The nominal scale was used for gender and education level. The interval scale was used for period one has been in the camp.

3.7 Procedure for data collection

The researcher obtained a letter of authorization from the department of Public Administration and Governance, Uganda Christian University to collect data. This letter was handed over to the Refugee Commandant of Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp and individuals who was contacted for this study.

3.8 Data collection instruments

The study was guided by the following research instruments: -

3.8.1 Questionnaire

The study used a semi-structured questionnaire which was administered to the head of households only, in the form of a five point likert scale questionnaire. The questionnaire was first pre-tested among five refugees to ensure the correction of the statement to avoid ambiguous and inconsistent questions before it was administered for the actual data collection.

3.8.2 Interviews

Interview method was applied to the head teachers, medical workers representative, Zone camp leaders, RDC and Humanitarian Agent representative (UNHCR) so as to enable the researcher use probing and be able to get detailed information about the study problem. These respondents were interviewed because the researcher believes that they may be having adequate information that is needed for the study. An interview was used in order to obtain detailed information on the study variables. It is important because it was easier for the researcher to observe non- verbal behaviors. It is also advantageous in that it was help the researcher to get first hand data since the respondents were answering for themselves compared to the questionnaire method (Cohen, 2011).

3.9 Quality/Error control

The study was guided by the validity and reliability of instruments: -

3.9.1 Validity

Stephanie (2016) defined validity as a test or instrument that accurately measures what it's supposed to. Validity refers to the degree to which results obtained from analysis-of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study. In order to establish the validity of instruments, the researcher was employ a technique known as triangulation to examine how data were collected to answer the questions under study from different perspectives and this was involve comparing responses collected through questionnaires. The validity of the questionnaires was determined by pretesting the instruments. Pretesting was done by administering to five (5) respondents within the study population but outside the sample. Results from the field helped to identify gaps and make modifications to the instrument where it was necessary. Pretesting was help to estimate the time it was take to fill the questionnaires, relevancy of the questions, and accuracy of the questions in measuring the subject under study. Additionally, a Content Validity Index (CVI) was established, where the figure above was considered valid.

3.9.2 Reliability

Stephanie (2016) defined reliability to imply consistency: if you take the act five times, you should get roughly the same results every time. Reliability is a measure of the stability or consistency of test scores.

Reliability refers to the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. Reliability is the dependability and is the degree to which the instrument consistently measures what it is measuring. Numbers of measures were taken both during the field work and in the subsequent analysis and conclusion process in order to ensure the quality of this study. Before real collection of data, the instrument was tested on 2 respondents from each category of respondents to determine their reliability and these respondents were not among the interviewees. Therefore, the reliability of the questionnaires in relation to the consistency was tested at 0.812 above the required 0.7 using Cronbach Alpha in the SPSS.

3.10 Data processing and analysis

3.10.1 Quantitative data analysis

The head of households filled and answered semi-structured questionnaires to provide quantitative data. Quantitatively, under this technique, data was analyzed using statistical packages like Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS v16) to generate descriptive statistics only. This was useful and helped in generating tables for easy presentation and interpretation of the study findings. The analysis of the data was done using the information given by the refugees through questionnaires. The questionnaire was in form of objective questions. Further, a sequential analysis was undertaken to provide much depth insight to the data collected, this helped in pointing out areas that required additional literature before finally compiling the final report.

3.10.2 Qualitative data analysis

The head teachers, medical workers representative, Zone camp leaders, RDC and Humanitarian Agent representative (UNHCR) were interviewed to provide qualitative data. Qualitatively, information from these participants was obtained by use of an interview guide. This was done by way of content analysis where field notes from the respective respondents was summarized in brief on the daily basis and coded it to Atlas Ti for data analysis. This necessitated construction of summary sheets containing data in key variable to be sought. The researcher accomplished this by using human judgmental and logic induction analysis. The representative information was improved by using triangulation that is grouping and regrouping and matching data with research questions.

3.11 Ethical considerations and approvals

3.11.1 Ethical consideration

Ethical clearance was sought from Uganda Christian University Ethical Review Committee as well as Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Public Administration and Management of Uganda Christian University to conduct research. Permission to carry out the study in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp in Isingiro District was sought from the OPM Office through the RDC for the selected schools. Ethically, the researcher ensured that the principle of confidentiality throughout the research is preserved given the fact that the topic being handled is very sensitive. The researcher administered the questionnaires to refugees, and interviewed to head teachers, medical workers representative, Zone camp leaders, RDC and Humanitarian Agent representative (UNHCR). This data was collected using questionnaires and interview guide. The researcher also assured respondents that the study is strictly academic and that utmost confidentiality was observed. The data used in this study was coded and cannot therefore be traced back to individual respondents.

3.11.2 Informed consent

Informed consent form that elaborates on the purpose of the study was filled by all those who participated in the study. Sometimes, verbal consent was also obtained from the participants to enhance confidentiality of the research which increased their participation. The respondents and

participants were informed that participation in the study is voluntary and they have a right to accept or decline to participate or withdraw from the study anytime.

3.11.3 Participants confidentiality

In trying to protect participants' confidentiality, each participant's record was given a unique ID number. Participants were given written consent before participating and confidentiality was emphasized at every stage. Data identifying individual subjects was restricted to those involved in the study. Participants were adequately informed about the procedures of the data collection and the survey remained anonymous (no provision for identifying the participant on the survey questionnaire to exist). Names and other identifying information from subjects are obtained for quality assurances purposes only and no individual was identified in the study report.

3.12 Methodological constraints

The study methodological constraints.

Since the study was focus on the head of Households, there were also some

Head of the household who were minors, the researcher then replaced them randomly since it was not possible to interview them without approval from the Zone leaders

The number of respondents that participated in the study was reduced from 379 to 308 as some respondents declined to participate on the study thus affecting the sample size.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis, presentation and interpretation of the results of the study. The results are presented and discussed following the research objective of the study. It starts with respondents' bio data, Kinds of humanitarian responses, challenges faced by humanitarian agencies and way forward to the challenges in Nakivale refugee settlement camp, Isingiro District.

4.1 Bio-data of respondents

The examined characteristics included; Sex, Age, Education level and Country of origin. Overall, the study respondents constituted males 144(46.8%) and females 164(53.2%). Majority of the respondents highest education level was certificate education 105 (34.1%)

constituting males 52(16.9%) and females 53(17.2%). (Table. 3).

Table 3 Sex and highest education level of respondents

		Education				Total	
		Degree	Diploma	Certificate	No formal School		
Sex	Male	Number	23	37	52	32	144
		%	7.5%	12.0%	16.9%	10.4%	46.8%
	Female	Number	40	32	53	39	164
		%	13.0%	10.4%	17.2%	12.7%	53.2%
Total		Number	63	69	105	71	308
		%	20.5%	22.4%	34.1%	23.1%	100.0%

Majority of the respondents 156(50.6%) were between 31-50years comprising males 72(23.4%) and females 84(27.3%). The least 43(14.0%) were 50 years and above constituting males 22(7.1%) and females 21(6.8%). (Table 4).

Table 4 Sex and age of respondents

Age		18-30years			31-50years		50 years and Above		Total
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Sex	Male	Number	50	72	22	144			
		%	16.2%	23.4%	7.1%	46.8%			
	Female	Number	59	84	21	39			
		%	19.2%	27.3%	6.8%	53.2%			
Total		Number	109	156	43	308			
		%	35.4%	50.6%	14.0%	100.0%			

Majority of the respondents had completed certificate education level 105(34.1%) constituting Burundi 50(16.2%), DRC 27(8.8), Somalia 15(4.9%), Rwanda 12(3.9%) and Kenya 1(0.3%). The least was with degrees 63(20.5%) constituting 31(10.1%) from Burundi, 16(5.2%) from Somalia, 13(4.2%) from DRC, 3(1.0%) from Rwanda and 0(0.0%) from Kenya were at Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp. (Table 5).

Table 5: Country of origin and education level

Education		Degree			Diploma		Certificate		No formal education		Total
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Country of Origin	Kenya	Number	0	4	1	2	74				
		%	0.0%	1.3%	0.3%	0.6%	2.3%				
	Rwanda	Number	3	3	12	3	21				
		%	1.0%	1.0%	3.9%	1.0%	6.8%				
	DRC	Number	13	18	27	12	70				
		%	4.2%	5.8%	8.8%	3.9%	22.7%				
	Burundi	Number	31	34	50	43	158				
		%	10.1%	11.0%	16.2%	14.0%	51.3%				
	Somalia	Number	16	10	15	11	52				

		%	5.2%	3.2%	4.9%	3.6%	16.9%
Total		Number	63	69	105	71	308
		%	20.5%	22.4%	34.1%	23.1%	100.0%

Majority of the refugees have been at the camp for over 10 years 146(47.4%) constituting Burundi 78(25.3%), DRC 28(9.1%), Somalia 27(8.8%), Rwanda 10(3.2%) and Kenya 3(1.0%).

And the last had lasted at the camp for 2-4years 38(12.3%) constituting Burundi 18(5.8%),

DRC 13(4.2%), Somalia 0(0.0%), Rwanda 3(1.0%) and Kenya 4(1.3%). (Table 6)

Table 6: Country of origin and duration at the camp

Duration		Less than 2			Over 10		Total
		years	2-4 years	5-9 years	years		
Country of Origin	Kenya	Number	0	4	0	3	74
		%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	1.0%	2.3%
	Rwanda	Number	3	3	5	10	21
		%	1.0%	1.0%	1.6%	3.2%	6.8%
	DRC	Number	8	13	21	28	70
		%	2.6%	4.2%	6.8%	9.1%	22.7%
	Burundi	Number	23	18	39	78	158

		%	7.5%	5.8%	12.7%	25.3%	51.3%
	Somalia	Number	6	0	19	27	52
		%	1.9%	0.0%	6.2%	8.8%	16.9%
Total		Number	40	38	84	146	308
		%	13.0%	12.3%	27.3%	47.4%	100.0%

Majority of the refugees at the Nakivale fled their homeland because of war 124(40.3%) constituting Burundi 64(20.8%), DRC 26(8.4%), Somalia 18(5.8%), Rwanda 13(4.2%) and Kenya 3(1.0%). The last was famine 44(14.3%) constituting Burundi 22(7.1%), DRC 12(3.9%), Somalia 5(1.6%), Rwanda 3(1.0%) and Kenya 2(0.6%).(Table 7)

Table 7: Country of origin and reasons for moving to the camp

Reasons			War	Famine	Political	Others	Total
					fear		
Country of Origin	Kenya	Number	3	2	1	1	74
		%	1.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%	2.3%
	Rwanda	Number	13	3	2	3	21
		%	4.2%	1.0%	0.6%	1.0%	6.8%
	DRC	Number	26	12	18	14	70
		%	8.4%	3.9%	5.8%	4.5%	22.7%
	Burundi	Number	64	22	44	28	158
		%	20.8%	7.1%	14.3%	9.1%	51.3%
Somalia	Number	18	5	17	12	52	
	%	5.8%	1.6%	5.5%	3.9%	16.9%	
Total	Number	124	44	82	58	308	
	%	40.3%	14.3%	26.6%	18.8%	100.0%	

4.2 Kind of humanitarian response that is appropriate for Refugee's Wellbeing

Deeper analysis in (table 8) on the kind of the humanitarian response revealed a positive statically between kind of humanitarian response and the quality of food distributed (Mean=4.19 and STD=0.914). This means that the qualities of food distributed by the humanitarian agency are of the

good quality. According to Mukasa (2016), humanitarian agencies provide humanitarian responses in form of quality food provision which inform on the wellbeing of the refugees. In an interview it was noted that

“The quality of food distributed at the camp is really good for consumption, even at schools the food are of good quality and very nutritious” (Male, Age 44years, Head teacher of a primary school)

The study further revealed a positive statistical correlation between humanitarian response and psychosocial support (Mean=1.61 and STD=0.915) expressing disagreement on the in the nature of the psychosocial support. However, in an interview it was revealed that

“Efforts are being made to ensure that refugees are supported with resettlement psychosocial support that stabilizes their minds. Currently, basic induction and mental support are given but there is still room for improvement” (Male, 38 years, UNHCR field officer) “As women we need a lot of mental support because when we fled the war in Burundi we went through at lot trauma” (Female, 36 years, Refugee)

“We always train and talk to the host communities to welcome the refugees and share with them what they can inform of basic needs or even stories which heal them psychologically” (Male, 38 years, UNHCR field officer)

The study revealed a positive statistical significance between the kind of humanitarian response and housing facility (Mean=1.66 and STD=0.964). This is also in agreement with the findings by Ingunn (2020) which indicated that the refugees receive temporary plots of up to 30 m² which should cover both their settlement and planting cultivation.

The findings also indicates a positive statistical significance between humanitarian response and health support (Mean=2.15 and STD=0.994). This indicates that the medical humanitarian responses are being given to the refugees. However, the disagreement comes in on the consistent availability the drugs. The study revealed a negative statistical significance on quantity of the drugs (Mean=1.90 and STD=1.038). According to the UNHCR Operation Update (2018), indicated that there is deterioration in health status at Nakivale because of lack of access to clean water.

“The staffs we have in health center are commensurate but the problem come from the fluctuating number of refugees which affect the drugs stored at the health centers” (Female, 26 years, A Nurse at the Nakivale refugee Camp)

The finding revealed a negative statistical significance between the humanitarian response and land distribution (Mean=1.69 and STD=1.169). This finding is also in agreement with the report by Ingunn (2020) that only 30 m² are given to the refugees for both their settlement and planting cultivation.

“The size of the land we are given is too small especially for large families because the demand for food is high” (Male, 37 years, Refugee)

However, in an interview with the camp leader it was noted that

“The size of the land given is measured in accordance with the status of the refugee although when refugees get married re-adjusting the size of that land is difficult” (Male, 37 years, Camp Commandant)

The study finding revealed a negative statistical significance between the humanitarian response and the nature of classrooms/schools at the camp (Mean=3.90 and STD=1.331). This also aligns with the UNHCR report (2018) which indicated that they have allowed the host communities children and the refugee children to share school facilities. In an interview with the UNHCR

“Government of Uganda together with other partners recently launched a programme to construct additional classrooms and toilets in order to reduce the pressure on existing school facilities as a result of high school enrolment at the Camp” (Male, 38 years, UNHCR field officer)

The study findings indicates a negative statistical significance between the humanitarian response and the number of teachers (Mean=2.41 and STD=1.349), and also a negative statistical significance on no of children in classrooms (Mean=3.62 and STD=1.394). According to **Ingunn (2020)**, the sharing of classroom between the refugees and host community children has made the learning very difficult for children.

Table 8 Kinds of humanitarian response

Statement on Kinds of Humanitarian Response	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
The food we get are of good quality	308	1	5	4.19	.914
We get psychosocial support at the camp	308	1	5	1.61	.915
The space/house is too small	308	1	4	1.66	.964
We often get adequate health support from government and NGOs	308	1	5	2.15	0.994
There are always doctors at the health facility and enough drugs	308	1	5	1.90	1.038
We have enough land where we cultivate crops	308	1	5	1.69	1.169
We have enough school facility within the camp	308	1	5	3.90	1.331
There are enough teachers in the school	308	1	5	2.41	1.349

The Children are not so populated in a class room	308	1	5	3.62	1.394
Overall	308			4.11	0.51792
Valid N	308				

4.3 Resource related constraints affecting the ability of Humanitarian agencies in their efforts to improve refugee wellbeing.

Table 8 highlights several resource-related constraints that limit the ability of humanitarian agencies to effectively improve refugee wellbeing. These constraints can be interpreted through the mean scores, which indicate moderate agreement among respondents that resource limitations are a significant challenge.

Limited access to banking services (Mean = 3.13, SD = 1.495) points to a critical financial resource constraint. Humanitarian agencies increasingly rely on cash-based interventions, digital payments, and financial inclusion strategies to support refugees. However, inadequate access to formal banking systems restricts the efficient delivery of funds, limits refugees' ability to save or invest, and complicates accountability mechanisms. This ultimately reduces the effectiveness and reach of humanitarian programs.

High population in the camp (Mean = 2.45, SD = 1.307) reflects pressure on already scarce resources. Even though the mean is relatively lower, it still indicates that overcrowding strains essential services such as food supply, shelter, healthcare, water, and sanitation. Humanitarian agencies may struggle to meet growing demands with limited funding, personnel, and infrastructure, leading to compromised service quality and reduced wellbeing outcomes.

Additionally, varying interests among refugees (Mean = 3.25, SD = 1.435) can also be understood as a resource allocation challenge. Diverse needs require tailored interventions, which demand more financial, human, and logistical resources. Agencies often operate under constrained budgets and donor priorities, making it difficult to equitably allocate resources across different groups. This can result in unmet needs and inefficiencies in program implementation.

Laws affecting humanitarian operations (Mean = 3.31, SD = 0.872) represent an indirect but significant resource constraint. Regulatory frameworks may limit access to funding, restrict partnerships with financial institutions, or impose bureaucratic procedures that delay resource mobilization and utilization. This reduces operational flexibility and increases administrative costs, diverting resources away from direct service delivery.

Finally, poor relationships with host communities (Mean = 2.79, SD = 1.672) can constrain access to shared local resources such as land, water, and markets. Tensions between refugees and host communities may lead to competition over scarce resources, thereby limiting opportunities for sustainable livelihood programs and increasing the cost of intervention for humanitarian agencies.

In conclusion, the table demonstrates that resource-related constraints are both direct and indirect, including financial system limitations, population pressure, diverse needs, regulatory barriers, and

competition over local resources. These challenges collectively hinder the efficient mobilization, allocation, and utilization of resources, ultimately affecting the capacity of humanitarian agencies to enhance refugee wellbeing.

Table 9 Challenges at refugee camp

Statement of Challenges	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Poor relationship with host communities	308	1	5	2.79	1.672
High population at the camp	308	1	5	2.45	1.307
Varying interest by the refugees	308	1	5	3.25	1.435
The limited access to banking services	308	1	5	3.13	1.495
Laws affect the humanitarian agency from their work effectively.	308	1	5	3.31	.872
Valid N	308				

4.4 Context-specific and participatory strategies to enhance the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving refugee wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp

Drawing on the challenges reflected in the table above, context-specific and participatory strategies are essential for enhancing the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving refugee wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp.

Given that laws affecting humanitarian operations recorded the highest mean (Mean = 3.31), there is a need for context-sensitive policy engagement and advocacy. Humanitarian agencies should adopt participatory policy dialogue approaches that involve local government authorities, refugee representatives, and host community leaders. This would ensure that interventions are aligned with national regulations while also advocating for flexible implementation frameworks that respond to on-the-ground realities in Nakivale.

The relatively high mean for varying refugee interests (Mean = 3.25) underscores the importance of participatory needs assessments and co-design of interventions. Agencies should actively involve refugees in identifying priorities, planning programs, and evaluating outcomes. This can be achieved through community committees, feedback mechanisms, and inclusive decision-making platforms, ensuring that interventions are tailored to diverse needs rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.

The challenge of limited access to banking services (Mean = 3.13) calls for locally adapted financial inclusion strategies. Humanitarian actors should collaborate with financial institutions and mobile money providers to design accessible, low-cost financial services suited to the camp context. Engaging refugees in the design and rollout of such services can enhance uptake and ensure that solutions are practical and culturally appropriate.

Although poor relationships with host communities (Mean = 2.79) scored moderately, the relatively high standard deviation suggests variability, indicating the need for context-specific social cohesion initiatives. Participatory approaches such as joint livelihood projects, dialogue forums, and community-driven development programs can strengthen trust and cooperation between refugees and host communities.

Finally, despite high population pressure (Mean = 2.45) being rated lower, it remains a structural issue that requires community-informed resource planning and service delivery optimization. Engaging refugees in identifying priority service gaps and co-managing shared resources (e.g., water, sanitation, shelter) can improve efficiency and responsiveness in overcrowded settings.

In sum, the data suggest that interventions in Nakivale should move beyond top-down approaches and instead emphasize inclusive, participatory, and contextually grounded strategies that address legal, social, and economic constraints while leveraging the agency and insights of refugee communities themselves.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The general purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of humanitarian response to the refugees' wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement camp in Uganda. The basic research question was formulated as; what kind of humanitarian response is appropriate for refugee's what challenges are facing the humanitarian agencies in improving the refugee wellbeing in Nakivale refugee settlement Camp and what ways can be used in improving refugee's wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp in Uganda .

The subsequent chapters assessed the effectiveness of humanitarian response the refugees' wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement camp in Uganda.

5.1 summary of study finding

5.1.1 Kind of humanitarian response is appropriate for refugee's wellbeing

The study sought to assess the relationship between the nature of humanitarian response and various aspects of refugee support services in Nakivale Refugee Settlement. The results revealed mixed findings, highlighting both strengths and gaps in the humanitarian interventions.

Firstly, the findings revealed a positive statistical relationship between the type of humanitarian response and the quality of food distributed to refugees, with a mean score of 4.19 and a standard deviation (STD) of 0.914. This suggests that the respondents perceived the food distributed by

humanitarian agencies as being of high quality, and this aspect of the response was largely satisfactory (see Table 8).

In contrast, the study found a positive statistical correlation between humanitarian response and psychosocial support, but with a mean score of 1.61 and a standard deviation of 0.915. This low mean score indicates that most respondents disagreed with the adequacy and effectiveness of psychosocial support provided. This points to gaps in the emotional and mental health services, signaling the need for enhanced counseling and psychological support frameworks.

Regarding housing facilities, the results showed a positive statistical significance with a mean of 1.66 and a standard deviation of 0.964. Although the correlation is positive, the low mean score reflects dissatisfaction among respondents with the current state of housing, implying that shelter remains a critical area requiring improvement in terms of space, safety, and structural integrity.

In terms of health support, there was also a positive statistical significance, with a mean of 2.15 and a standard deviation of 0.994. This suggests that basic medical humanitarian services are available to refugees. However, when the study specifically assessed the consistency in the availability of drugs, the findings showed a negative statistical significance, with a mean score of 1.90 and a standard deviation of 1.038. This implies that while medical services exist, there is widespread dissatisfaction regarding the reliable and adequate supply of essential medicines.

The findings revealed a negative statistical relationship between humanitarian response and land distribution, with a mean score of 1.69 and a standard deviation of 1.169. The results suggest that the allocation or access to land by refugees is perceived as insufficient or inequitable, limiting their opportunities for self-sufficiency through farming or settlement expansion.

Finally, the study found a negative statistical significance between the nature of humanitarian response and the number of teachers available in refugee schools, with a mean of 2.41 and a standard deviation of 1.349. This indicates that educational services are hampered by a shortage of qualified teaching staff, which affects the quality of learning and educational access for refugee children.

5.2

This second objective of the study was to find out challenges are facing the humanitarian agencies in improving the refugee wellbeing in Nakivale refugee settlement Camp

The findings (Table 9) revealed there is a no good relationship between the host communities and the refugees (Mean=2.79 and STD=1.679).

The finding reveals the refugees also feels they are over populated at the camp with mean (2.45) and STD (1.307).

The study also revealed that the refugees lack banking services which limited their productivity with Mean (3.13) and STD (1.495).

5.2.1 Other challenges facing the humanitarian agencies in improving the refugee wellbeing

The study uncovered several critical challenges facing both the refugee and host populations in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, particularly in relation to education, governance, land, and healthcare services. These findings are summarized and analyzed in detail below:

Overcrowding in Educational Institutions

The research findings indicate that educational institutions within Nakivale Refugee Settlement are significantly congested. Both refugee children and children from the host communities attend the same government-funded schools, leading to an overwhelming student-to-teacher ratio. In some instances, classrooms designed to accommodate 40 to 50 learners were found to be hosting over 100 pupils at once. This overcrowding has resulted in a deteriorated learning environment, where students struggle to receive individualized attention, and teachers are unable to effectively deliver lessons. Furthermore, the lack of sufficient learning materials such as textbooks, desks, and writing resources exacerbates the problem, compromising the overall quality of education provided in the camp.

Corruption and Mismanagement of Resources

Another significant challenge identified in the study is the presence of corruption among administrative officials managing resources in the refugee settlement. Respondents reported widespread bribery practices, particularly in relation to land access. Refugees stated that in order to retain or gain access to farmland allocated by the government or humanitarian agencies, they were often required to pay unofficial fees to local leaders or camp officials. This corrupt practice not only disadvantages the most vulnerable refugees—especially those with no financial means—but also erodes trust between refugees and authorities. The lack of transparent procedures and accountability mechanisms has created a system of exploitation that undermines the integrity of humanitarian interventions.

Land Conflicts between Refugees and Host Communities

The study further established that land disputes are common between refugees and members of the host communities. These conflicts stem from the lack of clearly defined land boundaries within and surrounding the settlement area. In many cases, land allocated to refugees overlaps with areas traditionally used by local Ugandan communities, creating ambiguity and friction. The competition for land is intensified by high population growth, limited arable land, and the increased demand for agricultural space for both food production and settlement purposes. These disputes have occasionally escalated into violent confrontations, threatening peaceful co-existence and social cohesion between the two groups. The absence of an effective land demarcation and dispute resolution mechanism has further complicated the situation.

Inadequate Healthcare Services

Healthcare delivery in Nakivale Refugee Settlement is severely constrained by inadequate facilities and frequent drug stockouts. The camp's health centers, which are intended to serve both refugees and host community members, are overwhelmed by the sheer number of patients. The study found that essential medicines often run out before resupply, leaving many patients—particularly those with chronic illnesses—without treatment. Additionally, healthcare personnel are few in number and overstretched, which compromises the quality of care provided. As a consequence, many individuals are forced to seek services from private health providers in nearby towns such as those in Isingiro District. However, these services are often costly and unaffordable to refugees, leading to delays in treatment and poor health outcomes. This situation has highlighted the urgent need for increased investment in health infrastructure, drug supply chains, and human resources for health in the refugee hosting areas.

5.3 Ways of improving refugee's wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp

There is need for government and the international partners invest in the construction and expansion of classroom for students. This is because it was noted the host communities and the refugees' children are sharing the same schools leading to high congestion which affects their learning and subsequently performance.

There is need for a clear demarcation of the boundaries of Nakivale Refugee settlement Camp to reduce conflict for the good of wellbeing at the camp. This has been singled out as one of the major causes of conflicts between the refugees and the host communities.

Government through the office of the prime minister should work towards expanding the land size of Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp. This has been justified by the high level of increasing refugees at the camp which has left the Camp very congested.

There is need to build more health center and also increase on the drug supplies if the refugees wellbeing is to be improved. It has been noted that often times the health centers run out of certain drugs which affects the quality of health services to the refugees at the Camp.

Conflict resolution programmes should be designed and implemented; programmes that encourage mutual respect, co-existence and community dialogues. These may involve training refugees and host communities in conflict resolution skills and peace building.

5.4 Study conclusion.

This study sought to assess the effectiveness of humanitarian response on the wellbeing of refugees in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, Uganda. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the type of humanitarian response and various wellbeing indicators of the refugees, with an overall mean score of 4.11 and a standard deviation of 0.51792. This suggests that the humanitarian agencies' efforts have some positive influence on the refugees' wellbeing.

However, despite this statistical association, the study concludes that the humanitarian response provided at Nakivale remains inadequate and ineffective in substantially improving the refugees' quality of life and wellbeing. Several critical gaps and challenges emerged from the findings:

Food Distribution: Although food provided was generally of good quality, issues related to consistency and quantity were reported, affecting the nutritional security of refugees.

Psychosocial Support: Refugees expressed dissatisfaction with the nature and availability of psychosocial services, indicating limited support to address mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Housing and Shelter: The conditions of housing facilities were found to be insufficient, with overcrowding and poor infrastructure undermining the living environment.

Healthcare Services: Health support was available but inconsistent, especially concerning the availability of essential medicines. This forced many refugees to seek expensive alternatives outside the camp.

Land Distribution and Access: Land remains a contentious issue, with reports of corruption, conflicts between refugees and host communities, and unclear boundaries. These factors limit refugees' ability to engage in sustainable livelihoods such as farming.

Education: Overcrowding in schools, insufficient numbers of teachers, and limited educational resources hamper refugee children's access to quality education, compromising their long-term prospects.

Taken together, these challenges illustrate that while humanitarian responses exist, they fail to comprehensively address the multidimensional needs of refugees in Nakivale. The structural, resource,

and administrative constraints diminish the overall impact of humanitarian interventions, limiting refugees' ability to achieve self-reliance and improved wellbeing.

Therefore, the study underscores the need for humanitarian agencies and stakeholders to reconsider current approaches by enhancing coordination, increasing funding, and implementing targeted, sustainable programs that address psychosocial needs, healthcare consistency, land access, and educational capacity. Strengthening transparency to curb corruption and fostering peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities is also essential for improving the effectiveness of humanitarian efforts.

In conclusion, achieving meaningful improvement in refugee wellbeing at Nakivale requires a holistic, well-funded, and participatory humanitarian response that aligns with the refugees' socio-economic realities and long-term aspirations for self-sufficiency and dignity.

5.5 Study recommendations

The researcher conducted this study to assess the effectiveness of humanitarian response on the wellbeing of refugees in Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, Uganda. However, the study was not exhaustive due to several constraints that impacted its scope and depth.

Time limitations restricted the extent of data collection and analysis, thereby limiting the possibility of capturing longitudinal trends or seasonal variations in humanitarian service delivery and refugee wellbeing. Secondly, the scope of the study was confined primarily to Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other refugee settlements in Uganda or similar contexts elsewhere. The study faced significant financial constraints, which curtailed resources available for wider data collection, broader sampling, and the inclusion of additional variables that could have enriched the analysis.

The study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which posed unique challenges.

Restrictions on movement, social distancing measures, and health concerns constrained fieldwork activities, limited access to participants, and potentially influenced the delivery of humanitarian services during the study period, thereby affecting the overall findings.

Given these limitations, further research is strongly recommended in complementary and related areas to build a more comprehensive understanding of refugee wellbeing and humanitarian response in Uganda. Two key areas for future investigation include:

The Economic Impact of Refugee Inflows in Uganda:

There is a need to explore how refugee settlements influence local and national economies, including effects on employment, markets, public services, and host community livelihoods. Understanding these dynamics can inform policies aimed at maximizing positive economic outcomes for both refugees and host communities.

Effective Land Use among Refugees in Uganda:

Given that land access and management remain critical challenges for refugees, further research should focus on land use practices, conflicts, and sustainable management strategies within refugee settlements. This research could guide more equitable and conflict-sensitive land allocation and usage policies that support refugees' self-reliance and harmonious coexistence with host populations.

By addressing these areas, future studies can provide deeper insights and practical recommendations to enhance humanitarian interventions and refugee integration policies in Uganda and beyond

5.6 Areas of Further Research

Economic Impact of Refugee Influx on Host Communities

Investigate how the presence of refugees affects the local economy in terms of employment, business growth, and public service delivery in host districts like Isingiro. This could help identify both positive contributions and challenges faced by host communities.

Effective Land Use and Land Management among Refugees

Study land allocation, utilization, and conflicts related to land in refugee settlements. Explore sustainable practices and policies that can enhance agricultural productivity and reduce disputes over land.

Long-term Psychosocial Support Interventions for Refugees

Examine the adequacy and effectiveness of psychosocial programs offered to refugees, including the impact on mental health and social integration, with a view to improving program design.

Access to and Quality of Education for Refugee Children

Explore challenges such as overcrowding, teacher shortages, and quality of education, and evaluate innovative educational models to improve learning outcomes in refugee settings.

Healthcare Service Delivery and Drug Availability in Refugee Camps

Analyze the health system's capacity to provide consistent medical services, the supply chain of essential drugs, and the impact of these factors on refugee health outcomes.

Corruption and Administrative Challenges in Refugee Settlements

Investigate the extent and impact of corruption among administrative officials on service delivery and resource allocation, and propose measures to enhance transparency and accountability.

Conflict Resolution Mechanisms between Refugees and Host Communities

Study the root causes of conflicts, particularly over resources like land, and assess existing peace-building and conflict resolution initiatives to recommend effective approaches.

Livelihood Strategies and Self-Reliance among Refugees

Research the various income-generating activities refugees engage in, their sustainability, and how humanitarian programs can better support refugee entrepreneurship and economic independence.

Impact of COVID-19 on Humanitarian Response Effectiveness

Evaluate how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the delivery and quality of humanitarian aid and services in refugee settlements.

Gender-Specific Challenges and Opportunities in Refugee Wellbeing

Examine how humanitarian responses address the unique needs of women, men, boys, and girls in refugee camps, including protection from gender-based violence and empowerment initiatives.

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Appendix I: Questionnaire for the study

Dear Respondent,

I am ENOS KUSIIMA, a student at Uganda Christian University conducting a study on, **“HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND THE REFUGEES WELLBEING IN NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT CAMP IN UGANDA”**. This is an academic study as a partial requirement for the award of Masters **of Public Administration and Management**. I am requesting you to spare some time and fill this questionnaire independently and at your own free will. Your views and responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you

Section A: Bio-data of respondents and general information

Please tick the best option as applicable.

1. Gender

[1] Male

[2] Female

[1] Less 30 years

[2] 31-60 years

[3] Over 60 years

3. Highest level of education attained

[1] PhD [2] Master's Degree [3] Bachelor Degree [4] Diploma [5] Certificate [6] Never went to School

4. Which Country are you from?

[1] Kenya [2] Rwanda [3] DRC [4] Burundi [5] Somalia

5. How long have you been at Nakivale Refugee Camp?

[1] Less 2 years [2] 2-4 years [3] 5-9 years [4] Over 10 years

3. What made you to seek refuge in Uganda?

[1] War	[2] Famine	[3] Fear of Political Prosecution Others,	[4]
specify.....			

Questions on objectives are presented in Sections B, C, D and F

Section B. Kind of Humanitarian Response Is Appropriate for Refugee's Wellbeing

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Not Sure 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

Code	Statement on Humanitarian Response	1	2	3	4	5
B1	We get psychosocial support at the camp					
B2	We often get adequate health support from government and NGOs					
B3	There are always drugs available at the health facility					
B4	The food we get are of good quality					
B5	We have enough land where we cultivate crops					
B6	The space/house is too small					

B7	We have enough school facility within the camp					
B8	The Children are not so populated in a class room					
B9	There are enough teachers in the school					

Section C: Challenges Facing the Humanitarian Agencies in Improving the Refugee

Wellbeing

1. What challenges most affect humanitarian Agencies in improving refugee wellbeing at Nakivale? 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Not Sure 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

CODE	Challenges	SD	D	NS	A	SA
C1	Poor relationship with host communities					
C2	High population at the camp					
C3	Varying interest by the refugees					
C4	The limited resources					
C5	Laws affect the humanitarian agency from their work effectively.					

2. What challenges do you face while interacting with humanitarian Agencies?

.....

3. Did you get help or support immediately you arrived in Uganda/Nakivale Refugee Camp?

.....

4. Does the service provided by humanitarian agencies meet your desire needs?

.....

If No, Why?

.....

.....
.....

5. What major challenges do you face in working with the Humanitarian agencies in Nakivale Refugee Camp?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section D: Ways of improving refugee’s wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee

1. Please advice on what should be done to improve your wellbeing at the Camp?

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Thank you so much for your participation in the study

Appendix II: Interview Guide (Head teachers, Medical workers, Camp Leaders, DRC and Humanitarian Agencies)

Dear Respondent,

I am ENOS KUSIIMA, a student at Uganda Christian University conducting a study on, **“HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND THE REFUGEES WELLBEING IN NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT CAMP IN UGANDA”**. This is an academic study as a partial requirement for the award of Masters of **Public Administration and Management**. I am requesting you to spare some time and answer these in an interview. Your views and responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you

Sincerely

A. General information

1. What role do you perform at Nakivale Refugee Camp?
2. How long have you been in this refugee Camp?
3. What is your highest level of qualification in education?
4. Are you also a refugee or a Ugandan?

B. Humanitarian Response to Refugee at Nakivale Refugee Camps

1. Are the refugees given psychosocial support?
2. Do you think there are adequate health supports to the refugees?
3. What do you make of the quality of food the refugee eat at the camp?
4. Are there always there enough food supplies at the camp?

5. What do you make of the nature of the houses the refugees are living in?

6. What do you make of the quality of education the refugee children at the camp?

Section C: Challenges Facing the Humanitarian Agencies in Improving the Refugee

Wellbeing

6. What challenges do you face while interacting with humanitarian Agencies or the Refugees?

7. Are the refugees supported immediately they arrive in Uganda/Nakivale Refugee Camp?

8. Do you think the services provided by humanitarian agencies meet the desire of the refugees?

If No, Why?

9. What major challenges do you face in working at the Nakivale refugee Camp?

Section D: Ways of improving refugee's wellbeing in Nakivale Refugee

10. **Please advice on what should be done to improve your wellbeing at the Camp?**

Appendix III: Consent form

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND THE REFUGEES WELLBEING IN NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT CAMP IN UGANDA

CONSENT FORM

Introduction: Hello my name is **ENOS KUSIIMA**, Reg. **RS18M12/017**. I am a student of Masters of **Public Administration and Management** at UCU. I am currently conducting an academic research study to understand HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND THE REFUGEES WELLBEING IN NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT CAMP IN UGANDA.

Invitation to Participate: This research study aims to talk to approximately **379 head of households and 14 senior officials at the Camp**. I would like to invite you to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary. You can refuse to answer the entire questionnaire, stop the process at any time, or you can tell us when a question makes you uncomfortable and we will skip that. If you agree to participate, I will ask you some questions about your business and loan details. All answers are accepted. The questions should take approximately 45 minutes of your time to answer depending on how you respond.

Risks: There will be no risk for you or your household if you choose to participate in this study and participating will not stop you from receiving services or assistance from any organization.

Benefits: The outcomes of this study will help me in the fulfillment of the requirement of **Masters of Public Administration and Management** of Uganda Christian University. There will be no any direct individual benefit to you, such as monetary compensation for participating in this survey.

Confidentiality: Your participation in this study will be confidential and the answers you provide will be stored securely by me or my research supervisor, or securely with the University School of Postgraduate. Your name and any other identifying information will not be accessible to the affiliated researchers and will never appear in any sort of report that might be published or shared with any organizations who may be interested in the results.

Feedback: At the end of the study, A written thesis will be shared publicly to the different stake holders, decision makers and the refugee community. A copy of this thesis will also be published online for public consumption.

Funders: This study is being privately funded by the student (ENOS KUSIIMA)

Approvals: This study has been approved by an accredited Ugandan Christian University Research Ethics Committee (REC).

Questions & Concerns: Please ask me/us anything you want to know about this research project now or later on the details below:

Consent: If you agree to participate in the study, please check the box and sign or write your initials or give a thumb print to show that you understand the information above and that your consent is given voluntarily. Feel free to have some minutes alone to consider whether or not you wish to participate.

I have read the above purpose of the study, and understand my role in participating in the research. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later, about the research. I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time. The investigator may withdraw me at his/her professional discretion.

I certify that I am 18 years of age or older and freely give my consent to participate in this study. I will receive a copy of this document for my records.

Yes No

Name: _____ Name: _____

(Participant)

(Research Investigator)

Signature: _____ Signature: _____ (Participant)

In the event the participant is illiterate: I confirm that the researcher has explained the elements of informed consent to the participant and has been given the transcribe version. The subject knows that their participation is voluntary, and that they do not need to answer all questions. The purpose of the research, as well as the risks and benefits has been explained. The procedures as well as the time commitment have been outlined. The participant understands issues of confidentiality.

Name: _____ (Witness)

Signature: _____



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Office of the Vice Chancellor
Research Ethics Committee UG-026



4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by subjects and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Regulations require review of an approved study not less than once per 12-month period. Therefore, a continuing review application must be submitted to the REC eight weeks prior to the above expiration date of 26th January, 2026 in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study, at which point new participants may not be enrolled and currently enrolled participants must be taken off the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. Your research details have been shared with the Executive secretary of Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) and you are not required to get clearance since you are a Master's Degree research. Refer to UNCST Research registration and clearance Policy and guidelines (July 2016) in Uganda section 6(e).

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by UG-REC_026:

	Document Title	Language	Version	Version Date
1.	Protocol	English	1.0	2025-12-30
2.	Questionnaire	English	1.0	2025-12-30
3.	Interview guide	English	1.0	2025-12-30
4.	Informed consent form	English	1.0	2025-12-30

Signed and Stamped

Prof. Peter Waiswa,
UCUREC Chairperson,
pwaiswa@musph.ac.ug





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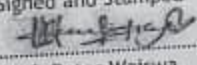
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