

**Spaces of trust and mistrust: Congolese refugees, institutions and protection in  
Kampala, Uganda**

*Eveliina Lyytinen*

Green Templeton College  
School of Geography and the Environment  
University of Oxford  
Trinity Term 2013

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

(Approximately 100,000 words)

## Abstract

The spatiality of refugee protection has been a key issue for humanitarian practitioners and policy-makers, and it has become of increasing concern in academic studies. This study interrogates the policy and practice-oriented concept of ‘protection space’ in regard to the experiences of the Congolese refugees in the city of Kampala, Uganda. My analysis of ‘protection space’ uses the geographical concepts of the ‘right to the city’ and ‘sense of place’ to emphasise the physical, imagined, lived and relational understandings of urban space. I also investigate the conceptual links between ‘protection’, ‘space’ and ‘trust’. I apply a qualitative case-study approach in this study and collected primary data from individual Congolese refugees, refugee communities and officers of the protection institutions. The data-collection methods included a combination of semi-structured interviews, observation and focus group discussions, supported by visual methods. I rely on aspects of discourse analysis to analyse my textual and visual data.

I conclude that the Congolese refugees informing this study conceptualised ‘protection’ not only legally, physically and relationally, but also spiritually. The geographical levels of protection and insecurity that refugees experienced varied: their ‘sense of place’ in relation to the city of exile depended on their micro-, meso-, and macro-scale experiences and perceptions of protection. Given the prevalence of generalised and particularised social mistrust and institutional mistrust – two matters that were intertwined in refugees’ discourses of their everyday urban life – it is concluded that the distinction between protection and insecurity was at times unclear. Refugees, however, found a sense of protection from various ‘communities of trust’, even though their community life was also characterised by struggles over their ‘right to the city’ and inter-community mistrust.

## Acknowledgements

The process of writing this doctoral thesis would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of a number of people and institutions. I would like to thank my supervisors Dr Patricia Daley of the OUCE and Emeritus Prof. Roger Zetter of the RSC for giving me the opportunity to work with them and for all their guidance over the course of the process. I also appreciate the comments and suggestions made by my assessors for Transfer of Status, Dr Ali Rogers and Dr Tony Lemon, and Confirmation of Status, Prof. Judith Pallot and Dr Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh. Particular thanks go to my internal examiner Dr Oliver Bakewell of the IMI and my external examiner Dr Camillo Boano of UCL: I appreciated your feedback, suggestions for improvements and our inspiring discussion during the *viva voce* examination. Financially speaking, this doctoral research would not have been possible without the generous support of the Oskari Huttunen Foundation, Finnish Cultural Foundation, Emil Aaltonen Foundation and Alfred Kordelin Foundation.

I would like to extend my gratitude for various kinds of academic support to Dr Elli Heikkilä, Dr Jeff Crisp, Dr Barbara Harrell-Bond and Mr Richard Haavisto. Thanks go also to the academic and support staff at my department, the School of Geography, and my college, Green Templeton. Special thanks to my college advisor Prof. Jeff Burely for his kind support. My gratitude also goes to the Secretary of the United Nations Publications Board and the Kampala Capital City Authorities for granting me permission to use their maps. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the proof-reading that Prof. Derek Jewell of GTC and James Disley of Isis Editorial Services did for me.

I am grateful for the research permission granted by the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNCST). During my fieldwork numerous people in Uganda provided me encouragement. I would like to thank all of my colleagues and friends at the Refugee Law Project. Without the invaluable support of my interpreters/research assistants this study would not have been possible: so, thank you Robert, Sedrick, Patrick, and Kambere, who unfortunately passed away. ICU guesthouse became my ‘home away from home’, and I wish to thank the ICU staff, other guests and in particular Sander and his family for hosting me during my fieldwork. Thanks to James and John for driving me safely around the streets of Kampala, and to Irene, Lara, Laura, Lucy, Shira and Tarja for your friendship. My special gratitude goes to all of those who were willing to participate in my study: without your precious stories, opinions and photographs, this study would not be what it is now.

Over the course of my five years in Oxford I have met extraordinary people who have provided me invaluable encouragement and became dear friends. I am thankful to all of the fellow DPhils at my department. Special thanks go to Carly, Nihan, Tanya and Vicky for your friendship, proof-reading, IT help, and coffee breaks. The support of my postgraduate church community at St. Aldates has been great. In Oxford I have shared a house with a number of wonderful and inspiring people, and would like to thank particularly Jess, Naomi, Subiksha, Sanne, Andrea(s), Thana and Lena. Home has been an important place for me because of you. My journey in Oxford would not have been the same without Avanti and Nathan, Lebo and Päivi: Thank you! Minna, I am thankful to you for encouraging me to apply to Oxford in the first place.

Lastly, my family in Finland has supported and looked after me at every step of my doctoral studies. Sussu and co, thank you for your support. Annukka and ‘the boys’; what a wonderful encouragement you have been in every possible way. To my parents, Hannele and Juhani, thank you for your support and love for me. I will be forever thankful for that.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Lists of abbreviations and foreign words	ix
List of tables and figures	xi
<b>Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	1
1.1. Why study urban refugee protection?	1
1.1.1. Recent studies on urban refugees and the current knowledge gaps	1
1.1.2. Contextualising the research topic	5
1.2. Aim, objectives and research questions	9
1.3. Structure of the thesis	10
<b>Chapter 2: CONTEXT</b>	15
2.1. The nature of cities in sub-Saharan Africa	15
2.2. The city of Kampala	17
2.3. Urban refugees in Uganda: Laws, policies and practices	25
2.4. Congolese refugees in Kampala and the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	29
<b>Chapter 3: PROTECTION, SPACE AND TRUST: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</b>	41
3.1. Introduction	41
3.2. Theorising ‘protection’	43
3.3. Theorising ‘space’	49
3.3.1. Conceptualisations of ‘space’	49
3.3.2. ‘Sense of place’	54
3.3.3. ‘Right to the city’	57
3.3.4. ‘Space’ in refugee studies	63
3.4. Theorising ‘trust’	70
3.4.1. Conceptualisations of ‘trust’	70
3.4.2. A theoretical framework to investigate trust discourses	74
3.4.2.1. <i>Scales and orientations</i>	75
3.4.2.2. <i>Contexts</i>	77
3.4.2.3. <i>Individual characteristics and intersectionality</i>	79
3.4.2.4. <i>Time</i>	82
3.4.3. Relational spaces of protection	83
3.4.3.1. <i>Relational spaces of social and institutional trust</i>	83
3.4.3.2. <i>Urban refugees’ ‘communities of trust’</i>	89
3.5. Concluding discussion	98
<b>Chapter 4: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH</b>	101
4.1. Introduction	101
4.2. Selection of the case study	101
4.3. Data collection and sample size	103
4.4. Fieldwork periods in Kampala	106
4.5. Details about the textual data collection	107
4.5.1. Flexible research design and sampling	107
4.5.2. Semi-structured interviews and characteristics of individual refugees	109

4.5.3. Focus group discussions and observation with refugee communities	111
4.5.4. Semi-structured interviews with protection institutions	114
4.6. Textual data analysis	115
4.6.1. Coding	116
4.6.2. Discourse analysis	118
4.7. Collection and interpretation of visual research data	120
4.7.1. The use of visual methods	120
4.7.2. Time-space diaries	121
4.7.3. Participatory photographing	123
4.8. Ethical considerations	126
4.8.1. Discourses on persecution and violence	127
4.8.2. Working with the youth	129
4.8.3. Positionality and reflexivity	130
4.8.4. Consent, confidentiality and anonymity	131
4.8.5. Representation of findings and trusting the data	134
4.9. Concluding discussion	136
<b>Chapter 5: INSTITUTIONAL SPACES BETWEEN REFUGEES AND THE OFFICIAL PROVIDERS OF PROTECTION</b>	137
5.1. Introduction	137
5.2. Imagined spaces of institutional trust	139
5.2.1. “It is not good to talk about everything that is the truth”: narratives of telling the ‘truth’	141
5.2.2. Misrepresentations and mismanagement	151
5.3. Physical spaces of institutional trust	161
5.3.1. “Between the UNHCR protection officers and me there is a gap”: refugees’ lack of direct access to the UNHCR	162
5.3.2. Sunday nights and Monday mornings at InterAid Uganda (IAU)	170
5.4. Concluding discussion	178
<b>Chapter 6: PHYSICAL SPACES OF PROTECTION AND HOST–REFUGEE RELATIONS</b>	181
6.1. Introduction	181
6.2. Urban micro-scale spaces of protection and insecurity	184
6.2.1. Home and shelter	184
6.2.1.1. <i>Rented houses</i>	184
6.2.1.2. <i>Church buildings</i>	189
6.2.1.3. <i>The “Struggle” – an alleyway as a shelter</i>	196
6.2.2. Neighbourhood and relations with Ugandans	199
6.2.2.1. <i>Selecting a neighbourhood</i>	199
6.2.2.2. <i>Relations with Ugandan neighbours</i>	202
6.3. Urban meso-scale spaces of protection and insecurity	210
6.3.1. Mapping the safe and unsafe areas of the city	210
6.3.1.1. <i>Unsafe areas of Kampala</i>	210
6.3.1.2. <i>Safe areas of Kampala</i>	216
6.3.2. Movement and its limitations within the city	223
6.4. Urban macro-scale space of protection and insecurity	229
6.4.1. Host–refugee relations at the city level	229
6.4.2. Situating Kampala within the national and regional politics	234

6.5. Concluding discussion	241
<b>Chapter 7: SOCIAL SPACES AMONG THE CONGOLESE REFUGEES</b>	245
7.1. Introduction	245
7.2. Trusting en route: refugees' flight from the DRC and arrival in Kampala	247
7.2.1. Trust-influenced reasons of flight	247
7.2.2. Trust and mistrust during travel and upon arrival in Kampala	255
7.3. Manifestations of social trust in refugees' everyday lives in Kampala	262
7.3.1. Spill-over effects of the persecution and navigating fear among the refugees	262
7.3.2. Social exclusions and the challenges of (re)building communities	266
7.4. Concluding discussion	274
<b>Chapter 8: INFORMAL PLACES OF PROTECTION: URBAN REFUGEES' 'COMMUNITIES OF TRUST'</b>	279
8.1. Introduction	279
8.2. Daily-life practices	282
8.2.1. The significance of communities	283
8.2.2. Everyday life in communities	286
8.3. Basic beliefs and attitudes	292
8.3.1. 'Congolese Refugee Community in Uganda' (CRCU)	293
8.3.2. Banyamulenge Tutsis	294
8.3.3. Refugee-community organisations (RCOs)	297
8.3.4. Congolese and Ugandan churches	298
8.3.5. Support groups	301
8.4. Perceptions of risk	303
8.4.1. The CRCU versus the protection institutions	303
8.4.2. CRCU's internal and external power struggles	306
8.5. Interests	313
8.5.1. The institutional approach to working with refugee communities	314
8.5.2. Communal forms of resistance	316
8.6. Shared space	323
8.6.1. "We have also displaced them": how the OPM 'displaced' refugees from the António Guterres Community Centre	323
8.6.2. School on weekdays, church on Sundays: the multiple uses of community spaces	328
8.6.3. Angels' office: security or surveillance?	332
8.7. Concluding discussion	335
<b>Chapter 9: CONCLUSIONS</b>	337
9.1. Introduction	337
9.2. Overall conclusions: answering the research questions	337
9.3. The notion of 'protection space' reconsidered	346
9.4. Directions for further research	349
9.5. Reflecting on the methodological approach	350
9.6. Contribution to the literatures	353
<b>References</b>	357
<b>Appendices</b>	368

## **Lists of abbreviations and foreign words**

ATV	Association for Torture Victims
CARA	Control of Alien Refugees Act
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CNDP	National Congress for the Defence of the People
CRCU	Congolese Refugee Community in Uganda
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FARDC	The Armed Forces of the DRC
FBOs	Faith-based organisations
FDLR	Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda
FGDs	Focus group discussions
FNL	National Liberation Front of Burundi
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IASFM	International Association for the Study of Forced Migration
IAU	InterAid Uganda
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDPs	Internally displaced people
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
KCC	Kampala City Council
KCCA	Kampala Capital City Authority
LCs	Local councillors
LFCs	Local faith communities
LGBT/I	Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Trans-sexual and Inter-sexual
MONUSCO	UN Mission in the DRC
MP	Member of parliament
NFE	Non-formal education
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NLCC	New Life Centre Church
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PCWG	Protection Cluster Working Group
PWDs	Association of Refugees with Disabilities

RCD	Congolese Rally for Democracy
RCOs	Refugee community organisations
RLP	Refugee Law Project
RSD	Refugee status determination
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
UBS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission
WRD	World Refugee Day
YARID	Young African Refugees for Integral Development

<i>Amani Leo</i>	Peace today
<i>Autogestion</i>	Self-management
<i>Bitenge</i>	Traditional Congolese women's clothing
<i>Boda boda</i>	Motorcycle
<i>Cabera</i>	Plastic bag
<i>Citadin</i>	Citizen
<i>Impala</i>	A type of antelope
<i>Kibugo</i>	The capital of then Buganda Kingdom
<i>Kimia</i>	Quiet
<i>La Sape</i>	Culture of dressing up in fashionable clothes
<i>Le droit á la ville</i>	Right to the city
<i>Matatu</i>	Mini-bus taxi
<i>Matooke</i>	Small banana
<i>Muzigos</i>	One-roomed houses
<i>Oeuvre</i>	Work of art
<i>Umoja Wetu</i>	Our unity

## **List of tables and figures**

### *Chapter Two*

Table 1. Trends in the urban population in Uganda 1980–2035

Table 2. Population size and growth rates of Kampala

Figure 1. Administrative map of the five divisions of Kampala

Figure 2. Map of the Eastern DRC and Uganda

### *Chapter Three*

Figure 3. The egg model of protection

### *Chapter Four*

Table 3. The preferred data-collection cycle with individual refugees

Table 4. Sources and references per node with the textual data collected with refugees

Table 5. Sources and references per node with the textual data collected with the protection institutions

### *Chapter Five*

Figure 4. The main protection institutions in Kampala

Figure 5. UNHCR poster at the WRD celebrations in June 2011

Figure 6. UNHCR County Office in Kololo parish of Kampala

Figure 7. Congolese men's queue outside the IAU office in Mengo parish of Kampala on a Monday morning

### *Chapter Six*

Figure 8. A refugee woman's photograph of her one-room house presenting the kitchen corner

Figure 9. Pastor's house and children which the informant identified as his "home and family"

Figure 10. NLCC in Rubaga

Figure 11. NLCC in Rubaga before a Sunday service

Figure 12. Personal belongings of a refugee evicted from the "Struggle"

Figure 13. Eviction at the Struggle on 2 July 2011

Figure 14. The alleyway after the eviction

Figure 15. Katwe and Nsambya parishes in Makindye division, Kampala

Figure 16. The neighbourhood in Nsambya where many of the refugee inhabitants felt unsafe due to a Ugandan neighbour

- Figure 17. A pile of rubbish in Nsambya parish
- Figure 18. A shared shower in Katwe parish
- Figure 19. A dead dog
- Figure 20. The areas of Kabalagala, Kibuli and the industrial area perceived by some of the refugee informants as unsafe
- Figure 21. Areas of Makindye, Katwe, Nsambya and Kabalagala perceived by some of the refugee informants as unsafe
- Figure 22. “A rape house”
- Figure 23. The areas of Rubaga and Najjanankumb perceived by some of the refugee informants as safe and protected
- Figure 24. A Congolese woman preparing cassava leaves in Katwe parish of Kampala
- Figure 25. Congolese crafting in Katwe parish of Kampala
- Figure 26. Police forces at the Kibuli roundabout
- Figure 27. Trees and blue sky
- Figure 28. President Museveni’s election campaign poster on a wall in Rubaga parish of Kampala

### *Chapter Eight*

- Figure 29. Conceptual scheme of ‘community of trust’
- Figure 30. The weekly time spent at home, in public spaces, in communities and at the protection institutions
- Figure 31. The Department of Refugees of OPM located at the António Guterres Community Centre in Old Kampala
- Figure 32. The office building of the CRCU
- Figure 33. The small house behind the CRCU office where the community provided short-term housing for the neediest asylum seekers and refugees
- Figure 34. The YARID school/JSS church/shelter for homeless refugees
- Figure 35. YARID language school on weekdays
- Figure 36. JSS church on a Sunday morning
- Figure 37. Worship time at the JSS church on a Sunday

## Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Why study urban refugee protection?

#### *1.1.1. Recent studies on urban refugees and the current knowledge gaps*

Refugeeness is a process of becoming rather than a onetime set of events bounded in time and space (Petee 1995: 171).

Currently, almost half of the refugees<sup>1</sup> worldwide live in cities and towns (UNHCR 2009a). Since more than 80 per cent of refugees reside in the Global South, urban areas in that part of the world are potential centres for refugees. Since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there has been a clear urbanisation trend within the refugee flows and this reflects wider migration trends. Yet the majority of humanitarian work has been, and to a large extent still is, concentrated on rural refugee camps and settlements, instead of focusing on the, mostly, self-settled refugees in urban settings. This is partly the consequence of a historic focus of legislation that encouraged rural settlements for refugees in segregated camps. In many countries urban refugees were illegal, and thus formed a marginalised and hidden population who largely lived in insecurity. Due to this historical context, “the humanitarian community is [still] outside of its comfort zone” in cities and towns (Crisp, Morris and Refstie 2012: s25). Given this background, this study provides a timely examination of the Congolese refugees’ experiences of protection/space/trust in the city of Kampala, Uganda.

---

<sup>1</sup> In this study, I use the term ‘refugees’ to refer not only to people with an official refugee status but also asylum seekers who are still waiting for their refugee status and unregistered forced migrants, who live in refugee-like situations but have not applied for the status. Clear distinctions between these three legal categories will be made when needed.

The academic study of urban refugees has increased significantly over the last decade or so. The growth has also been seen in the policy literature produced by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and think-tanks, among others. The global policy frameworks focusing on urban refugees have also proliferated, in particular after 2009 when UNHCR launched its new ‘Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas’ (2009a) (the urban refugee policy) to replace the heavily criticised policy from 1997 (Dryden-Peterson 2006; Crisp, Morris and Refstie 2012). In 2009, the High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges also focused on the topic of urban refugees.

However, contrary to the typical argument of the novelty of urban displacement, it is not a new phenomenon and it has been researched at least since the 1970s. The humanitarian sector has, however, “failed to galvanise on the issue, and has struggled therefore to employ existing knowledge and to adapt practice” (Pantuliano et al. 2012). Also, “although the issue of displacement to urban areas rose to the top of the humanitarian agenda in 2009, the relative lack of subsequent follow-up highlights the need for action” (Crisp, Morris and Refstie 2012: s 39). It is clear that more research on certain aspects of urban refugees is still needed.

The literature on urban refugees is growing both in its number and scope. Regarding the more recent academic and policy-oriented studies in the Global South, many have provided an overview of the various issues affecting the lives of urban refugees from the viewpoint of multiple refugee nationalities in a given city (Marfleet 2007; Crisp et al. 2009; Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantualiano 2010; Crisp, Obi and Umlas 2012). Nevertheless, the depth of these studies or evaluations has remained rather limited. Some

studies have incorporated the examination of refugees within larger urban phenomena such as vulnerability (Pantualiano et al. 2010), urbanisation (Crisp, Morris and Refstie 2012) or urban humanitarian action at large (Zetter and Deikun 2010). Other studies have focused on specific issues, including health care (Martin and Taylor 2012), education (Dryden-Peterson 2006, UNHCR 2009b), the role of religion, faith and spirituality (Sommers 2001a, 2001b; Nzayabino 2010), technology (Danielson 2012), livelihoods (Campbell 2006; Jacobsen 2006; WRC 2011a, 2011b; Omata 2012) and social networks (Willems 2003, 2005; Calhoun 2010b; Madhavan and Landau 2011). Research has also been conducted on particular refugee groups, such as women (Pittaway 2009) and youth (WRC 2012a, 2012b), or particular nationalities of refugees.

Relatively few studies on urban refugees have paid sufficient attention to host societies (Kobia and Granfield 2009, Pantuliano et al. 2012). Additionally, in recent years there has been less academic literature on the role of humanitarian assistance in urban areas (Pantuliano et al. 2012: s9), and there is a need to understand better how to provide protection in urban settings. Also, a number of studies have been conducted in a rather limited number of big cities in the Global South, such as Amman, Cairo, Johannesburg, Kampala, Nairobi and New Delhi (Kobia and Cranfield 2009, Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013). This has led to a situation whereby some urban refugee groups known from the media and previous publications have been the focus of extensive research (Crips, Morris and Refstie 2012: s 38). Very few studies on urban refugees have been conducted in smaller towns, even though the protection needs and challenges may be completely different compared to the capital cities where most of the work has been done. Moreover, not many studies have incorporated a comparative approach in conducting research in more than one city. It has also been argued that many of the needs assessments and

evaluations lack comprehensive context analysis and this compromises the applicability and policy relevance of the research (Pantuliano et al. 2012).

With regard to Kampala, the case study of this research, recent studies on refugees<sup>2</sup> have covered the overall situation of urban refugees (Lomo, Naggaga and Hovil 2001; Huff and Kalyango 2002; Berstein 2005; HRW 2002), youth (Clark-Kazak 2006), young men (Lammers 2006a), non-formal education (NFE) (Dryden-Peterson 2006; Bonfiglio 2010), refugee livelihoods (WRC 2011a), the church and the bars as forms of ‘communities’ (Russell 2011), and refugees’ memories of the history of their protection in the urban landscape (Sandvik 2012).

Except for the study by Sandvik (2012), which uses data from the early 2000s, these studies do not have a particular focus on the urban character of protection. Thus, I suggest that there is a knowledge gap in the literature produced on urban refugees in Kampala, and elsewhere, in regard to examining refugees’ understandings of the spatiality of their protection. Consequently, this study aims to provide new insights on this theme. In the next section, I will contextualise the research topic by discussing the conceptual starting point of this study – the notion of ‘protection space’.

---

<sup>2</sup> Many of the studies have either incorporated a number of different refugee nationalities or focused on Congolese refugees. The sheer number of and accessibility to Congolese in Kampala has led to many researchers working with them; approximately half of the refugees in Kampala are from the DRC. The possible biases in case-study selection both in terms of Kampala and Congolese will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

### *1.1.2. Contextualising the research topic*

The spatiality of refugee protection has been a key issue for humanitarian practitioners and policy-makers, and it has become of increasing concern in academic studies. This study interrogates the policy and practice-oriented concept of ‘protection space’ (Evans Barnes 2009, Crisp et al. 2009, UNHCR 2009a) in the context of the academic literature on ‘protection’, ‘space’ and ‘trust’ in regard to the experiences of the Congolese refugees in the city of Kampala, Uganda.

The term ‘protection’ is used in this study in a broad sense, as defined by the informants themselves and as discussed in current scholarship. First and foremost, it includes the traditional refugee assistance, physical and legal protection, and ‘durable’ solutions (i.e. the upholding of both general human rights and refugee-specific rights) (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005: 7). However, since refugeehood is largely characterised by insecurity, I consider the sense of ontological security – which can be explained as “the notion of safety, routine and trust in a stable environment” (Hawkins and Maurer 2011: 143) – as being central to the understanding of refugees’ experiences of protection. Often, this sense of security built on trust is established in community settings (Giddens 1991, Hawkins and Maurer 2011).

There is a lack of an agreed or legal definition of ‘protection space’, but in recent years this concept has gained increasing popularity in the ‘humanitarian vocabulary’. Indeed, the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy is centred on the concept of ‘protection space’ (UNHCR 2009a). The refugee agency defines it as “the extent to which there is a conducive environment for the internationally recognised rights of refugees to be respected

and upheld” (Crisp et al. 2009). Furthermore, it is perceived to consist of two elements: physical space and action space (Evans Barnes 2009). ‘Physical space’ is limited by geographical or territorial borders. ‘Action space’ refers to the area in which a refugee moves and makes decisions about his/her life. The idea of surrogacy in action space has been stated to be essential, as it refers to the possibility given to an organisation or other entity to act on behalf of the refugee (i.e. providing protection). Therefore, investigating refugees’ relationships with the various institutions that provide protection for them in the city is central. This largely institutional, dualistic definition of ‘protection space’ will be challenged in this study, as it is shown not to provide a fully purposeful representation of refugees’ commonly accepted understanding of the link between protection and space in the urban context.

UNHCR has also argued that protection space is not fixed but rather time-sensitive and dynamic because it expands according to changes in the political, economic, social and security environments (UNHCR 2009a). Therefore, it is understood that macro-level changes in regional and national spheres can influence the sustainability of refugee protection at the city level. Yet the analysis of micro-level production and contestation of ‘protective spaces’, and the related struggles over agency and power, are often missing from the studies and evaluations of the extent of ‘protection space’. This study aims to shed light, in particular, on these micro-scale processes producing ‘protective spaces’ in the urban environment, as will be discussed below in more detail. In this way, my aim is to provide a contemporary analysis of the protection architecture of Kampala explored in Sandvik’s (2012) study focusing on the situation in the early 2000s. All in all, this study calls for a reconceptualisation of the notion of ‘protection space’ with rescaling at the centre of analysis.

Unlike it is indicated by the policies on urban refugees, the notion of ‘protection space’ is both empirically and theoretically problematic (UNHCR 2009a). This is because investigating refugees’ experience of urban space provides us with a more nuanced understanding of the concept of protection. Given the knowledge gaps in fully understanding the complex spatial dimensions of refugee protection (Brun 2001, Boano 2009), there is a need to conduct more research on this. I suggest that geography as a discipline, with its focus on ‘space’ and the ‘right to the city’, can have an important role in deepening our knowledge of urban refugee protection.

Refugees’ experiences of urban space are often bounded and limited, and in view of that, I propose that refugees’ experiences of protection can be investigated by examining their ‘sense of place’ (Tuan 1977; Massey 1999; Bridge and Watson 2002; Tonkiss 2005; Phillips, Davis and Radcliffe 2007). Theories on ‘sense of place’ are used to examine how “people form meaningful relationships with the locales they occupy, how they attach meaning to space, and transform ‘space’ into ‘place’” – a locality imbued with emotional attachment (Low and Lawrence-Zúniga 2003: 13). In this study, the focus is on how refugees – men, women and the youth – perceive their life in a city, and how they imagine the safe and unsafe spaces of the city. Again, I suggest that refugees’ discourses of space and trust are intertwined, as refugees’ ‘sense of place’ is often characterised by ‘mistrust’.

Moreover, refugees’ access to and participation in producing different forms of urban ‘protection spaces’ can be interrogated through the concept of the ‘right to the city’. ‘Right to the city’ is understood in this study as “radically open” (Attoh 2011: 670) “transformed and renewed right to urban life” (Lefebvre 1996: 158). It includes investigation into refugees’ rights-based struggles in their city of exile (Harvey 2008, Lefebvre 1996),

physical access to and use of urban space (Mitchell 2003), and their right to appropriate (protection) space and participate in its production (Lefebvre 1996, Purcell 2002).

The notion of 'trust' is central to the discussion of refugees' sense of urban protection. Trust, or lack of it, appears fundamental to the experiences of exile, protection and insecurity. This is because, to a large extent, protection is about trusting people in a given space and being comfortable in that space. After reviewing other refugee scholars' (Brun 2001, Ramadan 2012) adaptations of Massey's (1999, 2005) theorisation of space as relational, I suggest an additional application; that of looking at the everyday spaces of protection through the concept of 'trust', which like 'protection' is dialectically linked to spatial relations. Therefore, the analysis on 'space', 'protection' and 'trust' is intertwined.

In the social sciences the importance of 'trust' has been acknowledged because "without trust, the everyday social life which we take for granted is simply not possible" (Gambetta 1988: 32). 'Trust' is multidimensional as it includes cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspects that characterise individual and collective relationships (Norman 2009: 72), and 'discourses of trust' (Candlin and Crichton 2012) are embedded in reason, routine and reflexivity (Möllering 2006). When 'trust' is used as an analytical tool, it is essential to recognise its situatedness and fluidity in relation to space and place (Peteet 1995). My analysis on trust focuses, in particular, on generalised and particularised social trust (Levi 1998, Jasinski 2010, Welter and Nadezhda 2012) and institutional trust (Luhmann 1979, Braithwaite 1998, Giddens 1990). Social trust refers to Congolese refugees' sense of trust among themselves and toward the other inhabitants of the city. Institutional trust refers to refugees' sense of trust toward the institutions providing protection to them.

## **1.2. Aim, objectives and research questions**

My overall aim in this research project is to examine Congolese refugees' experiences of protection in Kampala, Uganda. I have two specific research objectives. The first is to examine how the notion of 'protection space' is understood and shaped by refugees in their everyday lives in the city of exile. Drawing on Lefebvre (1991), I conceptualise 'space' as a physical, imagined and lived entity. In addition, I refer to Massey's (2005) conceptualisation of space as relational. I focus on how these different elements of urban space are intertwined in refugees' discourses of their 'sense of place' and 'right to the city'. I emphasise the relational understanding of the term 'protection space' and, consequently, my second objective is to investigate the conceptual links between 'protection', 'space' and 'trust'.

The more specific research questions are:

1. How do the physical, imagined, lived and relational elements of space condition refugees' experiences of living in the city of exile?
2. How do refugees use and appropriate urban space (i.e. how do they exercise their 'right to the city')?
3. How are refugees' experiences of protection/space/trust influenced by the evolving contexts and by the intersections of their individual characteristics?
4. In what ways does 'trust' affect refugees' relationships with the Ugandan hosts and with the protection institutions, and how does it affect refugees' use of city space?
5. To what extent does 'trust' play a part in the way refugees build relationships and community structures among themselves in Kampala?

I apply a flexibly designed qualitative case-study approach in this study.<sup>3</sup> I collected primary data from individual Congolese refugees, refugee communities and officers of the protection institutions. The data-collection methods include a combination of semi-structured interviews, observation and focus group discussions (FGDs), supported by visual methods (time-space diaries and participatory photographing). I rely on aspects of discourse analysis to analyse my textual data (Waitt 2005) and the visual data (Rose 2007, Jung 2012).

### **1.3. Structure of the thesis**

In this introductory chapter I discussed the reasons for studying urban refugee protection and interrogated the conceptual starting point of this study, the notion of ‘protection space’. I also presented my aim, objectives and research questions, and outlined the structure of the thesis.

In the ‘Context’ chapter (Chapter Two), as a background to the empirical analysis, I briefly discuss the nature of cities in sub-Saharan Africa, and describe the development of the city of Kampala. I then outline the Ugandan laws, policies and practices regarding urban refugees, and provide background information on the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Congolese refugees in Kampala.

‘Protection, space and trust: A Conceptual Framework’ (Chapter Three) introduces and develops the conceptual framework informing this analysis. I begin by discussing how ‘protection’ has been theorised in the context of refugees and humanitarian action more

---

<sup>3</sup> More detailed discussion on the methodological approach is presented in Chapter Four.

widely. Following this, I discuss how ‘space’ has been theorised in geographical literature by focusing, in particular, on physical, imagined, lived and relational conceptualisations of space. I then turn to examine how to reconfigure the notion of ‘protection space’ by introducing theories on the ‘right to the city’ and ‘sense of place’. Following this, I examine the main scholarly debates on ‘refugees and space’ in order to locate my study within these debates.

I continue the reconfiguration of ‘protection space’ by rethinking the spaces of protection through an examination of ‘trust’ in relation to the relational theorisation of ‘space’. Since relational space is understood in this study to have a particularly important role in understanding refugees’ sense of urban protection and insecurity, a substantial part of my conceptual framework is focused on theorising ‘trust’. I discuss how ‘trust’ has previously been used in refugee studies literature and examine the social sciences definitions and conceptualisations of ‘trust’. I also construct a theoretical framework to investigate trust discourses by examining scales and orientations, contexts, individual characteristics and intersectionality, and time in relation to ‘trust’. The theory chapter concludes with a brief discussion on how the key concepts of this study fit together to form an integrated conceptual framework.

In the ‘Methodological approach’ chapter (Chapter Four) I discuss the selection of the case study and the data collection and sample size. I then briefly describe the fieldwork periods in Kampala, after which I discuss details about the textual data collection and analysis. I then examine the use of alternative supplementary visual methods (time-space diaries and participatory photographing). I finish the chapter with an ethical discussion on the use of discourses of persecution and violence; working with the youth; positionality and

reflexivity; consent, confidentiality and anonymity; and representation of findings and trusting the data.

Following these background chapters, I move on to my four empirical chapters. In the first empirical chapter – ‘Institutional spaces between refugees and the official providers of protection’ (Chapter Five) – I analyse the city as an ‘institutional space’. I focus, first, on the imagined, relational understanding of ‘protection space’ between refugees and the protection institutions by focusing on the issue of institutional trust. Second, I interrogate the physical understanding of refugees’ right to the official, micro-scale protection spaces (i.e. the offices of the protection institutions). In Lefebvre’s (1991) terms, the aim is to analyse protection institutions’ ‘representations of protection space’, which can be somewhat contradictory in relation to refugees’ experiences and conceptualisations of ‘lived protection spaces’. The analysis highlights the contested nature of the ‘spatial practices’ of producing official protection spaces. It is concluded that even though a few refugees had established trust-based personal relations with officers, in general Congolese refugees did not trust the official protection architecture of the city. Rather, refugees suggested that the protection institutions were there to ignore or harm them. Thus, the distinction between ‘protection’ and ‘insecurity’ became blurred; this had further implications for refugees’ sense of trust toward the protection institutions.

The second empirical chapter, ‘Physical spaces of protection and host–refugee relations’ (Chapter Six), refers to the relevant theoretical literature in order to analyse the empirical data on refugees’ ‘sense of place’ and ‘right to the city’. The main focus of this chapter is on the forms of protection and insecurity that the refugees experienced and imagined in the urban environment. The chapter is framed around three different scales of urban

protection, i.e. the micro, meso and macro scales. The micro-scale analysis firstly focuses on the different forms of shelter refugees inhabit in the city. Secondly, I discuss the micro-scale of a neighbourhood and refugees' relations with their Ugandan neighbours (i.e. their particularised social trust). The meso-scale examination of the city starts by analysing the wider unsafe and safe areas of Kampala. I then briefly discuss refugees' freedom of movement and its limitations within the city of their exile. The macro-scale analysis outlines the overall host-refugee relations in the city of Kampala from the viewpoint of generalised social trust, and examines refugees' perceptions of their safety in Kampala within the national and regional politics. I conclude that even if refugees found relative peace and security in Kampala compared to the DRC, they did not feel that they were protected or safe. Thus, the sense of urban fear and mistrust of the Ugandan 'Other' characterised refugees' everyday lives in the city.

'Social spaces among the Congolese refugees' is the third empirical chapter of my thesis (Chapter Seven) and examines the security, unity and social trust among the Congolese in Kampala. I refer back to the conflicts in the DRC as preliminarily discussed in Chapter Two and examine refugees' reasons for and experiences of the flight from the DRC and arrival in Kampala. Overall, I analyse how refugees' sense of generalised social trust toward other Congolese changed over the course of their movement in space and time; the flight, travel, arrival and settling into the city of exile. I then turn to investigate the various forms and manifestations of social trust evident in refugees' everyday lives in the city. This includes discussions on the spill-over effects of the conflict in the DRC and the methods used by refugees to navigate their sense of fear in the urban setting. Social exclusion is further discussed in the context of analysing the role of social networks and the challenges of rebuilding traditional community structures and establishing novel forms

of 'exile communities' within the Congolese refugee population. I conclude that the issue of mistrust which to some extent followed the refugees from the DRC to Uganda negatively affected refugees' abilities and willingness to rebuild and establish communities which would serve as meaningful 'places of protection'. Yet this was not impossible for some people, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

The final empirical chapter – 'Informal places of protection: Urban refugees' communities of trust' (Chapter Eight) – discusses the various community structures among the Congolese refugee population in Kampala. Some of the community forms had existed in the DRC, while others refugees had created in Kampala. However, they all were characterised by their urban reality. Theoretically, the analysis draws from the conceptual scheme of the 'community of trust' presented by Jabareen and Carmon (2010). The chapter is structured around the five mutually reinforcing elements of the 'community of trust': daily-life practices, basic beliefs and attitudes, perceptions of risk, interests, and shared space. I conclude that analysing refugee communities through the theoretical framework of 'communities of trust' was highly useful and sheds light on the main issues of this study, namely 'protection', 'space' and 'trust', from a communal perspective.

The concluding chapter (Chapter Nine) outlines the key findings of my study and summarises the reconsidered notion of 'protection space' presented in this study from the conceptual framework to the empirical chapters. I also discuss areas for future research on urban refugee protection and reflect on the research methods used in this study. Finally, I examine the contribution that this study made to the fields of human geography and refugee studies.

## **Chapter Two: CONTEXT**

### **2.1. The nature of cities in sub-Saharan Africa**

“Africa is becoming an increasingly urban continent, and urbanisation has been taking place at an accelerating rate. [...] African cities are, at one and the same time, the most underdeveloped and the most contemporary” (Simone 1999: 69). Sub-Saharan African cities have been characterised in the literature by the informality of their economies, politics and social relations alike (Meagher 2010: 11). Hansen and Vaa (2004), for instance, have defined ‘the informal city’ in Africa as dominated by extra-legal housing and unregistered economic activities. Yet there is also ‘the formal city’, which manifests itself as “the urban government and its agents, institutions and rules and regulations that over time have been introduced in order to control urban space and economic life” (Hansen and Vaa 2004: 8). At times, the formal and informal elements of the city clash.

Sub-Saharan African urban environments have also been characterised by distinct political organisation and action, and the everyday politics in African cities have been perceived largely as informal. For instance, influential politics and forms of resistance by various social groups, elites and the non-elites alike have been utilised in cities such as Kampala (Goodfellow 2013). Consequently, marginalised social groups have struggled to attain their ‘right to the city’ in Africa, but they have been by no means passive victims of these power struggles. Additionally, it has been argued that, in African urban politics, it may be “difficult to disaggregate local processes from national processes, and there can be complex interconnections between the two” (Goodfellow 2013: 7).

The sub-Saharan African cities are impacted by various consequences of urbanisation. The increasing pressure on infrastructure and social services in cities has been targeted by various neo-liberal structural adjustment policies and decentralisation policies. Yet “although there is longstanding national support for decentralisation in sub-Saharan Africa, the results with respect to poverty alleviation and development remain inconclusive” (Gore and Muwanga 2013: 1). Moreover, the structural adjustment programmes have largely been deemed as detrimental (Bekker and Therborn 2012), and they have transformed urban space.

Sub-Saharan African capital cities are unique, for they share a critical demographic feature: the extraordinarily rapid population growth (Bekker and Therborn 2012). Population growth and urbanisation in Africa have led to historical and current forms of urban segregation. Often, the patterns of segregation are distinct to the capital cities (Walaga 2005). As African cities south of the Sahara have become increasingly ethnically mixed due to urban immigration, new tensions have emerged (Bekker and Therborn 2012). Thus, political conflicts in parts of Africa have become urbanised (Hansen and Vaa 2004).

African migrants have been characterised by a “culture of mobility” (Bakewell and Jonsson 2011: 7) and given this constant, circular movement of people within and between countries and cities, there is a need to rethink the nature of sub-Saharan African population dynamics. In this context of diverse migrations related to African cities, Landau and Madhavan (2011: 473) argue that questioning the taken for granted meaning of ‘host community’, and integration in it, and the differences between ‘migrants’ and ‘hosts’ living in the urban centres in Africa, is essential. This is because sub-Saharan urban environments are increasingly composed of heterogeneous and diverse peoples who form

'cities of strangers'. Moreover, African cities are not only places of attraction but also zones of departure for migrants, and both internal and international migration has had an important impact on African urban life as "migration is part of the changing social dynamic in the city and the transformation of the urban space" (Bakewell and Jonsson 2011: 16).

However, it has been argued that the "philosophy of urban space needs revisiting in the contexts of African cities" (Mbembe and Nuttall 2004: 361) and that "how cities in Africa are discussed and written about in both urban studies and African studies" needs to be revised (Myers 2011: 1). As argued by Simone (1999), a particular approach to the African city is necessary. For him, cities in Africa are "works in progress, at the same time exceedingly creative and extremely stalled" (Simone 2004: 1). They are spaces of diverse social activism and mechanisms of control. Additionally, the ways in which African cities are governed, do not fit into the very nature of the diversity of urbanism in Africa. Thus, "transformations of [African] cities must largely be based on the values, practices, understandings, affiliations and structures which urban communities bring to life" (Simone 1999: 71).

## **2.2. The city of Kampala**

The city of Kampala features a number of the more general characteristics of the sub-Saharan African capital cities discussed above. Kampala means a "hill of Impalas" derived from a Luganda word *impala*, a type of antelope. These animals were common in Old Kampala (UN-HABITAT 2007). Kampala is both the administrative and commercial

capital city of Uganda. The city was initially set on seven planned hills, but later on it expanded to 24 hills that have developed largely without planning (UN-HABITAT 2007).

Uganda's population has continued to grow rapidly over recent decades. The population of Uganda was 2.5 million in 1911 (UBS 2002), but has increased from 9.5 million in 1969 to 24.2 million in 2002.<sup>4</sup> Between 1991 and 2002 the population increased at an average annual growth rate of 3.2 per cent. The population has become increasingly young, with the proportion of children (under 18 year old) standing at 56.1 per cent in 2002 (UBS 2012: 11). Uganda had one of the highest average annual growth rates in Eastern Africa region from 1991 to 2002 (UBS 2002). In July 2011, an estimated 34.7 million people lived in Uganda (CIA 2013a).

The urban population in Uganda has grown rapidly from less than 0.8 million in 1980 to 5.0 million in 2012. This means that the urban population has increased more than six times during the given time period. Whereas the level of urbanisation was still low, the rate of urban growth was unusually high (UBS 2002). When statistics are compared, between 1980 and 2012 the per cent of population living in urban areas has increased from 6.7 per cent to 14.7 per cent. In 2035, it is expected that some 30 per cent of the 68.4 million people will live in urban areas (Table 1).

---

<sup>4</sup> Uganda had a census in 2012 but the results had not been published at the time of writing. Therefore, I had to largely rely on the census from 2002.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Urban population (millions)</b>	<b>Total population (millions)</b>	<b>Per cent of population in urban areas (%)</b>
1980	0.84	12.6	6.7
1991	1.65	16.7	9.9
2002	3.0	24.2	12.3
2012	5.0	34.1	14.7
2035	20.0	68.4	30.0

Table 1. Trends in the urban population in Uganda 1980–2035 (Sources: UBS 2002, UBS 2012, Cities Alliance 2009).

In the 2002 census ‘urban area’ was defined as “gazetted cities, municipalities and town councils as per the Local Government Act 2000” (UBS 2002: 36). There were by definition 75 urban areas but only one city in Uganda – Kampala (UBS 2002). This meant that 55 per cent of the urban population of Uganda was located in the central region.<sup>5</sup> Kampala accounted for 72 per cent of the urban population of the region, and 40 per cent of Uganda’s urban population (UBS 2002).

The history of Kampala can be traced back to the 1600s when it was established as the capital (i.e. *kibugo*) of then Buganda Kingdom (UN-HABITAT 2007). Officially, Kampala City was established in 1890 by Captain Lugard of the British colonial powers (Walaga 2005: 194). Given this history, Kampala had a dual urban form: the local *kibugo* was separated from the municipality. This dual administration of the city led to conflicting types of urban development, and ethnic and economic segregation of the inhabitants. The city of Kampala became a municipal council in 1949 and the capital city of Uganda upon its independence in 1962 (Walaga 2005: 198). Even after the independence, certain areas of the city were dominated by Africans and others by Europeans. Also, when the large Asian population was evicted from the country in the early 1970s, their businesses were

---

<sup>5</sup> Uganda is divided into four regions: Central, Eastern, Northern and Western.

given to Africans and this changed the ethnic composition of the city (UN-HABITAT 2007).

The population of Kampala has increased significantly over the course of the past decades. In the census conducted in 1969, the city had 330,700 inhabitants, whereas in 2002 Kampala had nearly 1.2 million residents. The fastest increase took place between the 1980 and 1991 censuses (Table 2). In 2008, Kampala already had 1.4 million inhabitants, and since then the city had grown due to both net migration and natural growth.

Population size				Intercensal average growth rates (%)		
1969	1980	1991	2002	1969–1980	1980–1991	1991–2002
330 700	458 503	774 241	1 189 142	3.1	4.8	3.7

Table 2. Population size and growth rates of Kampala (Source: UBS 2002: 42).

The rapid and uncontrolled urban growth has led to worsening living conditions in Kampala. Nearly 7.5 million Ugandans were considered poor in 2009/10. The proportion of the poor population has, however, reduced in recent years. Despite this, in 2002, two-thirds of Kampala's population lived in slum environments. Of the urban population, 89 per cent had access to improved water and 66 per cent to improved sanitation. Only 73 per cent had durable housing (UN-HABITAT 2008: 6). Also, for Kampala district the population density was remarkably high: in 2002, there were 7,259 people per square kilometre in the capital city, whereas on average in the entire country the density was 123 people (UBS 2002).

Overall, urbanisation in Uganda is relative recent compared to other East African countries. Ugandan urbanisation goes back to the 1890s when a European presence was

established in the country. The British colonial policy regarded Ugandan towns as centres of non-African settlement. This significantly shaped the legislation and administration of urban areas (UNHABITAT 2008). The growth and character of Kampala has, according to Walaga (2005: 199), been particularly influenced by “the presence of Mengo as the Capital of Buganda, the existence of headquarters of religious missions, the existence of Central Government institutions, and growth of a large commercial centre.” Colonial powers also dismissed the existing local forms of urban governance. Development efforts in Uganda were focused on rural areas for a number of decades, and the existing urban planning policies had the effect of segregating the urban inhabitants based on economic status and ethnicity (UN-HABITAT 2008). Historically, in Kampala, segregation has taken mostly a racial form given the fact that the Asians, Arabs and Europeans had distinctive areas of residence, and Africans were seen as temporary visitors to the city (Walaga 2005: 201). Overall, urban segregation in Kampala has become more complex and transformed itself over the course of time, as Walaga (2005: 193) has noted:

The social, political and economic developments of Uganda and their resulting urbanisation trends have generated different forms of segregation. During this time, segregation has spanned the structural, racial, tribal, religious, social status, political and technical to move into a more complex status based on a combined evolution of all these elements.

Additionally, most of the areas of the city have been established without any proper planning and the authorities have described them as ‘illegal’ settlements. They have consequently been ignored in service provisions (UN-HABITAT 2008: 6–7). Given this historical neglect of urban governance and planning, it is critical to note that even currently “Uganda does not have a national urban policy to guide the urbanisation process, ensure orderly development and enhance management. Consequently, urbanisation is taking place organically” (Cities Alliance 2009: 2). The main challenges with regard to the

management of urbanisation in Uganda are related to inadequate data on the urban sector; inadequate capacity to plan, guide and manage urban growth; inadequate resources for effective urban planning, development and management; legislative and regulatory constraints; and multiple land tenure systems and rights (Cities Alliance 2009).

The current boundaries of Kampala district date back to 1968 when a number of new areas were added to the city. Since this major growth in terms of both the land area and the population, there has been an increasing pressure to deliver services and control urbanisation. Under the national decentralisation policy, Kampala became a district in 1997. The city was first headed by Kampala City Council (KCC), which was largely deemed ineffective and corrupt (KCCA 2013b). Consequently, Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) was established under the Kampala Capital City Act 2010 as part of the central government in 2011. This controversial ‘recentralisation’, according to Gore and Muwanga (2013: 1–2), was “a well-planned effort by the central government to regain political control of the capital city”, and seemed “antagonistic to Uganda’s broader decentralisation programme.”

As a consequence of the decentralisation policy implemented widely in Uganda, Kampala City is administrated through “a five-tier hierarchy of elected leadership” (Walaga 2005: 208). The City of Kampala, headed by the Lord Mayor (LC5), is administratively divided into five divisions: Central, Makindye, Kawempe, Nakawa and Rubaga (Figure 1). These divisions are further divided into 99 parishes and parishes into 802 zones. The local councillors (LCs), who are elected by all registered residents of the particular areas, are in charge of their zones (LC1), parishes (LC2) and divisions (LC3). The LC1s, for instance, keep records on who lives in their zones and they write recommendation letters for the

inhabitants. Also, when civil disagreements take place, the LC1s try to settle them. Criminal cases are, however, dealt by the police. The LCs also supervise the local defence forces responsible for the overall security of their area. In addition the LC1s nominate eight people to make his/her executive and to form the Local Council. Among the council members are representatives of youth, women, elderly and the disabled (Walaga 2005: 20).

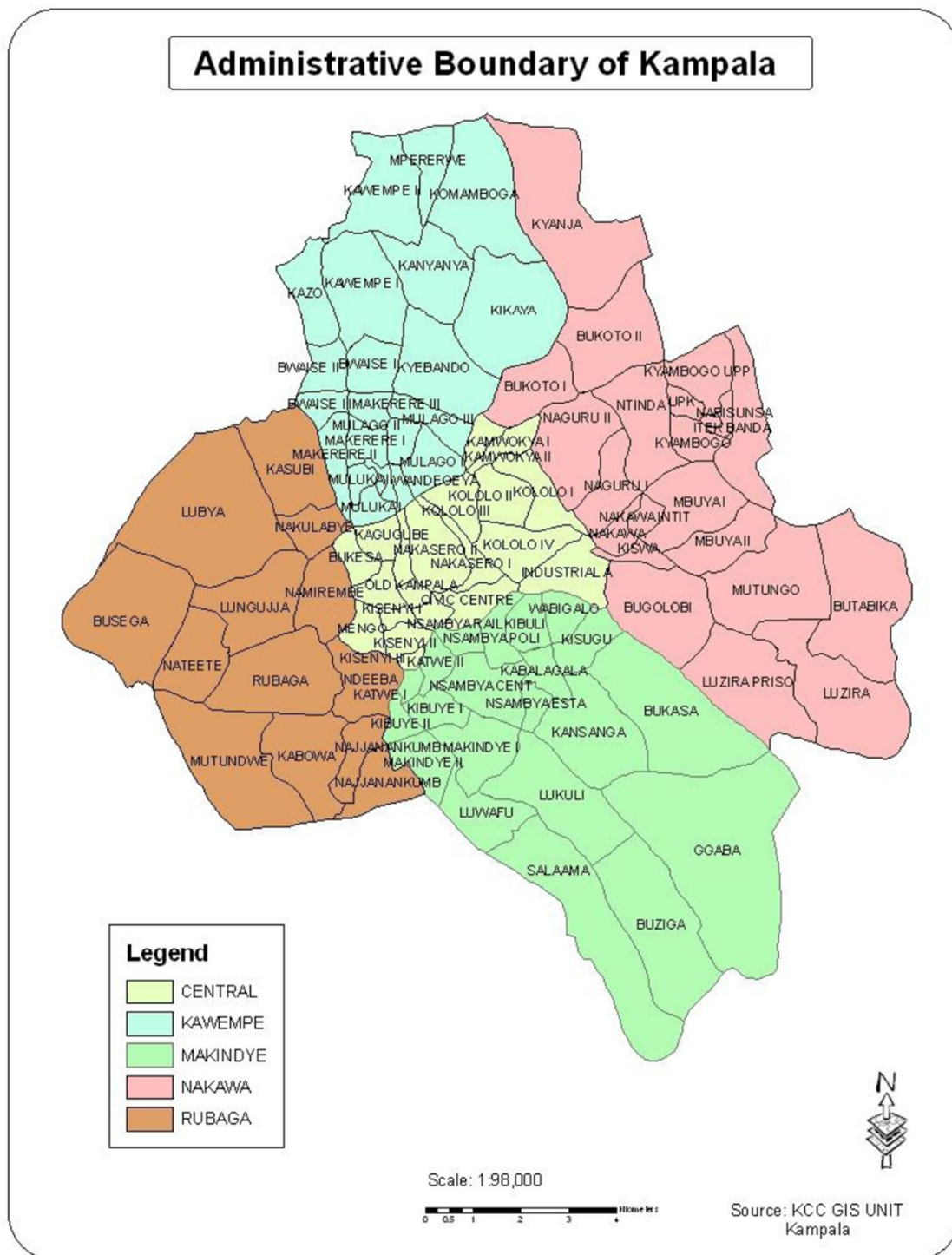


Figure 1. Administrative map of the five divisions of Kampala (Source: KCC 2010; permission to use granted 2 August 2013).

### 2.3. Urban refugees in Uganda: Laws, policies and practices

Uganda's population is made up of different ethnic groups with varying customs and norms. These play a major role in shaping the behaviours and ways of life of the people in the country. Some of the traditional values have changed due to the integration of the people as a result of migration and/or intermarriages (USB 2002: 1).

This statement written in the report summarising the results of the 2002 census makes it clear that the population of Uganda has changed over time due to both international migration and internal population flows. Ugandans inhabiting Kampala were largely Baganda, the people of the Buganda Kingdom. There were, however, a number of other ethnic groups, such as Banyankole, Besoga, Bakiga, Iteso, Langi, and so forth (USB 2002). Some of the ethnic groups, such as Acholis and Karamojong, have largely moved to Kampala as internally displaced people (IDPs) due to the conflicts in the north and east of the country.

Thus, the city of Kampala has historically been diverse. The census from 1959 shows that Kampala had a varied population with significant numbers of people from the neighbouring countries, Asia and Europe (Lammers 2006a). Subsequently, international migrants coming to the city over the decades have changed the overall ethnic composition of the city (CIA 2013a), although they have not had a significant impact on the size of the population. In 2002, there were 333,000 immigrants<sup>6</sup> in Uganda and of these 100,000 were recent immigrants.<sup>7</sup> In total, all immigrants constituted 1.4 per cent of the total Ugandan population of 24.4 million in 2002. More than 90 per cent of the recent immigrants were from the neighbouring countries,<sup>8</sup> and one-third of them were from the DRC (UBS 2002).

---

<sup>6</sup> Immigrants refer to persons born outside Uganda.

<sup>7</sup> Recent immigrants refer to immigrants who moved to Uganda within the five years prior the census.

<sup>8</sup> Uganda has land boundaries with the DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan and Tanzania.

It can be stated that “migration in Africa has always been a rather complex phenomenon, with various categories of migrants engaged in different forms of mobility” (Jonsson 2009). Economic reasons have caused most of the recent internal and international migration in to Uganda. Employment, marriage, education, retirement, and natural and man-made disasters, including war and conflicts, have also caused migration flows. Refugees have, at times, formed a significant proportion of immigrants coming to Uganda. Thus, the causes of migration to Uganda have been various and interrelated. This pattern of mixed migration is typical of the Great Lakes region, as was shown in a recent study by Bakewell and Bonfiglio (2013).

Urban areas have, in particular, been the centres for people migrating for better employment and education (UBS 2002). The immigrants were also more urbanised in Uganda than the locals: in 2002, the proportion of the immigrant population staying in urban areas was 17 per cent, whereas only 12 per cent of nationals lived in urban areas. Out of the recent immigrants, 26 per cent were located in urban areas (UBS 2002). However, in terms of research, “in Africa the integration of international migrants in metropolitan areas has hardly been explored beyond South Africa”, although “this immigration and settlement is changing the face of some [African] cities” (Bakewell and Jonsson 2011: 22).

Refugees coming to Uganda have largely followed these general migration and population trends and, consequently, they are increasingly found in urban areas. In Africa, this urbanisation trend of refugee movement has had a long history. In the mid-1980s, it was estimated that one-third of all the refugees in Africa were found in cities and towns (Rogge

1986, cited in Lammers 2006a). This was partly due to the changing nature of conflicts in the area, as explained by Lammers (2006a: 21):

In the course of the 1970s, confrontations between African states as well as internal resistance movements came to have more impact on urban areas. Rebel movements started to draw much of their support from an urbanised and largely youthful population. More and more people from urban areas were forced to flee in search of international protection elsewhere, and it is hardly surprising that many of them chose to settle in towns and cities in their countries of asylum.

It is not, however, only refugees originating from urban areas who chose to stay in the cities and towns of their country of exile. Refugees fleeing rural areas increasingly contribute toward the urbanisation of refugee flows. Thus, it is clear that refugee movements in Africa, and beyond, are closely linked to the wider migration trends which have an impact on urbanisation.

The number of refugees in Kampala expanded rapidly toward the end of the 2000s. In July 2008, the number of recognised refugees and asylum seekers in Kampala was around 20,000; by 2011 the number had nearly doubled. In addition, an estimated 50,000 unrecognised refugees were living in the city (Bernstein and Okello 2007). In July 2011, of the total 150,000 recognised refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda, more than 26 per cent – that is 39,921 – lived in Kampala<sup>9</sup> (UNHCR 2011). The majority of refugees in Uganda were from the DRC, South Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Uganda is a party to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, and is also a signatory to the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific

---

<sup>9</sup> UNHCR only kept statistics of registered urban refugees and asylum seekers in Kampala and not in other cities or towns of Uganda.

Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. Uganda replaced its heavily criticised 1960 Control of Alien Refugees Act (CARA) with the 2006 Refugee Act, which is more in line with international laws governing refugee protection. CARA was “perhaps the first piece of legislation in Africa specifically relating to refugees” (Lammers 2006a: 18). In 1998, the Government of Uganda launched its Self-Reliance Strategy, which emphasised placing refugees in rural settlements, not fenced camps, where they may become self-sufficient through agriculture. This strategy has, however, largely been proven unsustainable (Kaiser 2005).

The 2006 Refugee Act has been praised for its progressive nature by the Government of Uganda and UNHCR, but there are, however, “some deficits... which potentially erode the progressive and protection orientation of the Act and threaten to lower its compliance with international protection standards considerably” (RLP, undated: 3). Those deficits mostly relate to freedom of movement and residence, freedom of association and expression, and the right to work (Sharpe and Namusobya 2010). There were also delays in the actual implementation of the 2006 Refugee Act because, even though it entered into force in 2008, the regulations necessary for it to become operative were only finalised in 2010.

Despite the overall positive changes in refugee law in Uganda, and the adoption of the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy (UNHCR 2009a) by the UNHCR country office, both of which recognised cities as legitimate places for refugees to reside, “what exists today – and for the foreseeable future – is a policy that focuses assistance and protection on refugees living in settlements, and not those refugees who chose, for various reasons, to live outside such restrictive spaces” (Bernstein and Okello 2007: 47). Moreover, even though the 2006 Refugee Act was “lauded on the African continent as a progressive piece

of legislation”, in practice it “retains the settlement policy and places undue restrictions on the right of refugees to free movement” (Hovil and Okello 2008: 84). An explicit permission is required to leave the settlement in order to live in a city, and this “provision in effect curtails a refugee’s right to choose his/her place of abode and his/her freedom of movement” (RLP, undated: 19). Subsequently, refugees in Kampala were expected to be self-sufficient since there existed only minimal protection. Thus, it could be argued that at the time of fieldwork Uganda was still heavily relying on its rural settlement policy, and the situation of urban refugees had not, according to many NGOs working on the issue, improved significantly despite the newly adopted legal frameworks and policies.

#### **2.4. Congolese refugees in Kampala and the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**

In July 2011, a total of 80,221 registered Congolese refugees and asylum seekers lived in Uganda, with 18,075 (23 per cent) living in Kampala (UNHCR 2011). The number was constantly increasing due to ongoing violence in the DRC, particularly in the eastern parts. There were also older ‘vintages’ (Kunz 1973: 173) of Congolese living in Ugandan refugee settlements and in cities. Some of them have lived in Uganda since the 1960s (Lomo, Naggaga and Hovil 2001: 3), whereas a number of them fled the DRC during the First (1996–1997) and the Second (1998–2003) Congo Wars (Lammers 2006a: 18). Eastern Congolese had also been fleeing to Uganda due to military operations since 2008 and in the post-election violence after 2011.<sup>10</sup> In July 2011, of the nearly 40,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers in Kampala, 45 per cent were Congolese, with 48 per cent women and 52 per cent men (UNHCR 2011). On 29 October 2010, the governments of

---

<sup>10</sup> The DRC had presidential and parliamentary elections on 28 November 2011.

Uganda and the DRC signed the tripartite agreement with UNHCR to govern Congolese refugees' voluntary repatriation (UNHCR 2010). However, since security in eastern Congo was highly unstable, repatriation there remained highly unlikely.

The Congolese refugees individually interviewed for this study (N=74) left Congo between 2000 and 2011. The majority of the refugees were from the eastern parts of the DRC: 95 per cent from South and North Kivus. A few of them were also from Maniema, Orientale and Katanga provinces. Most of the refugees from South Kivu were from or around Bukavu (the capital of South Kivu province) and Uvira town and the wider Uvira territory, but some were also from Fizi territory. When it comes to refugees from North Kivu, most of them were from or around the provincial capital of Goma, but there were also some from Butembo and Rutshuru (territory and town).

The overwhelming majority of the refugees had an urban background; most of them had lived in a city or a town in the DRC all of their life, or at least at some stage of their life. Even if they were born in a village, the majority of them had moved to the towns and cities to work and study. Some had also been internally displaced to the cities of Goma and Bukavu, which were considered to be relatively safe compared to the rural areas (Paddon and Lacaille 2011: 15).

The Central African country of the DRC (Figure 2) is the 11<sup>th</sup> largest country in the world in terms of its land area. The DRC has 765 kilometres of land border with Uganda. In July 2013, an estimated 75.5 million people lived in the DRC (CIA 2013b). The DRC “presents a complex jigsaw puzzle of ethnicities sharing the same territory. Its ... inhabitants make up over 250 ethnic groups, including several minority groups...” (Gilbert 2013,

forthcoming). Most of the refugees who identified<sup>11</sup> themselves as a member of a particular ethnic group were Bashi (23 per cent), Banyamulenge (17 per cent), Barega (10 per cent), Nande (10 per cent) or Bembe (10 per cent). Others belonged to Hunde, Bangubangu, Munyabusha, Bunigali, Bakongo, Betembo and Lokele ethnicities, or were of mixed ethnicities. Some of the refugees were unable to clearly identify themselves as a member of a particular ethnic group because their parents were from different groups. Typically they would in that case, however, identify themselves with their father's ethnicity. One of the refugees also had Burundian nationality, but since she had married a Congolese man, she identified herself as Congolese. Another male refugee was born in the DRC but his Rwandan mother had taken him to Kigali as a child. He would, however, still identify himself as Congolese because of his father's nationality.

---

<sup>11</sup> The statistics for ethnic background include 47 out of 74 informants.



Figure 2. Map of the Eastern DRC and Uganda (Based on UN map<sup>12</sup>).

The DRC has experienced two decades of armed conflict and consequent forced migration both inside and outside its borders. The intertwined regional, national and local armed conflicts since the early 1990s caused the deaths of nearly four million people and displaced around the same number (Clark 2008: 2). Since the early 1990s four distinct patterns of displacement were distinguished (Tamm and Lauterbach 2010). First, between 1992 and 1996 inter-ethnic clashes caused displacement, particularly in Katanga and North Kivu provinces. Second, the First Congo War (1996–1997) caused displacement throughout the country and led to the ousting of President Mobutu Sese Seko by Laurent

<sup>12</sup> Original map: <http://www.un.org/depts/Cartographic/map/profile/drcongo.pdf> (Permission to use and modify granted 31 July 2013).

Kabila. When, in 1994, thousands of Hutus fled after the Rwandan genocide, the Hutu rebels brought the idea that the solution to the problems of the region was in killing Tutsis. During the first Congolese war this ideology was put into practice (Turner 2007).

Third, the Second Congo War (1998–2003) was characterised by regional dynamics with several African countries fighting in the DRC, most notably Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, and included localised conflicts, many of them between Banyarwanda<sup>13</sup> and other ethnicities. During this second war the majority of eastern DRC was under the control of Rwandan-backed Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), and the provincial capital of North Kivu, Goma, became the focal point of the so-called government. Kinshasa was not able to establish a sustainable presence and power in the eastern parts of the country, which was considered as periphery or border land (Vlassenroot and Buscher 2009). In 2001 President Laurent Kabila was assassinated and his son Joseph Kabila took over the presidency.

Fourth, even after the 2003 peace agreement, armed groups and the government-led military operations continued to cause terror and displacement. Despite the establishment of a transitional government, the eastern provinces were still divided:

Congolese had to navigate between ‘parallel’ or duplicate structures in the military and other areas of public administration, with one structure loyal to central government and the other to the locally dominant armed group (Turner 2007: 131).

All this fighting led to massive displacement within and outside the country. In 2006, the DRC held its first democratic elections; Joseph Kabila continued his presidency, and he was re-elected in 2011.

---

<sup>13</sup> People of Rwandan origin.

Since the majority of the refugees informing this study had left the DRC between 2008 and 2011, the recent nature of the conflict is discussed in more detail until the end of my fieldwork, 2011. In 2009, the Government of the DRC launched three military operations to defeat the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a predominantly Rwandan Hutu militia. The armed conflicts in the DRC have been characterised by shifting alliances, and a significant shift took place in 2009 when Rwanda and the Government of the DRC joined forces to tackle FDLR. All sides of the conflict have committed human rights abuses upon local civilians, and the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) has been criticised for its limited success in protecting civilians (HRW 2010).

The first military operation, *Umoja Wetu* (“Our unity”), was started jointly by Rwanda and the DRC in January 2009. It led to the removal of the Tutsi general Laurent Nkunda as the leader of the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP), an armed group which had been supported by Rwanda. Bosco Ntaganda was nominated as head of the CNDP and subsequently the CNDP was integrated into the national army (the Armed Forces of the DRC; FARDC) and established as a political party (HRW 2010). Ntaganda has been wanted by the International Criminal Court since 2006, and in 2012 he seemed to have left the Congolese army and started his (allegedly Rwandan-supported) rebellion, displacing thousands of people (Doyle 2012).

The second operation, *Kimia II* (“Quiet”), was launched in March 2009 with the support of MONUSCO. The military operations were aimed at defeating FDLR. The government of Congo used to support FDLR until 2009 when it decided to change sides. The various Mai

Mai militias (i.e. local ethnically organised defence groups<sup>14</sup>) have taken part in the conflict, mostly supporting the national army, FARDC, in its attempts to overthrow the foreign occupiers, such as the Rwandan-backed CNDP (HRW 2009, 2010).

The third military operation, *Amani Leo* (“Peace today”), was launched by the government in January 2010. The Congolese government and the UN have begun to implement stabilisation and post-conflict reconstruction programmes even though the military operations and the violence continued (HRW 2010).

In 2010, the governments of Uganda and the DRC signed the tripartite agreement with UNHCR to govern Congolese refugees’ voluntary repatriation. However, since security in eastern Congo was unstable, repatriation there remained highly unlikely. In 2010, and later on, most of the eastern Congolese still thought that the war was not over despite the numerous peace agreements between various factions of the conflict signed over the course of the years (Dolan 2010: 15). There were a significant number of ‘peace spoilers’ who benefitted from the ‘violence-in-peace’. According to the UN Mission, the Congolese army is the greatest disrupter of security and peace (Raeymakers and Vlassenroot 2009: 157).

Autesserre (2012) has argued that there are few dominant narratives explaining the war in Congo and these limited interpretations have had sometimes unintentional negative consequences. According to him the common narratives focus on “a primary cause of

---

<sup>14</sup> The Mai Mai militias are formed on ethnic bases throughout the eastern Congo (Autesserre 2010: xiv). The fighters are typically ethnically grouped young men, and they use magico-religious elements, such as the practice of sprinkling water in order to make themselves invulnerable. They started as a force to protect villagers from the enemy, but they have been turned into a predatory force. The Mai Mais have used anti-Rwandan discourse to recruit youngsters who are marginalised and excluded (Vlassenroot 2012).

violence, illegal exploitation of mineral resources; a main consequence, sexual abuse of women and girls; and a central solution, extending state authority” (Autesserre 2012: 202). In reality there have been numerous causes of the conflict, such as “land conflict, poverty, corruption, local political and social antagonism, and hostile relationships between state officials, including security forces, and the general population” (Autesserre 2012: 205).

Besides the military actions which were deeply rooted in regional and local ethnic tensions, the continuing instability was caused and sustained by the absence of a functioning state, as shown by the fragility of state power, tensions over land, citizenship and the control of space, and the externalisation of neighbouring instability (Paddon and Lacaille 2011). Violence and displacement were caused in order to control mineral-rich areas and ensure profit for military operations. Thus, the economic and politico-military motivations largely merged (ICG 2003: 23, 25). The Congolese elite and diaspora have, moreover, emphasised the role of a ‘global conspiracy’ in the creation and sustaining of the conflict: they often suggest that western powers have supported the neighbouring countries and their proxies in causing the conflicts (Vlassenroot 2012: 212, Turner 2007: 12).

As I use the case study of the Banyamulenge Tutsis<sup>15</sup> to discuss the issues of social mistrust and community formation,<sup>16</sup> the background of the conflicts between the Banyamulenge and Congolese of other ethnicity need to be explored here in some detail.

---

<sup>15</sup> In South Kivu, Tutsi are known locally as Banyamulenge (HRW 2007: 9). Banyamulenge (singular Munyamulenge) refers to ‘those living in the hills of Mulenge’. Banyamulenge Tutsis are believed to have started to move from Rwanda to the DRC in the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Autesserre 2010: 138). The Banyamulenge Tutsis of Kampala (who were mostly from Uvira) referred to themselves using this term and presented themselves as a very tight community within the Congolese refugee population.

<sup>16</sup> See, in particular, Section 8.3.2 of Chapter Eight.

In the densely populated eastern Congo, the Banyamulenge Tutsis of South Kivu totalled around four per cent of the population (Prunier 2008, 2009: 52). Before the 1990s their number did not exceed 50,000 (Reyntjens 2009).

The history of the conflicts between the Banyamulenge Tutsis and the Congolese of other ethnicities goes back to the colonial times. During the colonial period the Belgians pursued an incoherent policy toward the Banyamulenge, and for decades they considered them as foreigners. Independence in 1960 did not affect the Banyamulenge's position much (Turner 2007). Prior to the independence, relations between the Banyamulenge in the highland region of South Kivu and their neighbours, in particular the Bafulero, Babembe, Bashi and Barega (ICG 2003: 4; Prunier 2009: 51, 69), were relatively peaceful.

Later on, however, "a micro-level conflict evolved into a major cleavage, polarizing indigenous communities and people with Rwandan ancestry, contaminating national politics, and eventually jeopardizing the Kinyarwanda speaker's integration" (Autesserre 2010: 138). The situation worsened, particularly in 1994 when many Hutu perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide fled to the DRC and encouraged the local Congolese to attack the Banyarwanda Tutsis and the Banyamulenge Tutsis (who often were perceived as Banyarwanda). Subsequently, thousands of Banyamulenge Tutsis living in South Kivu were killed (Clark 2008: 3). According to Human Rights Watch (HRW 2007: 9):

the rapid rise of Tutsis to national political prominence in the 1990s followed by a sharp decline in their power, as well as the anti-Tutsi hostilities accompanying the process, form the essential context of the current political and military crisis in eastern Congo.

In 1996, the Banyamulenge Tutsis, backed by the Rwandan government, fought against the Government of the DRC which supported their opponents. The attempt of the Congolese

authorities to deny citizenship to the Banyamulenge has been seen as one of the causes of this war, which ousted the late President Mobutu in 1997.

During the second war (1998–2003) a number of different Congolese factions wanted to overthrow Kabila, including the Congolese Tutsis. This was due to President Laurent Kabila's attempts to marginalise the Banyamulenge. Kabila began to arm the Rwandan Hutu rebels and the local Mai Mai militias in an attempt to drive Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, their proxies and all Banyamulenge out of the country. Many Banyamulenge fled to Burundi where they were brutally attacked in the Gatumba refugee camp in August 2004 by armed fighters, the majority of them belonging to Burundi's National Liberation Front (FNL), the most extreme anti-Tutsi pro-Hutu movement. The governments of Rwanda and Burundi, however, interpreted the attack as being conducted by Congolese Mai Mai and Rwandan Hutu Interahamwe, together with FNL (Turner 2007).

The main actor in the second war was the Tutsi-identified RCD, which later on split into two sections: the RCD-Goma and the RCD-Kinshasa. The RCD-G (i.e. the Goma section) was the main rebel group during the second war and it was allied with Rwanda. It controlled most of the eastern DRC and they fought mostly against the local ethnically organised defence forces, the Mai Mai groupings. Yet during the second war most of the Banyamulenge opposed the RCD and the Rwandan occupation (Reyntjens 2009: 205).

Overall, "the rebellion in the Kivu was to a large degree an extension of the Rwandan civil war...[and] the Banyamulenge and all Congolese Tutsi were instrumentalised by the Rwandan regime" (Reyntjens 2009: 55). According to Turner (2007: 76):

One can see the ‘Banyamulenge’ question as a smokescreen. Rwanda used the pre-existing conflict between Banyamulenge and their neighbours, in South Kivu, as a pretext in order to attack the refugee camps.

In 2002, Rwanda and Uganda agreed to withdraw from the eastern DRC, and the peace agreement was signed in 2003. The various militias were supposed to merge into the FARDC but some of them rejected this. In 2004, for instance, Laurent Nkunda’s (the former colonel of the RCD-G) CNDP was created to defend the Rwandophone Tutsis. In June 2004, Nkunda took control of Bukavu and claimed that he wanted to protect the Banyamulenge minority. In 2006, during the elections, Congolese of other ethnicities responded with increasing hostility due to the grievances developed during the Rwandan occupations in 1996/97 and 1998 to 2003.

The anti-Tutsi rhetoric was created by political leaders of other ethnic groups (HRW 2007: 11). Subsequently, the Banyarwanda officials in the Kivus used the ethnic tensions for political purposes by nurturing the concept of ‘Rwandaphonie’. This concept refers to a sense of Rwandan togetherness among Hutu and Tutsi in the Kivus, claiming that the Banyarwanda faced “exclusion and discrimination never before seen in our country” (Clark 2008: 4). This led to further hatred and mistrust between the Banyamulenge and the Banyarwanda, on the one hand, and the Congolese of other ethnicities and the Banyamulenge, on the other hand. This has continued into exile.

The more detailed relationship between the conflicts in the DRC and refugees’ experiences of protection/space/trust in Kampala will be explored in Chapter Seven, and the essentially ethnical aspects of the conflicts, in particular between Banyamulenge Tutsis and Congolese of other ethnicities, are examined in Chapter Eight.



## **Chapter Three: PROTECTION, SPACE AND TRUST: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework for the reconfiguration and unpacking of the notion of ‘protection space’. I do this by rethinking the notions of protection and space, and by introducing the concept of trust that emerged from the initial analysis.<sup>17</sup> My aim, then, is to analyse the interconnections between the three key concepts of this study: ‘protection’, ‘space’ and ‘trust’.

Firstly, I briefly discuss theorisations of ‘protection’. Here, I contrast the institutional or legal definition of protection referred to by humanitarian organisations and states with the more common understanding of protection as articulated by affected populations. Protection is further elaborated in the later sections discussing ‘space’ and ‘trust’.

Secondly, I discuss the various ways to theorise ‘space’. Drawing on Lefebvre (1991) and Massey (2005), I conceptualise ‘space’ as a physical, imagined and lived entity as well as relational. Because of the specificities of the urban refugee context, I extend this conceptualisation by incorporating theories of ‘sense of place’ and ‘right to the city’, which help me to tease the urban character of the ‘protection space’. Then I proceed to

---

<sup>17</sup> Given the fact that ‘trust’ only emerged from the analysis of my primary data, this conceptual framework for the study of ‘protection space’ was finalised only after most of the data analysis had already been conducted. Thus, it sets the conceptual premise for the configured notion of ‘protection space’ analysed in the following empirical chapters and drawn together in the concluding chapter.

discuss the two main debates on ‘space’ in refugee studies: the relationship between refugees and place, and the spatiality of refugee protection.

Thirdly, I examine the definitions of ‘trust’ in the wider social sciences and present a conceptualisation of trust as a discursively created emotion and practice which is based on reason, routine and reflexivity. Moreover, I suggest that when using ‘trust’ as an analytical tool, paying attention to the scales and orientations, contexts, individual characteristics, and time is central. I also show how ‘space’ and ‘trust’ are intertwined: after reviewing how relational conceptualisation of space has been used in refugee studies, I make an argument for the incorporation of the concept of trust. I contend, by analysing the literature on refugee studies, that a more nuanced and complex understanding of trust is necessary for unpacking the notion of protection. This requires greater attention to particularised and generalised social trust and institutional trust. Finally, I examine the role of ‘trust’ in relation to urban refugee communities.

This chapter ends with a discussion of the overall conceptual framework for the reconfiguration of the notion of ‘protection space’, which is applied empirically in the proceeding chapters. I argue that ‘protection space’ can be theoretically rethought through the investigation of refugees’ ‘sense of place’, struggles over their ‘rights to the city’, and their social and institutional trust, which is affected by these spatial relations.

It should be noted that the main concepts of this study (i.e. protection, space and trust) resonate also with regard to other inhabitants of the city beyond Congolese refugees, namely Ugandan citizens and foreigners. Yet as this study interrogates the notion of ‘protection space’, which has been used solely in the refugee context, the natural focus is

to analyse refugees' experiences of their urban protection. The refugee-centric approach was also partly chosen given the time constraints associated with the data collection. Given this particular approach, this study does not attempt to conduct any comparative analysis to investigate how other inhabitants besides the Congolese refugee informants and the interviewed employees of the protection institutions experience the concepts of space, protection and trust.

### **3.2. Theorising 'protection'**

The notion of 'protection' has evolved over the course of the past decades. The term 'diplomatic protection' has been largely replaced by 'international protection', which is the centrepiece of modern-day refugee protection (Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2007). The core protection activities implemented by states with the support of the UNHCR include "the prevention of *refoulement*<sup>18</sup> and expulsions, access to status-determination procedures, grant of asylum, release from detention, identity and travel documentation, family reunification, access to educational institutions, facilitation of the right to work, solutions" (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005: 8). These protection activities are governed by the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and other refugee-specific legal instruments. Additionally, refugee protection is based on human rights law (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005) and international humanitarian law (Holzer 2012).

The notion of surrogacy in international protection is central, and UNHCR plays a key role in providing protection "which the refugee's own State, by definition, cannot or will not provide" (Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2007: 10). UNHCR's core mandate has evolved

---

<sup>18</sup> The term 'refoulement' refers to forced return.

over the course of the decades, but in general it is “to provide international protection for refugees and to find durable solutions to their plight, through repatriation, local integration, or the resettlement of refugees to a third country” (Loescher, Betts and Milner 2008: 13).

According to Evans Barnes (2009: 1), “over time, international refugee protection, a function primarily focused on the provision of legal assistance to refugees, has evolved to encompass a range of additional activities.” The institutional roles and responsibilities regarding protection have also expanded (Addison 2009: 2). Therefore, even though international refugee protection has a particular basis and meanings, it is shaped by broader understandings of (civilian) protection (Evans Barnes 2009). In a widely accepted normative framework of protection, originally presented by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), ‘protection’ can be defined as:

all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law, namely human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law (PCWG 2007: 5).

Different humanitarian and development agencies have, however, developed their own more specific definitions of protection, and “how ‘protection’ is conceptualised determines the way that protection programmes are conceived, planned and implemented” (Addison 2009: 4). The UNHCR, for instance, perceives protection as:

a range of concrete activities that ensure that all women, men, girls and boys of concern to UNHCR have equal access to and enjoyment of their rights in accordance with international law. The ultimate goal of these activities is to help them rebuild their lives within a reasonable amount of time (O’Callaghan and Pantuliano 2007: 2).

Protection has, furthermore, been defined by the global Protection Cluster Working Group (PCWG), of which UNHCR is also a member, as an objective, as a legal responsibility and

as an activity (PCWG 2007: 5). Protection-as-objective covers fulfilling a range of basic rights, which are for everyone without discrimination. Protection-as-legal-responsibility means that states are responsible for protecting their people, but when they are unable or unwilling to do so the ‘international community’ steps in. When it comes to protection-as-activity there are three components: responsive action, remedial action and environment/capacity-building action. These elements can be presented as an egg model of protection (PCWG 2007: 5, Evans Barnes 2009: 10) (Figure 3).

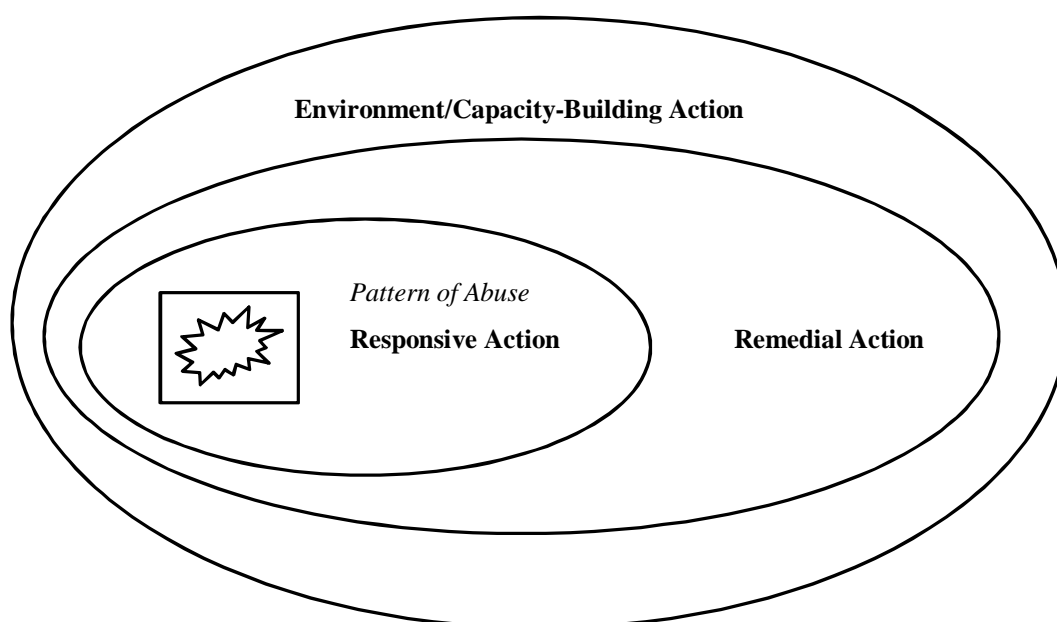


Figure 3. The egg model of protection (modified from Evans Barnes 2009: 10).

Responsive action refers to the immediate actions to “stop, prevent or alleviate the worst effects of the abuse” (Slim and Bonwick 2005: 42). Remedial action includes tasks which are aimed at restoring people’s dignity and ensuring adequate living conditions. Environment/capacity-building action denotes changing the society as a whole to act according to the internationally accepted protection norms and legal instruments. Fundamentally, it has been suggested that this model “puts an end to the protection–assistance dichotomy, instead regarding the two as specific facets of the same action which

cannot be disassociated” (Evans Barnes 2009: 10). While this may of course be somewhat debatable, I use the term ‘protection’ in this study to include assistance.

Protection has also been defined, in short, as “seeking to assure the safety of civilians from acute harm” (O’Callaghan and Pantuliano 2007: 1). There are, however, varying perceptions of the relationship between ‘protection’ and ‘security’: whereas humanitarian actors commonly see ‘protection’ as enjoyment of rights, other actors such as states, militaries and civilians themselves can define it primarily as physical protection (Addison 2009: 4).

Protection is also always political (Ferris 2011; Addison 2009; O’Callaghan and Pantuliano 2007; Huysmans, Dobson and Prokhovnik 2006), and thus the concept of ‘humanitarian protection’ has been perceived as debatable given the norm of neutrality in humanitarian action (Durieux 2009). The political nature of protection can be manifested, for instance, in cases where “a concern with [national] security can undermine protection in important ways, though the discourse of protection can be manipulated by those with a security agenda” (Keen 2009: 1). Also, protection can be used as a pretext for political actions (McNamara 2009).

Furthermore, since the global, regional and national environments in which ‘protection’ is delivered keep changing, “UNHCR will need to continually adapt to remain relevant” (Loscher, Betts and Milner 2008: 97). Thus, after the realisation that more than half of the world’s refugees live in cities and towns (UNHCR 2009a), UNHCR has paid increasing attention to the protection of urban refugees. Even if the protection standards should not differ between the rural refugee camps and urban areas, where refugees are commonly

self-settled (Kagan 2007),<sup>19</sup> the nature of protection and its implementation in these two environments can be rather distinctive.

For instance, in the 2009 urban refugee policy, UNHCR argues for the “implementation of comprehensive protection strategies” which include protection tasks, such as “reaching out to the community, fostering constructive relations with urban refugees, maintaining security, and promoting livelihoods and self-reliance” (UNHCR 2009a: 8–23). Accordingly, the definition of protection activities is seen by UNHCR broadly in terms of urban contexts. What is also clear is that UNHCR emphasises not only rights-based protection but also a community-based protection approach, while acknowledging refugees’ individual characteristics though age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (UNHCR 1996, 2008, 2009a, 2013).

As a result of the evolving nature of protection and the increase in the number of protection agencies, there has been new emphasis on programmatic work within communities (O’Callaghan and Pantuliano 2007: 2). Also, because the overarching definitions of protection have been criticised for privileging “the perspectives of human rights defenders over the perspectives of those affected”, it is important to understand that the “affected populations often conceive of ‘protection’ quite differently to those who seek to implement protection programmes” (Addison 2009: 4).

---

<sup>19</sup> According to Kagan (2007: 11), “the legal relevance of the ‘urban refugee’ concept in the Middle East and Africa stems practicing different forms of refugee status determination (RSD) in rural as opposed to urban areas. Urban refugees are usually subject to rigorous individual adjudication, which rural refugees are typically recognized on a prima facie basis [i.e. on a group basis].” This, according to him, puts rejected or unregistered *de facto* urban refugees in particular danger of *refoulement*.

Therefore, I argue for an alternative conceptualisation of protection as proposed by refugees in their discourses and everyday practices. This means recognising refugees not as passive receivers of protection, but rather as active providers and theorists of it. Refugees often have high levels of resilience and therefore protection activities should be designed not on *behalf of* refugees but rather *with* them: refugees' own "perspectives, priorities and realities" need to be understood so that protection can be provided through participation (Newman 2004: iii). Thus, protection can be defined, not solely through notions of safety, dignity, integrity and rights, but also through empowerment (Slim and Bonwick 2005).

Consequently, the term 'protection' is used in this study in a broad sense, as defined by the refugee informants themselves, and as also understood in the current scholarship on protection. Additionally, since refugeehood is largely characterised by insecurity, I consider the sense of ontological security which can be understood as "the notion of safety, routine and trust in a stable environment" (Hawkins and Maurer 2011: 143) central to the understanding of refugees' experiences of protection. Often this sense of protection, built on trust, is established in community settings (Giddens 1991, Hawkins and Maurer 2011). The connection between 'protection' and 'trust' is discussed in more detail in Section 3.4.

To conclude, even though the notion of protection has evolved in recent years, it remains vague and its definitions differ. Often it is thought of solely in terms of the providers of protection (i.e. institutions and authorities). Missing from the protection strategies are refugees' own understandings, definitions and experiences of protection. This study aims to respond to this gap by focusing on examining refugees' discourses of protection, which are often intertwined with their discourses of space and trust. Finally, as has already been

indicated, even though the Ugandan citizens and other inhabitants of Kampala may well have both similar and different experiences of ‘protection’ in comparison to the refugee informants, this study focuses solely on the refugees’ perceptions and definitions of protection.

### **3.3. Theorising ‘space’**

#### ***3.3.1. Conceptualisations of ‘space’***

In order to consider how urban refugee protection is affected by space in its multiple meanings and how various ‘protection spaces’ are created and contested, theories on the geographical conceptualisations of space are used to inform the study.

Geography as a discipline has traditionally been interested in the content or the essence of space, and also the relations between places (Blaut 1961). Within social sciences and humanities, a significant ‘spatial turn’ has taken place. This has been manifested in a greater recognition of the significance of the spatial in understanding social phenomena and also in the increasing use of spatial concepts.

Characteristic of the geographical discussion on space is the debate on the dualistic perceptions of space. The traditional conceptualisation of space includes two distinct forms: absolute and relative space (Blaut 1961). ‘Absolute space’ is distinct and physical, and is perceived as a container in which things take place. It is “fixed and we record or plan events within its frame” (Harvey 2004). ‘Relative space’, on the other hand, is

inconceivable or metaphysical, and thus bound to time and process (or spatio-temporal rhythms; Harvey 2004: 3). It is filled with objects and relations. UNHCR has also presented a dualistic interpretation of the notion of ‘protection space’ divided into physical space and action space (Evans Barnes 2009). ‘Physical space’ is limited by geographical or territorial borders. ‘Action space’ refers to the area in which a refugee moves and makes decisions about his/her life.

The dualistic perception of space divided into absolute and relative elements has, however, been challenged by scholars, and later the concept of ‘cognitive space’ gained more prominence in phenomenological geography. It recognises that in order to function in space, people rely on their subjective understanding of places. Thus, space is mentally produced. The phenomenological approach to space is, in particular, interested in the ‘sense of place’ and peoples’ beliefs and understandings in relation to a particular place (Kitchin 2009). Given the overall critique of the dualistic conceptualisation of space, I suggest that it is also important to question the dualistic understanding of the notion of ‘protection space’, divided into physical space and action space (Evans Barnes 2009), and to present a more nuanced understanding of the concept.

The French social theorist and critical urban thinker Lefebvre (1991) has provided in his humanist-inspired Marxist analysis another useful way to understand space<sup>20</sup> in a particularly dialectical manner through his thesis on space as social product. Lefebvre has

---

<sup>20</sup> Even though Lefebvre’s theorisation of space is perhaps the most well-know and widely used of his ideas in critical geography and urban studies, Butler (2012: 2), among others, has reminded us that “comprehending an individual element of his work often demands an understanding of how it relates to others.” Therefore, it is crucial to take note of the discussion of Lefebvre’s conceptualisation of ‘right to the city’ in Section 3.3.3, which is closely related to his theorisation of space. My application of these two concepts (i.e. ‘space’ and ‘right to the city’) is not, however, solely limited to their Lefebvrian understanding. Rather I apply various writings on these themes that I find the most suitable for my analysis of refugees’ experiences of ‘protection space’. Thus, my study is not an attempt to provide a comprehensive Lefebvrian analysis of ‘protection space’.

worked extensively on analysing urban everyday life and the role of space in the survival of capitalism, and his most extensive writings on space can be found in his book “*The Production of Space*” from 1974 (translated into English in 1991). He argues that it is useful to comprehend space as physical or perceived (“spatial practice”; actions and everyday routines which produce space) and as imagined or conceived (“representations of space”; the abstract space of professionals and technocrats, etc.). However, according to him there is yet another distinct way in which we encounter space in our everyday lives, which is “representational space”. This refers to the ‘social space’ or ‘lived space’ that is produced in everyday social interactions, i.e. the “lived space of sensations, the imaginations, emotions, and meanings incorporated into our everyday lives and practices” (Harvey 2004: 8). With this term Lefebvre, as explained by McDowell and Sharp (1999: 33), refers to “those everyday representations of spaces linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life as articulated in cultural products... often produced as resistance to representations of abstract space.” Representational spaces are the spaces of “human action and conflict (Merrifield 2000: 171) and the “sites of resistance and counter-discourses that have either escaped the purview of bureaucratic power or manifest a refusal to acknowledge its authority” (Butler 2012: 5). In summary, lived space “represents a person’s actual experience of space in everyday life” (Purcell 2002: 102).

Closely related to the social understandings of space, a relational conceptualisation of space<sup>21</sup> has been proposed by a number of scholars (Rose 1999, Harvey 2004, Massey 2005). In general, the relational view of space:

holds there is no such thing as space outside the processes that define it. Processes do not occur *in* space but define their own spatial frame. ... The very formulation implies that it is impossible to disentangle space from time. We must therefore

---

<sup>21</sup> The more applied use of the relational conceptualisation of space is presented in Section 3.4.3.1.

focus on the relationality of space/time rather than of space in isolation (Harvey 2004: 4).

Lefebvre's (1991) theorisation of space also holds a relational conception of space as a starting point for "the mental, physical and social dimensions of space are understood as internally related within an open totality" (Butler 2012: 40). Relational space has been the basis of much recent work in critical human geography, and post-structuralist scholars, such as Massey (1999, 2005) and Rose (1999), have, for instance, argued that new theorisations of space emphasise the heterogeneity of local contexts and the place-relatedness of our knowledge about the world. This relational understanding of space perceives it as the product of interrelations, heterogeneous and plural. Relational space is "the space of social relations, metaphorical spaces, spaces of ... emotion, and dream and aspiration" (Elden 2009: 265). Massey (2005: 9) has furthermore suggested:

First, that we recognise space as the product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny. ... Second, that we understand space as the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity in the sense of contemporaneous plurality... Third, that we recognise space as always under construction. ... [I]t is always in the process of being made.

Reverting to 'space' as seen by Lefebvre (1991), all three elements of space (as physical/imagined/lived) are fluid and connected to historical processes. They are also inseparable: "by reinforcing the fragmentation of the mental, physical and social fields, the vast bulk of the social sciences have relied on an improvised understanding of space" (Butler 2012: 39). The strength of Lefebvre's analytical framework is that it should not be treated as an abstract construction. On the contrary, it should be "embodied with actual flesh and blood and culture, with real life relationships and events" (Merrifield 2000: 175), such as refugees' everyday lives in exile.

In this study, Lefebvre's (1991) notion of the 'spatial practice' (of physical space) is understood as those heterogeneous acts and processes that are aimed at producing protective spaces in the city. These practices are both carried out officially by the protection institutions and unofficially by the refugees – both individually and collectively. The term 'representations of space' refers to the official ways that the protection institutions conceive and imagine urban space and various micro-scale protective spaces in it. Lastly, refugees' heterogeneous representations of 'protective spaces' and the acts of resistance associated in the production of some of these spaces, are conceptualised through Lefebvre's notion of 'lived space' (i.e. 'representational spaces'). Consequently, all of these three aspects of space are significant and influence each other, as will be seen from the analysis of refugee protection in Kampala. They form a conceptual triad of space:

[S]patial practice, representations of space and representational spaces contribute in different ways to the production of space according to their qualities and attributes, according to the society or mode of production in question, and according to the historical period. Relations between the three moments of the perceived, the conceived and the lived are never either simple or stable ... (Lefebvre 1991: 46)

To conclude, different conceptualisations of 'space' are taken into account when the production and contestation of 'protection spaces' are explored in this study. For instance, there should be a balance in observing physical, imagined and lived elements of space (Lefebvre 1991) when it comes to protecting refugees in an urban refugee context: if one dimension of space is given analytical priority, this will, according to Lefebvre, lead toward an intellectual dead-end (Butler 2012: 41). I also suggest that the relational space (Massey 2005), which is characterised by relations between people and between people and places, is essential for understanding refugees' experiences of protection and trust. Yet the physical and imagined elements of space are also understood to influence refugees' lived, everyday spaces of protection. Thus, as Harvey (2004: 5) proposes, I argue that

thinking space through different conceptualisations, created through the practices of urban refugee protection, is important:

The problem of the proper conceptualisation of space is resolved through human practice with respect to it. ... The question of “what is space?” is therefore replaced by the question of “how is it that different human practices create and make use of different conceptualizations of space?” (Harvey 1973, cited in Harvey 2004: 5)

I emphasise that all these different aspects of ‘space’ are mutually reinforcing and interconnected, and thus cannot be seen as separate. Consequently, I accept the proposition that we should keep the “concepts in dialectical tension with each other and to think the interplay among them” (Harvey 2004: 6).

Given the essentially urban focus of this study, in the next sections I examine two ideas that bring the ‘urban’ into the discussion of space: the ‘sense of place’ and the ‘right to the city’.

### 3.3.2. *‘Sense of place’*

The concept of ‘sense of place’ refers to a “set of feelings, emotions and attachments to the place” (McDowell and Sharp 1999: 201), but it can also be seen more as a process (Massey 1999). I examine how refugees perceive their life in their city of exile, how they imagine the safe and unsafe spaces and places of the city, and thus construct a ‘sense of place’.

With regard to theorising ‘place’, according to Tuan (1977: 3, 6):

place is security, space is freedom: we are attached to the one and long for the other. ... ‘Space’ is more abstract than ‘place’. What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value. ... [I]f we think of space as

that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place.

Moreover, “places are made through power relations which construct the rules which define boundaries. These boundaries are both social and spatial – they define who belongs to a place and who may be excluded, as well as the location or site of the experience” (McDowell 1999: 4). In this study, I accept the relationship between the concepts of ‘space’ and ‘place’ as proposed by Brun (2001: 16) in her article on ‘place’ in refugee studies. For her, space and place are closely connected:

Space may be understood as a fundamental dimension of all social processes, as social spatiality. Spatial forms are integrated parts of social practices and social processes and such practices and processes are all situated in space (and time) and all inherently involve a spatial dimension. Thus there are no fundamental differences in theorizing about space and place; social spatiality is the foundation for both concepts.

In analysing the ‘sense of place’ among British Asians, Phillips, Davis and Radcliffe (2007: 230) propose that “experiences and perceptions of urban space (real and imagined) play a role in understandings of both ‘self’ and ‘others’, sense of belonging and rights to space and other resources.” Accordingly, people’s ‘sense of place’ has implications for their “sense of identity, feelings of belonging, inclusion and exclusions, whether it is on the scale of the family, the ‘community’ or the city (Phillips, Davis and Radcliffe 2007: 230). Therefore, particular attention is paid to refugees’ ‘sense of place’ across different scales, including the wider city, particular neighbourhoods, streets and buildings. Additionally, the space of the body is an important scale to consider with regard to the conceptualisation of ‘protection space’. In writings on space, it is recognised that the body has a foundational role for our experiences and representations of space: “In short, our bodies allow us to experience and conceptualise the relationships between things, places,

persons (as well as regions), and to identify differences” (Knott 2005). Or, as Lefebvre (1991: 405) puts it, “the whole of (social) space proceeds from the body.”

Another important element of the ‘sense of place’ is the act of imagining. Tonkiss (2005: 2), for instance, suggests that:

cities ... are one of the best examples of the idea that things which are real are also imagined. Social structures, relations and practices are linked in sometimes complicated ways to symbolic urban forms. ... Cities are dense material realities which also take their shape in memory and perception.

These multiple stories and imaginations of urban space and everyday life in cities are increasingly characterising the human geography literature. Given the common understanding that cities are not solely physical spaces, Bridge and Watson (2002), following Lefebvre (1991), argue that urban locations are also spaces of the imagination and spaces of representation. They suggest that there is a relationship between the city and the imagination: the city affects people’s imagination, but the city is also imagined by people. The collective imaginations of cities can be positive or negative. Thus, “our imagination can be either an escape from the problems in the cities, or an act of resistance, or both” (Bridge and Watson 2002).

Refugees’ urban imaginations are explored in this study, with a particular focus on their discourses of the safe and unsafe areas of the city. Urban refugees’ ‘sense of place’ is commonly characterised by a sense of fear, “specifically fear of the Other (the stranger/outsider/foreigner)” (Sandercock 2000: 22), and these discourses of fear produce reality by the act of defining whom and what we should be afraid of (Sandercock 2000, Bauman 2001). Thus, in investigating refugees’ ‘sense of place’, it is important to not only focus on their discourses of protection, but also those of fear and insecurity.

### 3.3.3. *'Right to the city'*

The concept of the 'right to the city' refers to the idea that social justice is embedded in social processes, and accordingly that cities are spaces of oppression and inequality but also spaces of resistance and liberation. The concept, originally developed by Lefebvre (1996), "has been subject of much academic scholarship, activism and public policy debate in recent years, and there have been numerous attempts to institutionalise it at both domestic and international levels" (Butler 2012: 133). It has been increasingly used by the United Nations, governments, NGOs and social movements alike. Besides the Lefebvrian understanding of the concept, numerous applied interpretations have been presented. Often the attempts to use the concept in advocacy and to create alternative understandings of it have, however, lacked the radical connotation that was originally inherent in it (Butler 2012). Thus, the right to the city has, at times, been used in a theoretically and politically underdeveloped manner (Purcell 2002). Moreover, it has sometimes been narrowly defined and manipulated by the political and economic elite (Harvey 2008: 38). As the concept is often understood as "radically open" and is applied in various contexts (Attoh 2011: 670), sometimes this has arguably come at the price of trivialisation and corruption of the original meaning of it (de Souza 2010).

Here, I discuss how Lefebvre (1996) originally used this concept, and present some of the more recent applications of it. I conclude this section by defining my use of the 'right to the city' in this study.

For Lefebvre (1996), the concept of the 'right to the city' (*le droit à la ville*) had a radical meaning as he developed it alongside his 'concrete utopian' thinking, which referred to

“the purposeful anticipatory striving for new futures, based on the transformation of existing social tendencies” (Butler 2012: 135). For Lefebvre,<sup>22</sup> examples of ‘concrete utopia’ included events – such as the social upheavals of 1968 in Paris that related to the destruction of traditional neighbourhoods. These events were characterised by the possibility of change and a creativity by which the inhabitants appreciated their lived space. Lefebvre, therefore, recognised the potential alternatives to existing processes of urbanisation, and he re-thought the city “as a work of creative collaboration between its inhabitants” (Butler 2012: 136). For him, the urban was a work of art (*oeuvre*) by its inhabitants (Lefebvre 1996). Yet the inhabitants of the city were only able to gain their right to the city through struggles, which included a direct confrontation with the state’s role as a spatial organiser and a dominant force in people’s everyday lives. Moreover, the right to the city:

legitimizes the refusal to allow oneself to be removed from urban reality by a discriminatory and segregative organization. ... Equally, it stipulates the right to meetings and gatherings; places and objects must answer to certain ‘needs’... The right to the city therefore signifies the constitution or reconstitution of a spatial-temporal unit, of a gathering together instead of a fragmentation. It does not abolish confrontations and struggles. On the contrary! (Lefebvre 1996: 195).

Given this background on the utopian thinking and the distinct understanding of the urban as “a type of society” (de Souza 2010: 323), Lefebvre (1996) referred to the ‘right to the city’ in at least two different but mutually reinforcing ways. First, in its most basic form, the ‘right to the city’ is a right not to be expelled from the city centre, and it rejects urban segregation. This “transformed and renewed right to urban life”, which is “like a cry and a demand” (Lefebvre 1996: 158), refers to the right to physical access, occupy and use urban space.

---

<sup>22</sup> Much of this section relies on Butler’s (2012) clear and well-written explanation of Lefebvre’s work on the ‘right to the city’.

In the more recent literature applying this idea, questions regarding the use of and access to urban public spaces have been examined. According to Mitchell (2003), the ‘right to the city’ is related to the issue of what cities decide to do with the ‘undesirables’. Furthermore, this right is never guaranteed and it is not automatically clear to whom that right belongs. Thus, “conflict over rights often resolves itself into conflict over geography” (Mitchell 2003: 81), and struggles for rights and social action influence the production of law and the production of space. Considering the interpretation of the right to the city in relation to essentially physical space, it has been suggested that in his later writings on the right to the city Lefebvre perceived it more as a ‘right to space’, thus opening up the concept of the ‘politics of scale’ (Brenner 2000, cited in Butler 2012: 139). Consequently, examining the inhabitants’ access to the city itself, and beyond, and its various micro-scale places has been investigated in reference to the theorisation of the right to the city.

Secondly, the right to the city for Lefebvre (1996) referred to the, perhaps more radical and creative, “twin elements” (Butler 2012: 142) of the right to appropriate space, on the one hand, and participate in spatial production on the other. Appropriation<sup>23</sup> was presented by him as a counteracting of oppression, “concerned with the production of urban space as a creative and fulfilling aesthetic experience which encompasses the full and complete usage of space by its inhabitants in their daily routines, work practices and forms of play” (Butler 2012: 141). For Lefebvre (1996) it referred to the collective attempts to produce the city as a work of art, *oeuvre*. Inhabitation in the urban, for Lefebvre (1996), was also characterised by participation in decision-making over the production of urban space at all levels, and effective participation, in its essence, laid in mechanisms that were controlled by urban

---

<sup>23</sup> For Purcell (2002), the right to appropriate space also includes the right to physically access and use urban space, discussed above as a separate element of the Lefebvrian understanding of the concept adopted in this study. Thus, it has to be acknowledged that there is no one understanding of the essentially Lefebvrian notion of the right to the city, and different elements of it may be emphasised in various writings on it.

inhabitants themselves. Thus, participation did not fulfil its ultimate function if it was imposed from above on the inhabitants; rather, it required self-management (*autogestion*).

In the more recent applied literature, arising from these essentially Lefebvrian conceptualisations of the ‘right to the city’ as appropriation and participation, the idea of “spatial citizenship” (Butler 2012: 141) has been examined. According to Amin and Thrift (2002: 142), for instance, the right to the city essentially calls for “citizenship for all, the right to shape and influence”. Harvey (2003: 939) has also suggested that the right to the city is “not merely a right of access to what already exists, but a right to change it after our heart’s desire.” For him (2008: 23), the right to the city is “another type of human right”; a “right to change ourselves by changing the city.” Harvey (2008) also suggests that rather than being an individual right, the right to the city is a common right based on collective power. However, even though the idea of institutionalising the right to the city within the human rights framework has been attempted, the concept should not be reduced to a merely positivist legal right as this was exactly rejected by Lefebvre (Butler 2012). In investigating the right to the city, it is, however, important to consider and re-evaluate “how rights are defined, the form they take, and who has access to them (Attoh 2011: 6).

In line with Lefebvre’s thinking, Purcell (2002, 2003) has written extensively on the idea of renewed citizenship based on urban inhabitance. He has called for “an urban politics of the inhabitant” (Purcell 2003: 100) in which the ‘citizens’ (or, better, *citadins*), including all urban inhabitants irrespective of their nationality, should be able to participate in decision-making that ought to lead to the production of urban space that meets the needs of its inhabitants, thus ensuring its use value. What is also recognised in some of the current literature exploring alternative models of citizenship through the notion of the right to the

city is that rights are sites of struggle (Attoh 2011), and creating this new model of citizenship cannot be achieved without a fight leading to a radical transformation of urban life. Additionally, Purcell (2002: 106) has reminded us that:

it is precisely the analytical and political power of the idea of inhabitation that opens up the definition of the political subject to include a range of different ideas and political interests. One's class and race and gender and sexuality are all fundamental to inhabiting the city. ... The concept of inhabiting is not limited to a single social category –it can incorporate these diverse identities and interests because it is defined by everyday experience in lived space.

Leading from this is the pursuit of “heterogeneous and hybrid urban geographies, all of which nevertheless share in common a city produced to meet the complex and multiple needs of urban inhabitants” (Purcell 2002: 106).

To conclude, in this study<sup>24</sup> the ‘right to the city’ is interpreted in an open manner, yet not ignoring the key characteristics of it as argued for by Lefebvre. In order to find the most appropriate application of the concept for the examination of refugees’ experiences of the protection/space/trust nexus, different approaches to the right to the city, discussed above, are brought together. In brief, what I attempt by the application of the ‘right to the city’ idea is to bring in the essentially urban examination of the key concepts of this study – protection, space and trust.

First, as this study examines refugee protection in urban areas, it is useful to acknowledge the legal connotation of the demand for the right to the city (Butler 2012) or, in other words, its character as “another type of human right” based on collective power (Harvey 2008). Subsequently, it can be used to interpret refugees’, mostly collective, struggles to

---

<sup>24</sup> There is a clear lack of studies on (urban) refugees that use the concept of ‘right to the city’ in a substantial manner. Grbac (2013) has applied this concept in his examination of the refugee camp as he argues that it is useful to conceptualise the camp as urban in order to strengthen refugees’ appropriation and participation in the production of (camp) space.

re-evaluate how rights are defined and who can access them (Attoh 2011) or, in this study, how (rights-based) protection is defined and who can access it. The struggle for urban protection is thus broadly speaking related to the defence of both general human rights and refugee-specific rights in their city of exile, but it may go beyond the orthodox understandings of ‘protection’. This rights-based examination of the term is also based on the importance of acknowledging the ‘needs’ of the inhabitants in the production of urban space as argued for by Lefebvre (1996). Thus, examining the needs and desires (or “cries and demands”) that refugees have in regard to the production of the official and unofficial spaces of protection are of particular importance to this study.

Second, in regard to the focus of this study on space, the right to the city is understood to signify refugees’ right to access, occupy and use urban space (Mitchell 2003). This aspect of the right, however, has to be examined from multiple spatial scales in order to acknowledge the ‘politics of scale’. Thus, the right to the city can be utilised in the investigation of refugees’ right to occupy the city in the first place and also in relation to their rights to access and use various micro-scale urban spaces, such as the offices of the protection institutions and refugees’ own community spaces, not forgetting the public spaces of the neighbourhoods and the streets. In the African context this is particularly pertinent due to the colonial legacy of urban exclusion.

Thirdly, this study acknowledges the essentially Lefebvrian elements of appropriation and participation in the examination of refugees’ right to their city of exile. I suggest that investigating refugees’ appropriation of the urban can provide new insights into their creative use of space in their everyday life. It also signals how refugees may use or restrict their use of the city space as a form of counteracting of oppression (Lefebvre 1996). When

the right to appropriate urban space is denied or restricted, refugees can have feelings of mistrust and insecurity; this is because “the human landscape”, or the city and its protective spaces for that matter, can be read as “a landscape of exclusion” (Sibley 1995). Besides appropriation, I also examine various forms of refugee participation in the production of the formal and informal spaces of protection in the city. My examination is centred on the trust-related struggles that refugees may face in their attempts to gain meaningful forms of participation, which are essentially based on self-management and not imposed from above by the protection institutions. In summary, I apply the ‘right to the city’ in this study from an essentially refugee-focused perspective in relation to their experiences of protection/space/trust.

#### ***3.3.4. ‘Space’ in refugee studies***

A review of the literature on refugees and space suggests that there are, at least, two significant debates. Understanding these wider debates is helpful in my attempt to rethink the connection between ‘protection’ and ‘space’ in an urban context. First, there is an extensive scholarly debate on the nature of refugeehood in relation to territorially defined notions of nation state and identity. Second, there is growing body of literature on the spatiality of humanitarian intervention, or refugee protection in particular. Both of these debates provide elements to consider when the notion of ‘protection space’ is deconstructed.

Refugee scholars have long discussed the nature of refugeehood, refugee identities and experiences, which are informed by spatial relations. This debate on the link between refugees and space/place was addressed by Kibreab (1999a: 385), who suggested that

despite the partial opening of borders due to globalisation “place still remains a major repository of rights and membership”. Thus, the very nature of refugee movement reinforces the links between people’s identities and particular places (Kibreab 1999b).

Essentialist thinking claiming that people are rooted in a particular place has, however, been criticised, perhaps strongest by Malkki (1992, 1995). According to her, refugees’ physical separation from their homeland has resulted in them being perceived by states, scholars and policy-makers as a challenge to the ‘natural order of things’ (Malkki 1995). Refugees have been seen as uprooted and out of place, and subsequently their refugeeness has been seen as temporary and repatriation as the best ‘durable solution’ for them. Uprootedness is understood as ‘pathological’; associated with a loss of morals and trustworthiness, despite the fact that people have multiple attachments to places through “living in, remembering, and imagining them” (Malkki 1992: 38).

Warner (1999) has suggested that the analysis of refugees should not be focused solely on territory or space as such, but rather on the activities that take place in those spaces because “once we understand that territory is a site of activity, then analyses of the activities on the site are more compelling than the importance of the territory of the site itself” (Warner 1999: 414). Following this, Stepputat (1999: 416) proposed that the focus of the debate should be on “the ways in which power works through the organization and conceptualisation of space and movement.” He suggested that identity should be seen more as a process of re-territorialising than a de-territorialised or territorial entity, and the “challenge is thus to explore how places are imagined (given identity and meaning) and inhabited in the context of a global economy of space” (Stepputat 1994: 177).

In her contribution to the debate surrounding space and refugee identities, Brun (2001: 15) proposed an alternative relational approach to the territorialisation of space by suggesting that “space is constructed from the multiplicity of social relations”. She reiterates Malkki’s (1995) conceptualisation of re-territorialisation, which refers to physically losing one’s territory and then constructing a fresh community within a new place such as a refugee camp or a city of exile.

Turton (2005) reopened this debate in the mid-2000s by arguing that “we must treat place, not as a stage for social activity but as a ‘product’ of it” because “displacement is not just about the loss of place, but also about the struggle to make a place in the world” (Turton 2005: 258). According to him, this lack of spatial analysis hinders our understanding of what displacement means for the displaced. Novak (2007) further developed Turton’s (2005) theorisations on place-making, and he argued that we should not be focusing on territorial but rather on social understandings of places and identities, which furthermore helps us to understand refugee protection. Moreover, he suggests that it is important to capture both the structural and the subjective dimensions of refugee migration and protection.

To sum up, I suggest that there are a number of useful issues to be borrowed from this debate which is focused on the link between refugees and space/place, in terms of investigating the link between protection and urban space as it is attempted in this study.

First, space, and its relation with people, should not be considered solely as a territorial or physical entity; it is also deeply metaphysical (Malkki 1992) and imagined (Stepputat 1999). Space is, moreover, created from the multiplicity of social relations (Brun 2001).

When discussing the nature of 'space', the 'sense of place' is yet another critical component to be incorporated into the analysis. The sense of place is important not only in relation to an individual refugee's sense of identity but it also affects refugees' collective identity (Turton 2005) in the camp or a city of exile.

Second, given this diverse and fluid character of 'space', the analysis should be focused on the activities that take place in these various spaces and places (Warner 1999). Particular activities taking place in space are place-making projects (Turton 2005; Novak 2007). It is understood that "displacement is not just about the loss of place, but also about the struggle to make a place" (Turton 2005: 258). Since various place-making projects take place in a given displacement situation simultaneously, it is, again, important not to focus solely on the physical understanding of space but also on the social nature of space (Novak 2007).

Third, the "the ways in which power works through the organization and conceptualisation of space and movement" (Stepputat 1999: 416) needs to be considered, because 'space', like 'protection', is always political and characterised by struggles over power and representation. Therefore, it is essential to not only focus on those who are assumed to be powerful in producing 'spaces of protection' (i.e. the protection institutions, including humanitarian agencies and authorities); the analysis should also address host communities' and refugees' agency and power (Brun 2001) in the creation and contestation of 'protection spaces'.

The second debate on refugees and space is centred on the issue of the spatiality of refugee protection, or more broadly humanitarian intervention. As already mentioned, it can be

argued that humanitarian language has experienced a ‘spatial turn’ in terms of the rapid growth in the use of spatial concepts exemplified by the extensive use of concepts like ‘humanitarian space’ and ‘protection space’, which have increasingly replaced the more legal language of protection (Edwards 2010). Refugee camps and detention centres have been theorised as ‘non-places’ (Stepputat 1994) and ‘spaces of exception’ (Ramadan 2012), or as a technology of ‘care and control’ for ‘peoples out of place’ (Malkki 1995). The territorially remote management of humanitarian action and the creation of ‘safety corridors’ or ‘safe cities’ has been increasingly used in protection practices in regard to complex humanitarian situations (Hyndman 2003). Furthermore, extra-territorialisation of refugee protection (Hyndman and Mountz 2004) has created new challenges both in terms of providing and conceptualising protection.

The list of spatial concepts in humanitarian action is extensive, but what is characteristic of these notions is the understanding of ‘space’ merely as metaphorical or as physical. Therefore, it is important to examine these “spatial metaphors, which render space innocent and ignore the relations of power which always run through material (what might be considered as ‘real’) spaces” (McDowell and Sharp 1999: 33). Accordingly, Boano (2009, 2011) argues that the spatial characters of protection should be better understood and more widely analysed. He (2011: 37), however, notes that:

Operational links between space, protection and the vulnerable spatialities that emerge after a conflict or a disaster, and the discourses surrounding the notion of protection, tend to be focused on legal questions of rights and responsibilities rather than on matters of physical and social protection that may depend on spatial relations.

Besides focusing just on the metaphorical or physical understandings of ‘space’ in relation to protection, I suggest that the analysis needs re-scaling in order to be able to grasp

refugees' experiences of the spatiality of their protection. As an example, I discuss the critique of the term 'humanitarian space', which is analytically closely associated with the notion of 'protection space' (Evans Barnes 2009) – the focus of this study.

The absence of a critical interrogation of the concept of 'space' is evident when the literature on the widely used concept of 'humanitarian space' is reviewed. Analysis based on this seemingly spatial concept is problematic when it comes to the theoretical challenge of understanding the multi-actor perceptions of refugee protection. The conceptualisations of humanitarian space are frequently focused on the 'operating environment' or 'agency space', thus highlighting the role of global humanitarian actors (Abild 2009, Collinson and Elhawary 2012, Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012). Therefore, the role of various local actors, including refugees, is often missing from most discussions of humanitarian space (Collinson and Elhawary 2012). Yet it is important to put people and local actors, such as faith-based communities (Fiddian-Quasmiyeh and Ager 2013), at the centre of humanitarian action, in particular in urban settings (Zetter and Deikun 2010).

Given the need for a more refugee-focused approach, the analysis on 'humanitarian space' needs rescaling, because "the humanitarian space... is also influenced by the geographical locations" (Tennant, Doyle and Mazoy 2010: 7). This is in line with the argument that there should be more research directed toward "understanding how the micro-level geography of protection space (camps, urban squatter slums etc.) interacts with the macro-level spatial geography of protection" (Long 2010: 24).

The idea of investigating refugees' understandings of urban space from various spatial scales has been put forward, for example by Nah (2010) and Sandvik (2012), both of

whom emphasise the significance of the micro-scale analysis. Nah (2010), in her spatial analysis of urban refugees in Malaysia, identified various spaces that refugees use and share in the city, and she recognised that refugees talk about similar problems in similar locations. Thus, there are particular micro-scale urban spaces crucial to refugees' everyday lives that should be examined in relation to policy-making.

Sandvik (2012: 108), in her study reflecting the recent history of the spatiality of refugee protection in Kampala, suggests that we should reconstruct "refugees' experiences of rejection and mistreatment as physical mappings of Kampala, in which the creation and closure of urban spaces give meaning to the idea of "protection space" and urban refugeehood." Given the highly distinct discourses of protection and space expressed by refugees and the official providers of protection presented in Sandvik's study (2012), it is essential to realise that institutional spaces are not necessarily 'places of protection' but for some they may represent exposure to vulnerability and exploitation.

Recently, a meso-scale investigation of urban space in regard to refugee protection has also been advocated by organisations working on the implementation of protection. For instance, UNHCR, in its urban refugee programme in Nairobi, has been using urban mapping and geographical information systems (GIS) in order to better respond to the spatial challenges of protection (Campbell, Crisp and Kiragu 2011). The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC 2011b: 16) has also developed a 'safety mapping tool' to better understand refugees' 'sense of place' and to prevent sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) by mapping the urban areas where refugees feel unsafe.

To conclude, ‘refugee experiences’ are largely absent from the debate about the spatiality of protection, and too often ‘space’ is considered merely as physical or as metaphorical when the spatiality of refugee protection is discussed. The aim of this study is, therefore, to bring a more refugee-focused perspective and multiple conceptualisations of ‘space’ to the analysis.

### **3.4. Theorising ‘trust’**

#### ***3.4.1. Conceptualisations of ‘trust’***

Since the 1990s, there has been increasing scholarly attention paid to the multi-faceted phenomenon of trust in social sciences and consequently the ‘community of trust researchers’ has experienced a significant growth (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012: 1). Trust research, however, still faces many challenges, such as the lack of a general theory, the lack of a widely accepted definition of trust, and the lack of a generally accepted measure of trust (Li 2012: 101). These challenges are mostly caused by the lack of a multidisciplinary approach to trust.

In the Oxford English Dictionary, ‘trust’ is defined as “confidence in or reliance on some quality or attribute of a person or thing, or the truth of a statement.” Yet the academic literature on trust has presented a variety of definitions. The diversity of definitions is caused, partly, because “trust belongs to the same class of abstract concepts as freedom, justice, knowledge, power, prosperity, solidarity or truth” (or protection and space, I suggest), which are highly intangible and yet attractive (Möllering 2006: 1). This appeal of trust is manifested in the general observation that ‘everyone talks about trust’ or, more

precisely, crises of trust: “the breakdown of solidarity, cooperation and moral responsibility, of which trust appears to be their epiphenomenal expression” (Jimenez 2011: 177).

Thus, it is important to remember that “trust always invokes the potential for *mistrust*” (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 3) and lack of trust. These negatives of trust can be caused by risks associated with over-trust and trust violations. Trust can, for instance, erode if not exercised and as a result of opportunism (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012). Also, “trust is neither normatively good nor bad, it is neither a virtue or vice” (Levi 1998: 80). Consequently, distrust also lacks normative connotations. In fact, mistrust may be in given situations a normatively appropriate response because sometimes there are good reasons to mistrust other people or institutions. Mistrust can at times be the only assurance of one’s own security and therefore be seen as a rational choice (Jasinski 2010); “distrust is benign in that it protects against harms rather than causing them” (Hardin 2004: 5).

Often ‘trust’ is seen as multidimensional for it includes cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspects that characterise individual and collective relationships (Norman 2009: 72). The less visible or tacit forms of trust are particularly hard to identify and, yet these emotional aspects of trust research are particularly needed (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012: 11). As seen from the above description, trust can be used as “a holding word for a variety of phenomena that enable individuals to take risks in dealing with others, solve collective action problems, or act in ways that seem contrary to standard definitions of self-interests” (Levi 1998: 78).

Besides the definitions of trust, there are also a number of different conceptualisations of trust as an analytical concept. To begin with, “while the majority of trust researchers adopt conceptualisation of trust as a psychological willingness to accept vulnerability (i.e. trust-as-attitude), a growing number researchers support the definition of trust as a behavioural decision to accept (and even appreciate) vulnerability (i.e. trust-as-choice)” (Li 2012: 101). Trust-as-attitude is shaped as a consequence of control, and it includes a passive acceptance of risk. Trust-as-choice is formed under situations free of control, and it can be seen as psychological-behavioural trust. It refers to behavioural patterns of reciprocal exchange and strong relationships. Trust-as-choice is imperative in trust building because it initiates the process of exchange between strangers (Li 2007: 435–436).

Möllering (2006) suggests that trust should be conceptualised as reason, routine and reflexivity. This conceptualisation of trust is useful for the understanding of trust largely as emotion and practice embedded in everyday life, as it is applied in this research on urban refugee protection.

Firstly, in regard to the element of reason, Möllering (2006) argues that the rational choice theories and economic theories on trust are weak because they see that trust relies purely on calculative cognition and prediction. Yet as explained by Lewis and Weigert (1985, cited in Möllering 2006: 44), “trust in everyday life is a mix of feelings and rational thinking.” Thus, it should be conceptualised as having a rational and an emotional dimension. Consequently, emotional trust, which forms a central aspect of the trust analysis presented in this study, in the view of Möllering (2006), rests on strong positive affect for the object, and is analytically distinct from rational reasoning. The affect-based trust stems from emotional bonds between individuals and genuine care and concern for

the welfare of others. Subsequently, a negative emotion will manifest as distrust. Regarding the relationship between a variety of emotions and trust, it has been observed that “happiness and gratitude (emotions with positive valence) increase trust, and anger (an emotion with negative valence) decreases trust” (Dunn and Schweitzer 2005: 736). The issue of the emotionality of trust is important, according to Möllering (2006: 45), because rationality can be applied to emotions, and vice versa.

Secondly, because “every day we trust countless others without being able or requested to perform any detailed reasoning”, trust should be seen as a routine given its taken-for-grantedness (Möllering 2006: 51). The trust decision can still be rational and emotional, but its routine nature means that trust is “performed without questioning its underlying assumptions, without assessing alternatives and without giving justifications every time” (Möllering 2006: 52).

Thirdly, trust is a reflexive process that depends on ongoing interaction between actors. Trust also typically undergoes gradual growth and transformation in a process of reflexive familiarisation and structuration (Möllering 2006: 10–11). For Möllering (2006), this threefold conceptualisation of trust means that trust lies between reason, routine and reflexivity, and therefore all three elements are needed for the ‘leap of faith’ that creates trust.

Finally, trust has also been perceived discursively, and this conceptualisation is adopted in this study given my overall discursive analytical approach. Candlin and Crichton (2012: 3) argue that trust is better conceived “not as a ‘characteristic’ of particular sites but as discursively accomplished and dynamically and reflexively situated within diverse scales

of social order.” They continue by stating that trust in its discursive nature should at the same time be seen as a practice. This means understanding trust as both construct and process: trust can be seen as “a discursive practice continually constructed, negotiated, accomplished (as well as potentially jeopardised) among different participants (including researchers), with different interests and purposes, in different setting and critical sites” (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 9).

To conclude, given the many conceptualisations of trust, there is value in taking different perspectives on trust (Möllering 2006), and consequently I investigate ‘trust’ as a discursively created emotion and practice which is based on reason, routine and reflexivity.

### ***3.4.2. A theoretical framework to investigate trust discourses***

Given the lack of an interdisciplinary conceptualisation of trust, some trust researchers have criticised the fact that trust remains an under-theorised phenomenon in social sciences (Li 2007).<sup>25</sup> Subsequently, as there is no one overarching theory of trust, what I aim to do is to explore the key elements of different theorisations of trust which then inform my analysis.

Based on the ontological clusters of trust research<sup>26</sup> identified by Lyon, Möllering and Saunders (2012: 4–7), as well as on my wider reading of the trust literature, I propose four

---

<sup>25</sup> This is certainly the case with refugee studies, in which ‘trust’ as an analytical concept remains under-theorised. This argument is further explored in Section 3.4.3.1.

<sup>26</sup> E.g. antecedents; processes of building trust; the context-shaping trust-building; decision-making processes in trust; implications and uses of trust; and finally, lack of trust, distrust, mistrust and repair.

theoretical elements of trust for my analytical framework: scales and orientations, contexts, individual characteristics, and time.

#### *3.4.2.1. Scales and orientations*

Trust operates dynamically and reflexively at different ‘scales’ of social order (Candlin and Crichton 2012), and therefore trust research needs to pay attention to the various scales of investigation. In particular, research that has a focus on both personal relationships and on institutional contexts is desirable (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012).

Typically it is suggested that trust should be examined both in relation to the large-scale ‘macro’ social systems and structures (i.e. the society) and the ‘micro’ actions of individuals. Only then can the ontological landscape of trust be explained (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 3). Others have, however, argued that there is a third scale which is crucial for the analysis of trust, namely the ‘meso’ scale of communities and organisations (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012).

The main ontological challenge is not how to distinguish these scales but rather how to bring these different scales or perspectives together. The theoretical discussion on the orientations of trust may be helpful with regard to this question. Since trust is relational, it takes place between the trustor, trustee and objects or results of trust (Candlin and Crichton 2012). Given the different scales of trust, the terms ‘trustor’ and ‘trustee’ can refer to different things, such as persons and institutions, and trust can further be divided between social trust and institutional trust.

Social trust (i.e. inter-personal trust) includes particularised trust, i.e. trust in people you know, and generalised trust in strangers. Particularised social trust refers to situations where the trustor and trustee are members of a cohesive group and typically know each other well. This is the form of trust that results from networks of individuals who are dependent on each other and engage in iterated interactions that promote loyalty (Levi 1998). Inter-personal social trust is, moreover, highly context-specific and it may depend on the characteristics of the individuals (Welter and Nadezhda 2012: 51).

Generalised social trust focuses on the individual tendency (or lack thereof) to view strangers (who may belong to different social classes, ethnic groups, or nationalities) as trustworthy (Jasinski 2010). Generalised trust is essential for the functioning of society, and the individuals and groups in it. It reduces the endemic collective action problem and it can lead to the creation of free individuals who live without fear of others.

Institutional trust, embedded in formal and informal institutions, is the typical form of trust examined in sociological trust research. There are various aspects of institutional trust research, but typically it refers to people's trust in institutions (Möllering 2006). Trust norms and values are seen to have an impact on the levels that people trust different institutions, such as the government (Braithwaite 1998). Institutional trust also reflects the functioning of these institutions, "with low levels of trust generally taken as indicators for a deficient institutional framework" (Welter and Nadezhda 2012: 51).

According to Luhmann (1979) trust in institutions is build up through repeated, assenting experiences with these institutions; this is what he calls 'system trust'. Furthermore, Giddens' (1990) notion of the 'access point' is particularly helpful in understanding how

people come to trust or mistrust institutions. He refers to people who represent the institutions as ‘access points’, and the interaction which happens at these personalised points of contact can enable or prevent trust in those systems.

To sum up, the ‘ontological landscape of trust’ (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 3) needs to be explained through different scales and orientations of trust. In my research on refugee protection, I will discuss social trust both from the particularised perspective (mostly in the context of refugee communities) and in relation to generalised trust (in refugees’ trust discourses related to the hosts, and the refugee population at large). I also examine refugees’ individual and communal institutional trust by analysing refugees’ trust discourses on the protection system in general, and individual protection institutions and their ‘access points’ in particular.<sup>27</sup>

#### *3.4.2.2. Contexts*

The second theoretical element of trust incorporated in my theoretical framework is the ‘contexts’ of trust. By ‘context’ I mean the cultural and societal context in a given location where trust is built or lost. Again, because trust is situated and embedded in nature, the context of trust has to be considered from multiple directions. Several theoretical models trying to explain trust have, however, been criticised for not paying sufficient attention to the contextual issues affecting trust building (Hall and Symon 2012).

---

<sup>27</sup> More detailed discussion of how the concepts of social and institutional trust have been used in refugee studies is presented in Section 3.4.3.1.

According to Singh (2012), the idea that an individual trust decision might be influenced by the characteristics of a country is not new. Studies have, for instance, shown that generalised social trust appears to be stronger in nations with higher and more equal incomes and better educated and homogeneous populations (Knack and Keefer 1997, cited in Singh 2012: 114). Religious traditions and the functioning of formal institutions have also been shown to have an impact on people's levels of trust. The history of the country can, moreover, affect the levels of trust between people. On the one hand, a history of violence, for instance in the form of slavery or war, can lead into a context where people, even second generations, find it difficult to build trust (Singh 2012). On the other hand, trust building can be facilitated between communities which have a common history or shared experiences (Welter and Nadezhda 2012).

Various societal norms are also important contextual determinants of trust. For instance, in societies where honesty and respect are norms, people are more likely to trust each other than in societies characterised by dishonesty and greed (Singh 2012: 115). Furthermore, because trust has been shown to be embedded in social relations, Lyon, Möllering and Saunders (2012) argue that examining how the particular culture affects trust is essential. As trust is embedded in cultures, it may differ in its level and nature across countries but also within countries. When considering trust in cross-cultural contexts, the role of experience is central. On the one hand, positive experiences of shared and regular exchange with people of a dissimilar background can foster cross-cultural trust. On the other hand:

negative experiences are often reinforced by cultural distance, and they also reinforce cultural distance. Prejudices, retentions and stereotypes can hinder the emergence of trust. Cultural stereotyping is often a result of disappointment and negative individual experiences (Welter and Nadezhada 2012: 58).

Also, as trust is based on cultural values, people are more likely to trust in institutions that, in their opinion, operate according to their values (Jabareen and Carmon 2010: 447). Overall, there is a need to recognise that “people from different cultures and languages may develop and apply trust constructs in different ways” (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012: 11).

Regarding contexts, my aim is to examine and understand the broad contexts of refugees’ discourses of trust.<sup>28</sup> I recognise that these discourses are formed in the wider regional, national and local contexts. In particular, I pay attention to the aspects of trust discourses which can explain, and be explained by, contextual factors, such as norms, history and communal experiences. Given the apparent importance of contexts, situating refugees’ trust discourses within the broader framework of persecution and flight is therefore necessary.

#### *3.4.2.3. Individual characteristics and intersectionality*

Besides the contexts, the individual characteristics of the trustor and the trustee have to be considered, in particular when social trust is examined. The literature on the individual characteristics, however, still lacks substantive analysis (Alesina and La Ferrara 2002). The characteristics of the trustor and trustee can mean different things. According to the cognitive models, trust is an outcome based on evidence gained by observing the behaviour of the counterparty. Accordingly, beliefs, stereotypes and emotions, among other factors, may have an impact on the level of trust (Hall and Symon 2012: 139).

---

<sup>28</sup> This aim is difficult given the major lack of literature specifically focusing on trust in sub-Saharan Africa and on the DRC in particular.

Trust can also be subjected to “social forces such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and other socio-cultural factors that shape who trusts, who is seen as trustworthy, and in what contexts” (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 5). Trustor’s and trustee’s identities, built around issues of gender, class, age, ethnicity, and language, can also have an impact on trust. Moreover, the relationship between the person and the body can also affect trust (Candlin and Crichton 2012). For instance, having been tortured can affect a person’s level of trust as “war and torture can destroy life, self-esteem, trust, support networks, and sense of personal invulnerability” (Behnia 2004: 26).

Furthermore, belonging to a group which claims to be discriminated against can affect trust negatively (Alesina and La Ferrara 2002). It has also been concluded that “individual perceptions of being unfairly treated or taken advantage of significantly decreases the trust level” (Singh 2012: 123). This is an important aspect to consider also in my research on refugees’ sense of trust and how their trust discourses are intertwined with discourses of discrimination and traumatic experiences both individually and communally. As my study is not about refugees’ identities, rather than investigating particular individual characteristics or conducting any systematic comparisons based on these ‘identity elements’, I suggest that it is more useful and appropriate to refer to the concept of intersectionality. This term can be defined as “the way in which any particular individual stands at the crossroads of multiple groups” (Minow 1997, cited in Valentine 2007: 12), and it was originally developed to “underscore the ‘multidimensionality’ of marginalized subjects’ lived experiences” (Crenshaw 1989, cited in Nash 2008: 2). Moreover, when analysing the intersections of oppression, there is a need to adopt “a multi-disciplinary and multi-scalar approach that addresses the intersection between multiple sites of oppression and their overlap across different spatial scales” (Daley 2008: 7).

By adopting this approach (broadly speaking), I suggest that my analysis of refugees' discourses of protection/space/trust needs to recognise the intersections of the various individual characteristics that my informants embody. However, my aim is not to extensively analyse these intersections but rather to acknowledge them in my analysis, which focuses on a variety of issues as outlined above (such as the context in which these discourses are produced and the multiple scales of analysis). Thus, my analysis pays attention to the various individual characteristics according to the amount that refugees use them in their discourses of protection/space/trust. Consequently, my analysis does not necessarily emphasise one element, such as gender, over others. Due to this approach, intersectionality, adopted commonly by feminists in various social sciences, is useful for my study because it recognises "that it is not possible to separate out categories of gender, race, class, and sexuality, nor to explain inequalities through a single framework" (Valentine 2007: 12). Moreover, it addresses previous problematic homogenising conceptualisations and treatment of these categories.

Given these propositions of intersectionality, I suggest that when refugees' discourses of trust are investigated, we need to pay attention to how these accounts of trust feature overlapping individual characteristics, such as aspects of gender, age, ethnicity, body, spirituality or legal status. In other words, I may investigate a specific discourse of trust by recognising that it is produced by a refugee who is a young disabled mother who belongs to an ethnic minority group, rather than trying to pin down or explain away the reasons for her trust as being a young person, female, disabled, a mother *or* a member of an ethnic minority. In taking this approach, I aim to give the refugees the space to "produce their own lives" (Valentine 2007: 14) by not assigning them specific identities but rather investigating what 'identity elements' they choose to employ in their discourses of

protection/space/trust. This approach, what has been referred to as “intersectionality as a lived experience”, helps us to understand “how identifications and disidentifications are simultaneously experienced by subjects in specific spatial and temporal moments through the course of everyday lives” (Valentine 2007: 18).

#### *3.4.2.4. Time*

In trust research the element of time is generally considered an important factor when issues of trust building and loss, and the nature of trust are examined. This is because trust is “always a fragile and momentary accomplishment, subject often to rapid shifts within encounters and over time” (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 5). Thus, when trust is used as an analytical tool, it is essential to recognise its situatedness and fluidity (Peteet 1995). Furthermore, as time passes the trust relationship and the nature of trust may change, typically from calculus-based trust to identification-based trust, which is centred on the assumption that the parties feel some kind of common identity (Hall and Symon 2012: 141).

Additionally, trust is not something that either exists or not; rather it “develops sequentially over a sustained trust period” (Norman 2009: 86). Thus, like space and time, trust and time are interconnected, and “the narrative lines connecting the past, present, and future are critical junctures in restoring trust” (Peteet 1995: 181). Given these observations, there is a need to move to a temporal way of conceptualising trust as it is “continuously changing, even if it may have relatively stable episodes” (Blumberg, Peiró and Roe 2012: 67). The dynamic processes of trust, however, make it a particularly difficult subject to analyse (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012: 11).

In this study, my aim is not to try to elaborate how the nature of trust changes over time but rather to investigate the broad ‘trust periods’ or ‘seasons of trust’ which might be characteristic of the various stages of the ‘refugee experiences’. I do this by investigating how refugees’ discourses of trust relate to their explanations of how they fled their homes, during their travel and while settling in to the city of exile.

### ***3.4.3. Relational spaces of protection***

#### *3.4.3.1. Relational spaces of social and institutional trust*

As already discussed (in Section 3.3.1), the physical, imagined, lived and relational elements of space are understood as intertwined. Thus, the relational aspect of space not only refers to relations between people but also to people’s relations to the physical, built urban environment (e.g. the cityscape) and the imaginations and everyday lived experiences of it. This section, however, presents a particular understanding of the relational nature of space centred on the concept of trust, which is particularly useful in the examination of refugees’ experiences of protection in their city of exile. Essentially, I suggest that refugees’ discourses of relational space (Massey 2005) combine the (also relational) concepts of protection and trust (Levi 1998, Candlin and Crichton 2012).

This section on relational space takes on Massey’s definition of space as constructed in social relations but extends the discussion to the new area of trust relations. A few refugee scholars have adopted Massey’s (2005) theorisation on space in their various analyses (Brun 2001, Ramadan 2012). A particular reading of relational space is presented by Ramadan (2012) in his theorisation on spatialising the refugee camp. Some aspects of this

theorisation can, I suggest, also be applied when refugee protection in urban space is investigated. According to Ramadan (2012: 3), “spatialising the camp, understanding how it is constituted and functions spatially, is a way of grounding the geopolitics of the everyday.” Based on Massey’s relational conceptualisation of space, Ramadan (2012: 6) proposes that:

the camp is ... who and what is in the camp, how they interrelate and interact. Camp space is produced out of the relations between and the practices of people (as individuals, families, institutions and organisations), and those subjectivities... in turn are produced by these interrelations and the space that they are simultaneously constructing.

Accordingly, the camp – like urban space – is diverse, dynamic and always in a process of changing. Refugees’ relations with the wider regional geopolitics and relations with the protection institutions also shape the relational space of the camp, or city.

Additionally, Ramadan (2012) recognises refugees’ agency and resistance to marginalisation in the camps. He suggests that camps can create a sense of community through mobilisation against exclusion. The aspect of resistance is also apparent in the contexts of refugees living in cities, as they establish communities which can function as a form of resistance against the inadequate formal protection architecture of the city. In this study I investigate, in particular, how mistrust can create forms of resistance deployed by urban refugees individually and collectively. These often communal forms of resistance performed by refugees can be studied from an inherently geographical point of view, as “resistance seeks to occupy, deploy and create alternative spatialities from those defined through oppression and exploitation” (Pile 1997: 2–3).

In this study, the relational understanding of space directs the analytical focus to the relationships between those providing and receiving protection. These protection

relationships, I suggest, are characterised by trust and the lack of it. I argue that the creation of meaningful ‘places of protection’ in cities is determined by refugees’ ability to trust and be trusted by other refugees, their hosts and the protection institutions. Yet trust is shaped by spatial relations, which ties the analyses of space and trust together. Not only are the relational space and trust interwoven but the physical, imagined and lived urban space is also understood to influence refugees’ sense of trust, creation of supportive communities and consequent feelings of safety – or the absence of all this.

In refugee studies, ‘trust’ has routinely been taken for granted and seen more as an indicator than as a process worth examining (Hynes 2009), and I suggest that its theoretical use in refugee studies remains limited. Yet trust has a central place in enquiries on the multiple stages of the ‘refugee experience’, from fleeing to the creation of durable solutions. Even by definition “refugees ... fear rather than trust their home government” (Muecke 1995: 38), and trust is understood to refer to refugees’ feelings of safety and well-being (Peteet 1995). In this study, ‘trust’ is understood as an essential element of protection – both the giving and receiving of protection in the urban space is shaped by trust.

Previous trust research in the context of refugee studies varies in at least two ways in relation to what Hynes (2003, 2009) has called social trust. Firstly, there is debate about how much the culture and society of the refugee’s country of origin, which have often been affected by violence and conflict, contributes to social trust in exile. Secondly, it has been suggested that there are varying perceptions as to whether or not there is something inherent in the ‘refugee experience’ that leads to a shortage of social trust. Consequently,

mistrust has emerged as an increasing outcome of the study of trust with respect to refugees.

In relation to the cultural and societal influence on 'trust', it is suggested that even if 'trust' is a fundamentally universal notion, it is shaped by particular contexts (Hynes 2003, Daniel and Knudsen 1995, Muecke 1995). Sommers (2001a) suggests that the events and societal context of the flight are essential in establishing feelings of fear and trust in exile. In the context of Burundian Hutu refugees in Tanzania, he talks about 'cultural fear', the culturally transmitted terror of past atrocities which took place in Burundi, and which was still relevant in a form of mistrust in the creation of refugee communities in Dar es Salaam. Russell (2011) and Lammers (2006b) also point out how the traumatic experiences of conflict and flight have an impact on refugees' social trust, sense of belonging and ability to create communities in Kampala.

When the question of whether or not 'mistrust' is something intrinsic in the 'refugee experience' is discussed, it is important to recognise that not all refugees experience the same levels or forms of mistrust (Hynes 2003). However, it is often difficult for refugees to trust other people, particularly in the early stages of their life in exile. This is because a considerable number of them had to learn not to trust people in order to survive in their countries of origin or during their flight. Kibreab (2004: 1), however, argues that abuse of trust (e.g. by cheating) has "little or nothing to do with being a refugee." He suggests that explaining cheating through ethical breakdown in a refugee population would be an oversimplification of the situation. It is also proposed that through reincorporation into the society of the country of asylum, and into communities, refugees' trust can be reconstituted or restored (Daniel and Knudsen 1995: 1–2). Religion and membership of

(religious) communities can be an important factor in restoring refugees' trust (Muecke 1995: 49).

In addition to social trust among the refugees, this study addresses institutional trust (Hynes 2003, 2009), which is understood to underpin personal trust (Rubbers 2009). A considerable volume of literature on trust-related issues<sup>29</sup> involving refugees and institutions focuses on the relationship between UNHCR and refugees. These analyses are, however, indicative of the relations between refugees and humanitarian organisations and authorities in general. Verdirame and Harrell-Bond (2005) provide an interesting analogy of 'UNHCR as a welfare state', which reveals the widespread mistrust between refugees and UNHCR. According to them (2005: 291), as a result of the increasing 'care and maintenance' aspect of UNHCR's work, they "developed many problems – or pathologies – that are common to national welfare institutions: the negative stereotyping and disempowerment of the beneficiaries; ... the gradual dehumanisation of helping; blaming the refugees for institutional failures." This has all contributed to the breakdown of trust between refugees and UNHCR.

The existing literature suggests that time is a relevant factor in refugees' feelings of trust toward the institutions of the humanitarian system. Hynes (2003) noted that while refugees from Myanmar generally trusted the 'UN system' upon arrival in Thailand, over time refugees in the camps lost that trust. Hyndman (2000: 140) also identified how, over time, organisations and authorities working with refugees can change their perceptions regarding

---

<sup>29</sup> This body of literature is, however, often focused on the broader relations between refugees and the protection institutions, and addresses the concept of trust only from a marginal and under-theorised perspective.

whether or not to trust refugees. Thus, as with social trust, institutional trust may change over time and space.

Two concepts, that of ‘compassionate authoritarianism’ (Holzer 2010) and the ‘culture of disbelief’ (Griffiths 2012), are useful in understanding the widespread challenges of institutional trust between refugees and protection institutions. In the refugee camp context in Ghana, Holzer (2010) examines a form of rule called ‘compassionate authoritarianism’; compassionate in the attempt to relieve the suffering of refugees, and authoritarian given the fact that “refugees have little or no access to grievance procedures and authorities face little or no accountability for political failures” (Holzer 2010: 1–2). In cases where refugees’ communal action is perceived by UNHCR and authorities as being dissident, the situations will most likely lead to the eroding of institutional trust. According to Griffiths (2012), the level of mistrust between asylum seekers and immigration officials in the UK is so deep that it can be described as a ‘culture of disbelief’. This refers to the magnitude of mistrust between asylum seekers and the immigration officials, and to the fact that neither side of the system trusts the other.

When trust between refugees and the protection institutions is discussed, it is important to include not only analysis of various humanitarian practices but also to consider the ways of representing refugees and acts of humanitarianism. Hyndman (2000: xxii) suggests that because displaced people often refuse to be categorised or managed, the politics of representation have become, in some cases, more important than humanitarian operations on the ground. This has sometimes led to ‘semio-violence’; a “representational practice that purports to speak for others but at the same time effaces their voices.”

To conclude, I will explore refugees' sense of social trust from generalised and particularised viewpoints by focusing on both the inter-personal and inter-community levels. This includes not only paying attention to the relationships among refugees but also to those between refugees and the hosts. Besides social trust, this study focuses on institutional trust: refugees' trust in the whole protection architecture of the city, its particular protection institutions and the 'access points' (i.e. officers) that represent these institutions.

#### *3.4.3.2. Urban refugees' 'communities of trust'*

Studies on urban refugees<sup>30</sup> in sub-Saharan Africa, and beyond, reiterate the importance of social ties and community structures in refugees' lives. Amisi (2006) describes how social networks play a crucial role in refugees' escape and travel from their country of origin. They are also central in refugees' abilities to thrive and integrate into new host societies. Indeed, communities are particularly important given forced migrants' exclusion from formal safety nets, such as public services and social assistance programmes (WRC 2011c: 57).

'Community' has been defined in urban refugee studies in multiple ways, and this analytical ambiguity has created not only conceptual but also programmatic challenges in regard to implementing 'community-based' protection approaches (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013). A case in point is Campbell's (2006) doctoral thesis in which she uses the notion of 'community' in at least 19 different ways, including references to the

---

<sup>30</sup> Some of the literature review presented in this section also appeared as part of the International Rescue Committee/Women's Refugee Commission consultancy on urban refugee research and social capital. As I worked on the consultancy together with Janosch Kullenberg, I would like to acknowledge his contribution to my thinking and writing on this theme.

“refugee community in Nairobi”, the “business community in Eastleigh”, the “host community” and the “international community”.

Latham et al. (2009: 149–150) have suggested that there are three principal ways in which the term ‘community’ has been used: community as place or neighbourhood; community as a set of shared values, practices, and ways-of-being-in-the-world; and community as shared interests. Community can also be defined as symbolic and imagined (O’Neill 2010: 12). Moreover, it is essential to understand community in relational terms: it involves (trust-based) connections between people and provides a means of resistance (Amin and Thrift 2002). Taking a network approach to community, Clark-Kazak (2006) emphasises the networks of human relationships and trust, and challenges the often taken for granted homogenous perception of ‘communities’ as it is not necessarily useful to think of a ‘community’ solely as a particular fixed space or as a shared identity. In urban contexts in particular, territorially defined community structures are often weakly developed, thus not providing a platform to reinforce community-based protection mechanisms. Urban communities are thus more accurately perceived as communities in process and cannot merely be fixed in space (Amin and Thrift 2002: 43).

The review of the urban refugee literature suggests that nationality is the most commonly used denominator to assign community membership to refugees. It is, for example, frequently stated that there are Congolese, Somali, Rwandan and Burundian ‘communities’ in Kampala (WRC 2011a). It is commonly assumed that when belonging to a certain nationality, individuals are automatically part of a national community. This is problematic because it reduces individuals’ agency. In addition, the practice of automatically assuming there is one community incorporating all of a particular nationality disguises the

differences and nuances between people and groups of the same nationality (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013).

Perhaps the most instrumental conceptualisation of the ‘urban refugee community’ is that of refugee-initiated communities. These refer to associations, churches, community-based organisations and self-help groups, among other forms. For instance, in the context of non-formal education (NFE) in Kampala, refugee-initiated communities may take the form of a refugee organisation, a ‘working group’, or a ‘support group’ (Bonfiglio 2010). Moreover, refugee-initiated communities can be distinguished according to their purposes and motivations. In Khartoum, Jackson (1987), for instance, found out that there were “instrumental refugee associations” (e.g. political organisations, relief and development organisations, and non-political self-help associations) and “expressive refugee associations” (e.g. centres for worship, para-church organisations, recreation groups and associations). The community initiatives refugees have created in the cities of the Global South – not only recently, but for decades – are plenty. Yet these structures have remained somewhat neglected by researchers and aid organisations alike (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013).

Religious and faith communities are increasingly recognised as crucial for urban refugees’ well-being (Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano 2010: 30). The issue of “spiritual capital” (Stawski 2012, cited in Pacitto 2012; Montemaggi 2011) or “religious capital” (Baker and Miles-Watson 2010) has been addressed in urban refugee studies, but often the discussion has been implicit and not focused on the issue on a theoretical level. Thus, there is a clear gap in theorising the role of faith and religion in (urban) refugee scholarship, and “probably no aspect of African refugee society and culture is as overlooked by researchers

and most humanitarian relief agencies as their religious lives”<sup>31</sup> (Sommers 2001a, 2001b: 362). Recently there have, however, been more studies looking at the importance of faith-based organisations (FBOs) and local faith communities (LFCs) in humanitarian action, and in refugee protection in particular (Fiddian-Quasmiyeh and Ager 2013, UNHCR 2012a).

The review of existing literature suggests that religion and faith play a significant role in refugees’ lives in the cities and towns of the Global South. Refugees derive support from networks in refugee-established churches, mosques and other places of worship, and in the places of worship dominated by the host society. Research findings indicate that attending a place of worship is important, as refugees derive “both individual and corporate spiritual strength from it” (Jackson 1987). Other studies have also concluded that “immigrant congregations are no longer just sites for religious worship; they are also assuming multiple functions, including both religious and secular classes such as the provision of social services, recreational centres and social spaces for civic functions” (Nzayabino 2010: 2). Moreover, the organisations related to the church, not the church per se, can also be a significant source of support (Jackson 1987).

Churches and other centres of worship are, furthermore, significant places to create social ties (Willems 2003) and can, therefore, represent a place where refugees feel a sense of belonging. This belonging and security can be created not only through material and immaterial support among the members of the congregation but also through preaching on how “religion directly tackles the difficulties of the lost aspects of home in the refugees’

---

<sup>31</sup> As a response to these observations, UNHCR has recently paid increasing attention to the connection between faith and refugee protection, most significantly by organising the High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges in 2012 on this very theme.

lives” (Russell 2011: 301). Additionally, the sense of belonging is created among the members of the congregation and also between refugees and God (Russell 2011). Places of worship can help to establish informal networks not only among urban refugees but also between refugees and their home country. Faith-based social ties can create an avenue for refugees to escape their country of origin or to move from the refugee camps to the cities (Sommers 2001a, 2001b). Finally, membership of a church or a mosque can further affect refugees’ motivations to integrate into their city of exile (Nzayabino 2010).

The term ‘community’ is also used to refer to people with similar characteristics. It is assumed that because these people belong to the same category (e.g. young, disabled) they form a group or community (i.e. ‘the youth,’ ‘the disabled’). While this is problematic (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013), findings have shown that similar characteristics do play an important role in social networking and community building. Willems’ (2005: 64) research in Dar es Salaam, for instance, suggests that on average refugees share their gender with the majority of their network members. Research findings also show that young refugees can create social networks among themselves, providing them with a sense of ‘community’ in the absence of traditional kin support structures (Clark-Kazak 2006, Lammers 2006). Thus, social networks among young refugees are often essential (WRC 2012a, 2012b; Newhouse 2012).

Despite the diverse definitions, and the subsequent conceptual confusion, of a ‘community’ in refugee studies, it is commonly suggested that trust is required for establishing meaningful communities where refugees can feel protected and secure. These

elements – trust and community – are vital in understanding refugee protection.<sup>32</sup> However, “not all community-driven and -determined action is positive or protective...” (Ferris 2011: 199) and, accordingly, romanticised conceptualisations of a ‘community’ should be avoided (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013).

Criminology studies suggest that people’s fears about crime or insecurity are mediated by the strength of their relationship with their local community and their structural position within that community (Walklate 1998). Understanding the nature of these relationships suggests that the question of trust is, therefore, significant in dealing with issues of crime, violence, and insecurity. Giddens (1991) states that trust is evident in traditional societies through personal relations and feelings of belonging to various communities. Ontological security, which can be understood as “the notion of safety, routine and trust in a stable environment” (Hawkins and Maurer 2011: 143), would thus provide a structure for one’s life and can then lead to a regaining of trust in people (Padgett 2007).

Refugees often feel that their ontological security – their safety, routine and sense of trust – is, if not completely absent, at least under threat (Hynes 2003). This is because in the context of forced displacement people may lose trust and routine, at least temporarily (Kibreab 2004). Losing trust in others often leads to weak community ties (Lammers 2006b), and there is a clear link between belonging to communities, establishing trust-based social networks and feeling protected. For instance, in the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy, the importance of community structures and community support in refugee protection is emphasised:

---

<sup>32</sup> Some of the literature review presented in this section appears as part of a submitted book chapter discussing the issues of social and institutional mistrust among the Congolese refugees in Kampala.

UNHCR's approach in urban settings will be community-based. ... The Office will strive to mobilize and capacitate the refugee population, so as to preserve and promote their dignity, self-esteem, productive and creative potential. ... UNHCR will foster the development of harmonious relationships amongst the different refugee groups residing in the same city. Similarly, the Office will encourage refugees and their local hosts to interact in a positive manner (UNHCR 2009: 7).

In addition, various UNHCR policies establish an explicit link between protection and community because "protection, which includes physical security and the restoration of human dignity, involves supporting communities to rebuild their social structures, realize their rights, and find durable solutions" (UNHCR 2008: 11). Furthermore, a study of four African cities by Landau and Duponchel (2011: 1) suggests a clear link between protection, particularly physical, and community structures, as the "primary determinants of urban protection have less to do with direct assistance and policy frameworks than individuals' choices and positions in social and institutional networks." However, "mutual support mechanisms and community-structures are probably less effective in urban than in rural areas" (Ferris 2011: 254).

UNHCR also realises that the task of providing protection through refugee communities may be challenging. Conflicts among refugees may arise in urban settings. Some of these tensions reflect divisions in the refugees' home countries, but new tensions can also arise in the context of living in exile in a city. Refugee communities may feel that they are sometimes neglected by UNHCR and the authorities. Organisations and authorities favouring some refugee community structures at the expense of others can further lead into conflicts between various communities, and between refugee communities and official providers of protection (UNHCR 2008, 2009a). Consequently, the rationale for and success of UNHCR's community-based protection approach has been questioned (Bakewell 2003). UNHCR has, for instance, failed to conceptualise the relationship

between community development and protection, and it has not successfully measured the link between community development and effective programming (Calhoun 2010a). The organisation therefore does not have a strong basis for investment in community development activities and is stuck in a “cycle of under-investment and under-performance in this area of work” (Calhoun 2010a: 2–3).

Regarding the social science literature, there are various streams of trust research which may be helpful in understanding how the issues of ‘trust’ and ‘community’ are linked. For example, many scholars include trust in the investigation of social capital (Coleman 1988, Putnam 1993) and social networks (Meagher 2010). Trust has also been investigated in relation to the city and the state in different political systems under the notion of ‘trust networks’ (Tilly 2004).

Perhaps more useful literature on trust in community settings can be found in the form of those studies focusing on the concept of ‘cooperation’. Sullivan, Snyder and Sullivan (2008) argue for a functional understanding of cooperation. This approach sees positive social connection as a source of emotional well-being. This argument is based on the evidence that feeling connected to others through a sense of group identity or shared humanity is a key component of cooperation: “positive social connections, often based on trust, serve as major sources of happiness, life satisfaction, meaning and other forms of positive affect” (Sullivan, Snyder and Sullivan 2008: 6). However, when group identity is not formed, or is characterised by suspicion or distrust, they do not lead to positive cooperation.

The lack of social connections or poor connections may result in negative emotions. This is because such a lack of positive connection indicates that the individual is in an unsafe environment in which support is unavailable (Sullivan, Snyder and Sullivan 2008). Also, being associated with a very close group characterised by control can lead to the destruction of generalised trust. Additionally, there is a clear connection between inequality and mistrust, and a sense of social integration and trust (Jasinski 2010: 62).

A sense of community, and the fact that trust makes social life more predictable and makes it easier for people to work together have all been identified as critical functions performed by trust (Misztal 1996). Trust is closely associated with the sense of security and protection. This is because trust can be understood as “an existential decision – to trust or not to trust – according to which each person’s sense of ontological security depends on their perception of the trustworthiness of people and society more generally” (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 2). Thus, trust is not only a social mechanism but also a psychological state which has an impact on community building and people’s sense of protection (Jabareen and Carmon 2010: 447, Tilly 2004).

Jabareen and Carmon (2010: 447–448) provide a useful analytical framework to study ‘communities of trust’ which can be defined as “a socio-spatial setting in which substantial relationships of trust among people exist, and in which people feel sheltered and safe because they do not perceive other community members as posing them a risk.” This framework basically combines the concepts of trust and risk in a communal setting. Trust is seen as the essence of community: “what differentiates community from a mere collection of people in a city is the existence of trust among them. Where there is trust,

there is a community.” This framework is discussed in more detail and applied in Chapter Eight.

### **3.5. Concluding discussion**

Given the lack of theoretical understanding of the notion of ‘protection space’, a conceptual framework to reconfigure this term was presented in this chapter. In this framework, I suggested that refugees’ own conceptualisations of protection ought to be at the centre of the investigation. In order to examine refugees’ urban protection discourses, I suggest that it is important to consider how they are related to, and possibly intertwined with, their discourses on space. Yet space should be understood not only as physical or imagined but also as social and relational. The essentially relational understanding of space, furthermore, opens the analysis to the investigation of refugees’ trust discourses. How refugees conceptualise protection in urban space, I suggest, may be closely related to their individual and communal experiences of both social and institutional trust. In summary, presenting a reconfigured refugee-initiated conceptualisation of ‘protection space’ requires an examination of the protection/space/trust –nexus.

In order to bring in the ‘urban’ character of the ‘spaces of protection’ at the centre of this study, I suggest that refugees’ ‘sense of place’ and their ‘right to the city’ need to be incorporated into the overall conceptual framework. With regard to the ‘sense of place’, the focus is on how refugees perceive their life in their city of exile and on how they imagine the safe and unsafe urban spaces. Again, I suggest that refugees’ discourses of space and trust may be intertwined, as refugees’ ‘sense of place’ can be characterised by

senses of trust and mistrust. 'Right to the city' is another essential concept for this study because it calls not only for the re-evaluation of the concept of rights-based protection but also provides an analytical framework to examine refugees' access to and use of space. Moreover, the concept of the right to the city provides a means to analyse how refugees appropriate space and participate in the production of (protective) spaces in their city of exile.

To conclude, I suggest that 'protection', 'space' and 'trust' are dialectical, fluid and interrelated concepts, and their essentially urban character can be examined through the investigation of refugees' 'sense of place' and 'right to the city'. These concepts, and their interplay, thus present an appropriate theoretical framework for understanding the everyday experiences of Congolese refugees in Kampala.



## **Chapter Four: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

### **4.1. Introduction**

I apply a flexibly designed qualitative case-study approach in this study. I collected primary data from individual Congolese refugees, refugee communities and officers of the protection institutions. The data-collection methods include a combination of semi-structured interviews, observation and FGDs, supported by some visual data (time-space diaries and participatory photographing). I rely on aspects of discourse analysis to analyse my textual data (Waitt 2005) and the visual data (Rose 2007, Jung 2012).

In this chapter I discuss in more detail the selection of the case study and the data collection and sample size. I also describe the fieldwork periods in Kampala. I give further details about the textual data collected for this study, and discuss how I analysed this data set. Following this, I examine the collection and interpretation of the visual research data intended to support the interviews. This chapter is finished with some ethical discussions and concluding remarks on my overall methodological approach.

### **4.2. Selection of the case study**

This study applies a case-study approach to investigate Congolese refugees' experiences of protection/space/trust in the city of Kampala. The aim is to develop an in-depth analysis of the case based on "detail, richness, completeness, and within-case variance" (Flyvbjerg 2011: 314). A case-study approach is in line with my overall aim to reconfigure the notion

of ‘protection space’ as it is based on the constructivist paradigm, which “supports the deconstruction and the subsequent reconstruction of various phenomena” (Baxter and Jack 2008: 544). A case study can be seen as “an instance in the flow of social life: scrutinised from different angles and providing critical insights into theoretical explanations for social phenomena” (Spencer 2011).

I chose to conduct my study in the capital city of Uganda, Kampala, for a number of reasons. Geographically, Kampala is one of the main centres for refugees in Eastern Africa. Uganda is, furthermore, an English-speaking country and Kampala a relatively accessible city. Additionally, I was aware of the work of the Refugee Law Project (RLP), a NGO which I became affiliated with, and other academics recommended that I cooperate with the RLP. The RLP works to ensure the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs in Uganda by providing a variety of legal, psychosocial and training services, and by conducting research. Additionally, there have been earlier studies of refugees in Kampala,<sup>33</sup> and my study contributes to this literature with its particular focus on protection, space<sup>34</sup> and trust.

A number of factors led me to focus on Congolese refugees. During my first fieldwork trip, the RLP officers advised me that the Congolese, Burundian and Rwandan refugees, in particular, had clear protection concerns. However, the Burundi population in Kampala is small and thus difficult to reach, as well as extensively studied in other cities, such as Dar

---

<sup>33</sup> Lomo, Naggaga and Hovil 2001; Huff and Kalyango 2002; HRW 2002; Macchiavello 2003; Clark-Kazak 2006; Lammers 2006a; Dryden-Peterson 2006; Bernstein and Okello 2007; Bonfiglio 2010; WRC 2011a; Russell 2011; Sandvik 2012

<sup>34</sup> Only the study by Sandvik (2012) has a focus on the question of urban space and protection. Her research, however, relies on data from the early 2000s, and therefore, my study provides a more current complementary analysis to Sandvik’s (2012) research.

es Salaam.<sup>35</sup> The Rwandan refugee population, on the other hand, faced such a severe security threat in the form of the cessation clause<sup>36</sup> that the RLP officers advised me not to work with them, due to the likelihood of them being reluctant to participate in my study. Thus, as a consequence of the large number and the cultural openness of the Congolese, I decided to pursue my study with them. The Congolese also form an interesting population to study because of the different periods of time that they have lived in Kampala.

### **4.3. Data collection and sample size**

My data-collection methods include a combination of semi-structured interviews, FGDs, observation, and supplementary visual methods (i.e. time-space diaries and participatory photographing) (Appendix 1). The use of multiple methods is seen as essential in a case-study approach as “each data source is one piece of the ‘puzzle’, with each piece contributing to the researcher’s understanding of the whole phenomenon. This convergence adds strength to the findings as the various strands of data are braided together to promote a greater understanding of the case” (Baxter and Jack 2008: 554). I also aimed to ensure the rigour of the analysis through methodological triangulation (Bradshaw and Stratford 2005, Robson 2002). Understanding refugees’ experiences of ‘space’, moreover, required the use of alternative visual methods. These supplementary methods provided me with essential data that I would not have gained by solely relying on the interview and observation techniques. Thus, my analysis of refugees’

---

<sup>35</sup> Malkki 1995; Sommers 2001a, 2001b; Willems 2003, 2005

<sup>36</sup> The cessation clause was signed by the Governments of Rwanda and Uganda, together with the UNHCR, in 2010. It was supposed to be invoked in mid-2013 but the Government of Uganda has given mixed signals in regard to its implementation (Cachari and Cliché-Rivard 2013). Also, UNHCR postponed its first date of cessation from 31 December 2011 to 30 June 2013 due to a lack of preparation. If the clause was to be implemented, it would mean that the majority of the Rwandan refugees in Uganda would have to return to Rwanda due to them losing their refugee status.

conceptualisations of ‘protection space’ was enhanced by integrating different textual and visual data.

The data collected from Congolese refugees comprises 74 formal semi-structured individual interviews (Appendix 1), 13 formal and informal FGDs (Appendix 2), and observational data from a number of community meetings. Semi-structured interviews were also held with 18 refugee community leaders. Additionally, I held a number of informal discussions with refugees, and some of the participants I interviewed more than once. Regarding the visual data, time-space diaries were filled in by 23 refugees and nine of the diarists were interviewed. Additionally, ten refugees took part in the participatory photographing exercise and all of them were interviewed several times. Written documents produced by refugees are also used.

In regard to the sequencing of different methods used, I usually began data collection with a semi-structured interview covering the main themes of the research and participant’s biographical data. This was followed by the time-space diary exercise and the interview explaining the diaries. Some of the refugees also conducted the participatory photographing exercise and all of them were interviewed. A final interview discussing the photographs was arranged to complete the data collection circle (Table 3).

<b>Data-collection method</b>	<b>Data collected</b>	<b>Data interpreted by the participant</b>	<b>Typical data collection setting</b>
1. Semi-structured interview (N=74) →	Recording (and transcript) or notes; biographical data and the main themes of the research	No	Private discussion with or without an interpreter at an office, community space or home
2. Time-space diary (N=23) →	Filling in a diary over the course of seven days in two-hour blocks, optional notebook to write additional reflections	Yes, retrospectively	Initiated in a classroom of YARID; filled in in private
3. Interview explaining the diary (N=9)→	Recording (and transcript) or notes	Yes, interpreting the diaries together with the researcher	Private discussion with or without an interpreter at an office or community space
4. Participant photographing (N=10)→	Around 36 photographs taken by each participant over the course of a week on important issues of their everyday lives	Yes, retrospectively	Initiated in a classroom of YARID or at RLP; produced in private
5. Interview explaining the photographs (N=10)	Recording (and transcript) or notes	Yes, interpreting the printed photographs	Private discussion at an office or community space

Table 3. The preferred data-collection cycle with individual refugees (See Appendix 1 and 2 for details).

I also incorporated an institutional perspective on examining refugee protection in urban space. I interviewed individually or in pairs 16 Ugandan authorities (at the national, city, division, parish and zone levels), and 22 officers from other protection institutions (including UNHCR and NGOs working on refugee-related issues) (Appendix 2). Observational data were collected at the offices of the institutions of protection. In addition, written documents and statistics produced by these institutions were used. I also conducted nine ‘expert interviews’ in Kampala and in Geneva<sup>37</sup> on the broader themes of urban humanitarian action and urbanisation (Appendix 2).

<sup>37</sup> In Geneva, I was invited to attend the High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges on urban refugee protection in December 2009, which was organised at the UNHCR headquarters.

#### **4.4. Fieldwork periods in Kampala**

In total I spent eight and a half months in Kampala between May 2010 and September 2011. My fieldwork consisted of three separate visits with particular goals: a pilot study of two weeks and two periods of substantive research of four months each.

The pilot study took place in May 2010. This was my first time in Uganda. During this initial trip I established a research affiliation with the RLP. As an international researcher I was required to have an affiliation with a Ugandan institution in order to gain the required research permit from the Government of Uganda. I also gained advanced understanding of the refugee issues in the city.

During the first substantive fieldwork period (October 2010 to January 2011) my work was negatively affected by a delay in receiving the research permit from the Ugandan government. I assume that this was partly due to the upcoming presidential elections but it may have also been delayed because of my affiliation with the RLP.<sup>38</sup> Despite this delay I managed to test the various data-collection methods, to establish initial connections with various participants (including refugees), and to collect some data. I decided to return to Oxford to work on my preliminary data set in order to avoid the presidential elections held in Uganda in February 2011. After transcribing and analysing this first set of data in Oxford, I produced a clear plan as to what I needed to achieve during the next fieldtrip. I also decided to focus solely on Congolese refugees and was able to do the necessary readings on the conflict in the DRC during my stay in Oxford.

---

<sup>38</sup> RLP has had a rather tense relationship with the Government of Uganda and at the time I applied for the permit a number of RLP applications were on hold.

The second substantive fieldwork period (end of May 2011 to end of September 2011) was the most successful one. I managed to collect most of my data, including the visual data which I tested during my previous trip. I also gained access to several refugee communities and became a regular visitor to some of them. Consequently, I was able to build some long-term relationships with my informants. I also managed to conduct the majority of the interviews with the authorities and officers during this period.

#### **4.5. Details about the textual data collected**

##### ***4.5.1. Flexible research design and sampling***

This study uses a qualitative approach to study refugees' experiences of protection in urban space. Adopting a flexible research design (Robson 2002) meant that the methodological approach used in this study evolved over the course of the research project. In practical terms this meant, for instance, that when I started my fieldwork, I had not decided to work merely with Congolese refugees and had not planned to include youth in my study. Also, after realising that my other data-collection methods did not provide me with the quality and quantity of information I needed in regard to 'space', I adopted visual methods during my fieldwork. The flexible research design also allowed me to explore new theoretical insights while analysing my data, in particular that of 'trust'. Quite commonly social science research becomes involved in the issue of trust only when it emerges from the analysis (Möllering 2006), and consequently "methodological care may be less than in studies which were designed to investigate trust" (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012: 7).

I apply an ‘information-oriented selection’ of samples, which is a form of purposeful sampling. This sampling method fits with the case-study approach, as it aims to “maximize the utility of information from small samples and single cases” (Flyvbjerg 2006: 230). In more detail, I apply ‘maximum variation sampling’ which I deemed to be the most appropriate for this study because I examine refugees’ diverse, yet somewhat shared, experiences of protection. As I understood that not only the evolving contexts but also refugees’ individual characteristics and past experiences may have an impact on their experiences of protection/space/trust, documenting “unique or diverse variations that have emerged in adapting to different conditions” (Bradshaw and Stratford 2005: 72) is seen as central to the analysis. Besides recognising some of the unique nature of the experiences, I attempt to identify common patterns that cut across participants. I understand that the intersections of certain characteristics of refugees, such as age, bodily appearance, ethnicity, gender, legal status and spirituality, among others, may influence their experiences of everyday urban life in their city of exile. Consequently, I selected participants with different characteristics: men, women, boys, girls, young, middle-aged, elderly, disabled, able bodied, homosexual, heterosexual, ethnic minorities, ethnic majorities, refugees, asylum seekers, undocumented forced migrants, and so on. I do not, however, intend to examine one or a few characteristics more than others, and thus my analysis does not put, for instance, more emphasis on refugees’ gender than their bodily appearance or age.

After setting up these broad selection criteria, in order to locate the participants I utilised multiple strategies to avoid potential selection biases. I met some of the refugees at the RLP office where I began my study. However, after getting access to different refugee communities through my initial contacts, I began to conduct interviews in multiple

locations of the city. I also conducted some interviews at refugees' homes. Toward the end of my fieldwork I 'returned' to the RLP office, where I collected data with the various refugee support groups attached to the RLP.

Whereas most of the time I relied on my gatekeepers (i.e. my research assistants/interpreters and community leaders) to recruit participants from their respective communities, I also ended up being approached by refugees who wanted to talk to me. Some of them knew I was conducting research and they specifically wanted to share their experiences with me, but sometimes I was approached on the streets of Kampala by Congolese refugees who did not even know what I was doing in Uganda. Occasionally these unexpected encounters led to the building of long-term relationships with refugees and consequently to access to their respective communities.

#### ***4.5.2. Semi-structured interviews and characteristics of individual refugees***

Semi-structured interviewing as a data-collection method is widely used in case studies and it refers to interviewing with "some degree of predetermined order but still ensures the flexibility in the way issues are addressed by the informant" (Dunn 2005: 80). Before starting my interviews, I developed an initial interview schedule. However, after discussing its content with my research assistants/interpreters and testing it, the schedule kept evolving. The interviews with refugees covered briefly their flight, travel to, and arrival in Kampala as a background in order for me to be able to contextualise their discourses. The main focus was, however, on their everyday life in Kampala, or more specifically refugees' experiences of protection and insecurity, access to formal mechanisms of protection, and their attendance in various 'communities'. After an initial

analysis of data on refugees' experiences of the spatiality of their protection, I realised that the concept of 'trust' was an overarching theme throughout the data. Since 'trust' emerged as a key analytical theme only after I had finished my fieldwork, direct questions about trust were not explicitly included in the interview schedule. A number of the topics discussed, however, implicitly refer to the issue of trust.

Most of the interviews with Congolese refugees were conducted in Kiswahili (and some in French) and translated into English by an interpreter. Many were also conducted in English without an interpreter, and often these interviews provided the most nuanced information. More than 90 per cent of the interviews were audio recorded with the informant's permission, and subsequently transcribed.

The 74 Congolese refugees individually interviewed for this study had left the DRC between 2000 and 2011. On average they had stayed in Uganda for three years, but the actual time varied, from a couple of days to 11 years. The majority of the refugees (95 per cent) were from the eastern parts of the DRC: 49 per cent were from South Kivu and 46 per cent from North Kivu. Most of them had an urban background and were relatively well educated. The majority of the informants were married (45 per cent) or single (43 per cent). Some were also widowed or unaccompanied minors (5.5 per cent each). Sixty-eight per cent of the individuals interviewed were men and 32 per cent women. This rather unequal gender balance was partly due to the fact that there are slightly more Congolese refugee men in the city than women. Also, men typically have more time to come to community meetings and offices to seek for protection, and thus are easier to approach than women who typically are the breadwinners and who also have to take care of most of the household chores. In order to circumvent the bias of having interviewed fewer

individual refugee women than men, I made an effort to conduct FGDs with women. My home visits also targeted women.

Overall, the refugees I interviewed for this study were between 15 and 64 years old, the average age being 32 years. The majority of my informants were relatively young, but I aimed to maintain a cross-generational analysis of my data by providing examples from young, middle-aged and elderly refugees. Sixty-two per cent of the informants had a refugee status, 28 per cent were asylum seekers, and ten per cent were not registered with the authorities. Seventy-seven per cent of the refugees had not been in the rural refugee settlements over the course of their stay in Uganda. Most of the refugees who identified themselves as a member of a particular ethnic group were Bashi (23 per cent), Banyamulenge (17 per cent), Barega (10 per cent), Nande (10 per cent) or Bembe (10 per cent). The majority of my participants identified themselves as Christians<sup>39</sup> but they represented different denominations; mostly Pentecostal or denominational, but also Catholic.

#### ***4.5.3. Focus group discussions and observation with refugee communities***

To supplement the semi-structured interviews with individual refugees, I collected data from various Congolese refugee communities. I observed their meetings, held FGDs with their members, and interviewed the community leaders. The term ‘community’ is used in this study by referring to various non-territorially defined refugee groups characterised by some level of trust among their members. My sample is limited to the communities

---

<sup>39</sup> Two informants identified themselves as Jehovah’s Witnesses, but the remaining 72 identified themselves as Catholic or Protestant.

refugees identified during our interviews: the Congolese Refugee Community in Uganda (CRCU) (based on their attempt to unite all of the Congolese refugees in the city), the Banyamulenge community (based on distinctive ethnic background), various refugee community organisations (RCOs) (based on training and entrepreneurship), different Christian churches (based on shared faith), and peer-support groups for women, youth, people with disabilities, sexual minorities and sex workers, and torture survivors (based on shared experiences and needs).

I became a regular visitor to some of the refugee communities and people had a chance to get to know me and my research project rather well. In other situations my encounter with the communities remained short and formal, comprising only one or two visits to their offices or other meeting places. However, in regard to some of the church communities I gained access as a partial ‘insider’ because of my regular visits and more substantial participation in their activities.

Observation, through seeing and listening (Kearns 2005: 194), is a particularly useful method with regard to communities. I mostly conducted primary observation by observing, not taking part in<sup>40</sup> (Robson 2002: 310), the various community meetings held by refugees. However, even if I did not actively take part in most of the meetings, my presence alone as a white foreigner had an impact on these situations.

Data from the communities were also collected through the use of FGDs. I held both formal and informal FGDs, of which most were audio recorded. Setting up these group

---

<sup>40</sup> My observation in the church settings was more in line with participatory observation than in other community environments.

discussions was done in ways that were identified as the most appropriate in a given context. The composition of the FGD was discussed and decided in consultation with the leader of the given community. In many cases, the leaders also ended up selecting the participants following my advice on the desired numbers and characteristics. This certainly created a selection bias, but by doing this I showed respect to the leaders who regulated my access to these communities.

Overall, I found FGDs a useful method because they provided me with an additional chance to observe the intra-community relations. For ethical reasons, I emphasised that the participants were not encouraged to share particularly personal or sensitive information, and that they were required to keep all of the information confidential (Cameron 2005). Both men and women participated in some of the FGDs together. This was seen as appropriate by most of the leaders and members because there were no differentiations between men and women in their activities. However, in cases where the community leader or members suggested having separate FGDs for men and women, this was organised.

The number of people in formal FGDs ranged between five and 14 people. When the number of participants was more than seven, keeping up dialogue became difficult. Including too many participants in a FGD is a common problem with the method (Cameron 2005: 122). On a few occasions people were asked to come back for another session when it seemed that the initial discussion had not reached saturation point. I conducted most of the FGDs with an interpreter. Sometimes the interpreter would be an 'outsider' to the community, and at other times the communities wanted to provide their

own interpreter. Most of the FGDs were audio recorded and transcribed. However, some of the communities prohibited my use of recorder and then I relied on my notes.<sup>41</sup>

#### ***4.5.4. Semi-structured interviews with protection institutions***

Besides refugees, I collected data from various protection institutions in order to examine their discourses of urban refugee protection and, in particular, to analyse how their discourses and policies corresponded to or diverted from refugees' experiences of protection.

After gaining the required research permit from the Government of Uganda, getting access to the Ugandan authorities at the national, city, division, parish and zone level was quite straightforward. I ended up interviewing three officers of the Department of Refugees of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) who have national responsibility for refugees in the country (Appendix 2). I also interviewed three officers of the KCCA, which is in charge of the planning and implementation of various services in the city. Additionally, I held interviews with the Commissioner for Urban Development and seven LCs at division, parish and zone levels. I also managed to interview two police commanders, one who directly dealt with refugee protection. Three UNHCR officers and 19 NGO staff members were also interviewed. Gaining access to some of the officers required lengthy waiting periods at their offices, which allowed me to observe their practices and interaction with refugees. At times, talking to NGOs was controlled by the national authorities. For instance, I was not allowed to interview the InterAid Uganda (IAU) officer before the

---

<sup>41</sup> During the two FGDs with the Banyamulenge Tutsi men and women I was asked not to record the discussion. I was, however, accompanied by a volunteer Legal Officer from the RLP and I could cross-check my notes with hers.

OPM had written a letter approving this. IAU was UNHCR's only implementing partner in the city. In practice UNHCR had outsourced most of its direct interaction with refugees to IAU.

UNHCR ended up being the most difficult organisation to engage with. Despite the fact that I had previously worked for their headquarters in Geneva and made numerous efforts to gain access, the office in Kampala remained unapproachable to me for nine months after I had arrived to Kampala for my pilot study. Once, I was promised an appointment with an UNHCR officer as long as I would not ask any questions about urban IDPs, which is an issue highly sensitive in Uganda; however, this meeting was cancelled. I finally managed to interview two officers at once. Being able to secure a meeting with a third officer, however, took another eight months after my first encounter with UNHCR. Like IAU, UNHCR wanted to receive my interview questions in advance, and I respected their wish.

#### **4.6. Textual data analysis**

By applying a case-study approach in my investigation, I relied on a constructivist paradigm (Baxter and Jack 2008), which has an “emphasis on the social meanings constructed by people in diverse communities and societies, and the relativity and context-dependence of these meanings implies quite different ways of doing research” (Castles 2012: 21). Consequently, my data analysis involves deconstructing and reconstructing refugees' textual and visual ‘discourses’ on their protection in the city space.

#### **4.6.1. Coding**

More than 90 per cent of my semi-structured interviews with refugees and officers, as well as many of the FGDs and observation situations with refugee communities, were recorded. Diary and photographing exercises with refugees also included some questionnaires and interviews which had to be transcribed. I transcribed all of the recordings myself because, since I collected the data, I was able to contextualise the discussions. The transcription process, despite being lengthy, allowed me to become exceptionally familiar with the content of my data and it acted as the preliminary form of data analysis (Dunn 2005: 97). I ended up with more than 700 pages of transcriptions. Given the large amount of data, I needed an effective way to store and analyse it, for which I used the NVivo 9 programme. NVivo also proved an efficient way to perform data coding (Bazeley 2007: 2). In order to avoid the typical criticism against the use of computer programs for coding, such as distancing the researcher from the data (Bazeley 2007), I also printed out all of my transcripts and organised them in a secure filing cabinet for manual usage.

When I had imported all the transcript files produced in Microsoft Word to NVivo, I sorted them into folders based on who provided the data. I began my data analysis with coding aimed at reducing and organising my data (Cope 2005: 223). As my coding proceeded, I began to identify themes in texts (i.e. to recontextualise). The created codes in NVivo refer to both the source and also the descriptive or analytical theme at hand. From the initial reading and rereading of my textual data with refugees, I coded 14 main themes (called 'nodes' in NVivo), which helped me to create a meta-structure for further analysis (Table 4). I also coded the data collected from the protection institutions into 16 main themes (i.e. 'nodes') (Table 5). The main nodes shown in tables 4 and 5 were coded in more detail to

include several sub-themes. For instance, the theme ‘insecurity’ coded from the refugee data included 15 sub-themes. Also, some of the textual data has been coded into more than one ‘node’, whereas other parts of the transcripts irrelevant for my study were not coded at all.

<b>Node (i.e. theme) (95 items<sup>42</sup> in total)</b>	<b>Source (i.e. interview/FGD/ observation)</b>	<b>Reference (i.e. frequency)</b>
1. Additional information	50	59
2. Arrival	61	80
3. Assistance	71	400
4. Biographical data	74	85
5. Camps	46	74
6. Challenges	81	360
7. Communities	74	151
8. Flight	74	81
9. Insecurity	77	591
10. Knowing the city and movement	8	8
11. Trust	56	238
12. Protection	31	36
13. Refugee Status Determination (RSD)	60	72
14. Travel	47	47

Table 4. Sources and references per node with the textual data collected with refugees.

<b>Node (i.e. theme)</b>	<b>Source (i.e. interview)</b>	<b>Reference (i.e. frequency)</b>
1. Access to IAU, UNHCR, OPM etc.	7	18
2. Camps	3	16
3. Protection challenges	6	11
4. Cooperation and relations with other organisations and authorities	13	57
5. Durable solutions	9	10
6. Home visits	1	2
7. Making work personal	4	12
8. Mistrust	20	159
9. Policies explained	8	49
10. Protection and insecurity in the city	17	84
11. Reception centre	1	1
12. Refugee communities and organization	11	36
13. Relations between refugees and Ugandans	7	19
14. RSD	6	18
15. Support for assistance	11	18
16. Description of the urban case load	8	36

Table 5. Sources and references per node with the textual data collected with the protection institutions.

<sup>42</sup> ‘Item’ refers to the number of text files (defined as an individual interview, FGD or set of observation) in the database. ‘Node’ refers to the theme coded from the transcript. ‘Source’ refers to the number of text files referred to. ‘Reference’ refers to the amount of references made to a certain theme.

To some extent my coding was based on ‘a priori codes’ (Bazeley 2007: 76), which I identified through my theoretical reading and creation of research questions. My coding was also derived directly from the data (i.e. ‘in vivo codes’) and included themes such as ‘trust’, which only emerged following preliminary analysis. The themes (i.e. ‘nodes’) combine both descriptive codes (e.g. where a specific word was mentioned) and analytical codes (e.g. where issues related to the specific subject were discussed) (Cope 2005: 224–226). After the preliminary metacoding in NVivo, I decided to conduct a more detailed analytical re-coding in Microsoft Word. This allowed me to “grasp the varying opinions on a certain issue and to begin to unravel the general feelings about an issue” (Dunn 2005: 101).

#### ***4.6.2. Discourse analysis***

Overall, my analysis of the textual (and also visual) data includes aspects related to discourse analysis, which is seen as a particularly appropriate data analysis method in studies on marginalised or excluded people. Based on its constructionist approach, discourse analysis aims to “move beyond the text, the subtext, and representation to uncover issues of power relationships that inform what people think and do” (Waitt 2005: 166). In an approach drawing on discourse analysis, it is understood that “language has such a central role in social life, [that] the study of it provides the key to understanding our social functions” (Robson 2002: 365). Thus, the analysis focuses not only on the content of the text but also on the styles and strategies of the language use (i.e. how things are said). However, in my analysis the latter takes a less important role.

My analysis focuses on identifying both shared and contested discourses used by refugees (individually and collectively) and the officers of the protection institutions on protection/space/trust. The use of language and expression is, therefore, focused on the issue of how various individuals try to describe their ‘truth’, i.e. the discourse they adopted on protection. This is in line with the aim of (Foucauldian) discourse analysis which in its essence “investigates the rules about the production of knowledge through language (meanings) and its influence over what we do (practice)” (Waitt 2005: 164). Thus, the aim is to examine the outcomes of various discourses in terms of actions, perceptions and attitudes, and to challenge the structures and ideas that are perceived as ‘common-sense’ or as ‘taken-for-granted’, so as to “understand how particular ideas are privileged as ‘truth’” (Waitt 2005: 168).

Furthermore, as I investigate refugees’ experiences of protection from both individual and communal points of view, my primary data can shed light not only on the unique individual experiences but also on commonly shared discourses of protection/space/trust. Given the limited sample I had with particular categories of refugees, such as the disabled, youth and sexual minorities, I cannot conduct a systematic comparison between these heterogeneous groups, and this was not my aim from the outset of the research. Rather, what I aim to do is to recognise that refugees’ experiences of protection may be distinct depending on the intersections of the context of their flight and living in exile and their particular individual characteristics (e.g. age, bodily appearance, ethnicity, gender, legal status, and spirituality).

## **4.7. Collection and interpretation of visual research data**

### ***4.7.1. The use of visual methods***

In order to investigate refugees' experiences of protection/space/trust, I incorporated visual methods because I understand that these methods can provide refugees with an alternative way to describe their spatial experiences of protection. However, at the outset of my research, I was not planning to use visual methods. Only when I realised that my interviews did not produce the data I needed in regard to examining 'space' did I decide to test and implement a combination of time-space diaries and participatory photographing. The data these methods produced were of tremendous help in order to understand the intersection between the notion of 'protection space' and the geographical reality of the urban everyday life experienced by the refugees.

Visual data-collection methods are particularly useful in providing data on personal memories and experiences of specific places (Spencer 2011), and when used carefully they can provide the participants with real chances to join in the creation and interpretation of data (Pink 2007). In situations where language or the sensitivity of a research topic may be an issue, using visual data-collection methods can provide highly appropriate ways of knowledge production (Jung 2012, Rose 2007). Finally, various visual data triangulate each other (Jung 2012), and innovative methodological combinations are encouraged (Pink 2007). In this study, I first conducted time-space diary exercises. Participatory photographing was a natural continuation of the use of visual methods. Most of the visual data were produced and collected with advanced-level English students at a community

school and at the RLP. I will now discuss briefly time-space diaries and participatory photographing in more detail.

#### ***4.7.2. Time-space diaries***

A diary is “a document created by an individual who has maintained a regular, personal and contemporaneous record” (Alaszewski 2006: 29). Time-space diaries are a method often used in geographical research investigating people’s behaviour in and use of space. When used in an innovative way, diaries can produce interesting accounts of the everyday life of the diarist’s “embodied routine, routines of occupation and use” (Latham 2003: 2001). Diaries can be seen as an extension of direct observation, and therefore they can be useful in situations in which it may be difficult to conduct observation or when interviewing people about sensitive issues is deemed inappropriate.

In this study, I applied a simple seven-day diary with each day divided into two-hour blocks. This frequency has been suggested to be generally appropriate when using this method (Thornton, Williams and Shaw 1997). The diary had four columns which refugees filled in in relation to the given time: ‘parish/zone’ (i.e. location in the city), ‘place’ (i.e. building), ‘activities’ (i.e. conducted activities), and ‘experiences’ (i.e. reflection). Only a few of the diarists used the optional notebook to expand on their reflections. I see these diary entries as indicative of refugees’ everyday life in the city, both in terms of their spatial routine and rhythms. They also provide insights into the micro-scale ‘spaces of protection’ which refugees visit as part of their ordinary life.

The quantity and quality of data can vary according to the enthusiasm of the diarist (Thornton, Williams and Shaw 1997). Diaries as a method put a lot of pressure on the participants and some of them never returned the diaries. Another challenge was to do with language skills. I decided to conduct the exercise in English because the language students saw the diary exercise as a useful way to improve their skills. However, I may have got more insightful data had I let the informants fill them in in Kiswahili or in French. Another problem is that the diarists may end up changing their normal daily routine just because they want to show certain activities to the researcher that they assume are important or interesting (Thornton, Williams and Shaw 1997). While explaining how to conduct the diary exercise, I emphasised the fact that the participants should not change anything about their normal daily and weekly rhythm as I was especially interested in their everyday life.

In regard to combining time-space diaries with other methods, Latham (2003) in his 'diary-photograph, diary-interview method' has presented innovative ways to combine these data-collection methods. However, I did not ask my participants to fill in the diary and to take photographs over the course of the same week, like Latham (2003) did, due to the time pressure that this approach would have created. Combining diaries with interviews, on the other hand, is essential as "the diary becomes a kind of performance or reportage of the week and the interview a reaccounting, or reperformance" (Latham 2003: 2002). Accordingly, my analysis combines reflections from diaries and photographs with the main source of data, the interviews.

### ***4.7.3. Participatory photography***

As I understood that the diaries alone would not have provided rich enough data for my spatial analysis, I decided to incorporate a participatory photography exercise in my study. This was because diaries and photography are often seen as complementary visual data-collection methods (Latham 2003). Photographs can “carry or evoke three things – information, affect and reflection – particularly well” (Rose 2007: 238). At best, participatory photography can be a culturally appropriate “powerful tool as it can reveal in-depth information from research participants (values, knowledge, concerns, and aspirations) that may not be captured through other participatory approaches such as semi-structured interviews” (MacLean and Woodward 2010: 7). It can also engage the participants in data production, interpretation and analysis, and consequently mitigate the power imbalance between the researcher and the participants (Holgate, Keles and Kumarappan 2012). Additionally, photographs can serve as a starting point for discussion on new research themes, and they can provide insights into places that the researcher would not have otherwise gained access to (Joanou 2009).

A participatory photography project typically includes four stages: opening phase, active photo shooting, decoding phase, and analytical and scientific interpretation (Kolb 2008, cited in Giritli-Nygren and Schmauch 2012). First, in the opening phase, I recruited ten refugees – two women and eight men – most of whom had also taken part in the diary exercise. The uneven gender balance was unfortunate but I was unable to find more female refugees who wanted to participate in this stage of the research. I advised the participants to take photographs of their everyday life, including important places and issues reflecting the theme “life of a refugee in Kampala”. Giving only broad instructions was done

purposefully in order to “allow the participants to ‘speak’ for themselves using the lens of their camera” (Holgate, Keles and Kumarappan 2012: 312). I also explained some of the possible ethical considerations involved in this exercise. I cautioned the participants not to put themselves in risky situations for the sake of taking photographs, and reminded them about the need to gain permission if including people in their photographs (Prins 2010, Lykes 2010). For ethical reasons I have not used any photographs where either my participants or any other people are easily identified. Excluding photographs when necessary is an important aspect of the ethical use of the photo elicitation project (Joanou 2009: 214).

Second, the active photo shooting refers to the phase when “participants answer the research questions by taking photographs that reflect their own standpoint, entailing choices in how to visualise the issues that concern them and how to produce images” (Giritli-Nygren and Schmauch 2012: 603). I gave the participants a week to take the 36 photographs. I did not have much interaction with them during this week because I did not want to influence their decisions about where, when or what to photograph. I did, however, explain to them in detail the aim and objectives of my research.

Third, in the decoding phase the participants are interviewed about the photographs they took. This is to provide a verbal explanation of the images (Giritli-Nygren and Schmauch 2012: 603). I see photographs primarily as supporting data and they were used to encourage interview talk that would not be possible without the photographs (Rose 2007: 239). I developed two copies of the photographs, one for the participant and one for myself. Considering the ownership of the photographs is a particular ethical issue which has to be dealt with carefully (Joanou 2009). I gained verbal consent to use the

photographs in my research from all of the participants and they could exclude any of the photographs from my research at any stage. I recorded most of the discussions explaining the photographs. Some of the participants provided in-depth reflections, whereas others only gave short explanations. Thus, the textual data on the photographs substantially varies in its quantity and quality.

The last stage of analytical and scientific interpretation gives the researcher a larger role than in the earlier stages. This phase includes the researcher analysing the data. The photographs can be seen as direct answers to the research questions, and it is important to let the coding and analysis emerge from the empirical data itself (Giritli-Nygren and Schmauch 2012: 603). Typically, photographs are analysed based on their content and the stories behind the pictures.

In summary, my use of participatory photographing with the Congolese refugees in Kampala is in line with Lombard's (2012: 1475) conclusions on the use of this method in her geographical research in the informal neighbourhoods in Mexico:

Within a broadly phenomenological approach to place, auto-photographing [i.e. participatory photographing] offers a rich potential to explore participants' perceptual observations that may be harder to access through more conventional techniques such as interviews. It is particularly suitable for use with marginalised groups, given its capacity to emphasise how the less powerful see their place in the world.

Furthermore, I would suggest that the two visual methods – diaries and photographs – are complementary and the shortcomings in one method can be overcome in the other method. Additionally, both of these visual methods contribute to building a coherent picture of the participant's understandings of the protection/space/trust nexus. Thus, I am convinced that

by applying these visual methods with interviews I was able to produce the data needed for an in-depth understanding of my participants' experiences of protection in their city of exile.

#### **4.8. Ethical considerations**

It is important to consider some of the ethical dilemmas prevalent in this study by discussing the more general literature on ethics in the social sciences and in refugee studies in particular. Ethical considerations are particularly complex in refugee research, which is typically conducted in highly political and insecure environments (Schmidt 2007). The main ethical issues in regard to my study are: the emergence of sensitive topics in my interviews and the use of this data (especially data referring to persecution and SGBV); disclosure in FGDs<sup>43</sup>; working with youth; issues to do with my position and reflexivity; confidentiality and anonymity; and, finally, representation of the findings, in particular in terms of the 'trustfulness' of data.

Many of these ethical issues needed to be considered before conducting the fieldwork in order for my study to receive ethical approval from the University of Oxford. The ethics of my research design were again under scrutiny during the process of gaining the research permit from the Government of Uganda. Nevertheless, even after these approvals I continued to reflect on the ethical issues throughout my fieldwork and during the writing-up stage.

---

<sup>43</sup> See my discussion on the ethical issues regarding FGDs in Section 4.5.3.

#### *4.8.1. Discourses on persecution and violence*

Retelling experiences of persecution and (sexual) violence are often painful moments. In general, there are two distinct understandings of whether or not pain and violence should be voiced; one holds the idea that giving voice to pain is necessary to overcome trauma, whereas the other one sees silence as a form of coping (Coulter 2009). I decided to include questions about why people left the DRC and how they travelled to Uganda because I perceived that in order for refugees to be able to explain their experiences of protection/space/trust in Kampala, they needed to be able to contextualise their experiences. Also, in trust research it has been established that the context and previous experiences of violence and trauma are significant factors affecting people's trust (Alesina and La Ferrara 2002, Singh 2012).

Accordingly, most of the refugees I interacted with strongly associated their sense of insecurity in Kampala with their experiences of violence and persecution in the DRC or elsewhere in Uganda. However, I only asked them to explain briefly, and as vaguely as they wanted to, why they had left the DRC. I saw my informants as agents able to use their power in deciding what to tell and not to tell me (Lammers 2006a). I never pursued gaining information on traumatic experiences, but a few of the refugee informants ended recounting in detail the violence and persecution they, or other people close to them, had experienced in the DRC and/or in Uganda. At times it was difficult for me to try to stop their recollection of these painful events.

I understand that some of the refugees might have thought that I wanted to hear these stories, even though I always explained them that I was primarily interested in their

everyday life in Kampala. Yet violence and insecurity encountered elsewhere, or at least the trauma caused by them, were a common part of refugees' everyday lives in Kampala. However, at times when these stories were told without much emotion or explanation in regard to how the participant experienced the violence, it made me think that maybe some of them just assumed that I wanted to know these standardised "hegemonic humanitarian discourses on victimhood and suffering" (Coulter 2009: 18). However, on many occasions I felt that the informants genuinely wished to articulate their pain to me in order to process it and to contextualise their experiences.

No matter what the reasons behind these discussions were, using these stories in my work poses another ethical dilemma. After considering this, I decided to include these discourses of violence and persecution<sup>44</sup> because leaving them out would mean that my analysis on refugees' sense of mistrust and insecurity would be incomplete and biased. However, when writing about sensitive experiences, I have paid special attention to ensure the informant's complete anonymity. It also needs to be recognised that some of these discourses of war and violence were collective<sup>45</sup> but others were highly personal. Additionally, there is a distinction between "experiences and experience as expressed" (Coulter 2009: 19), and thus my writing about persecution and violence is based on my informant's recalling and memory of these events. I understand that retelling the stories may involve changing their content because human memory and strategies of recounting can be selective (Coulter 2009, Pallot and Piacentini 2012). Finally, it is my reading of these stories that shape the analysis and the ways I end up presenting my informants' discourses of persecution and violence.

---

<sup>44</sup> My focus is on insecurity in Kampala, and I will only refer back to what happened in the DRC or during the flight when necessary. However, often these discourses are intertwined.

<sup>45</sup> For example, the Banyamulenge Tutsis have created a distinct collective discourse of violence and discrimination against them.

#### **4.8.2. Working with the youth**

This study has a multi-generational approach, but since working with the youth had some particular ethical considerations, I will address here the question of including refugees under 18 years old in my study. I conducted six semi-structured interviews, one FGD and some diary and participatory photographing exercises with young Congolese refugees. Particular ethical issues had to be considered to include youth. This is because even though some of the ethical considerations are not unique to studying youth, they “are refracted in particular ways because of the particular position of children [or youth in my case] and the inequalities of power between children and the adult research workers” (McDowell 2001: 87). In my study, I define ‘youth’ as people between 15 and 17 years old. A similar age category has been used to define ‘youth’ by other researchers, who understand that boys and girls of this age “were no longer children but not yet adults” (McDowell 2001: 87). For ethical reasons I decided to exclude children under 15 years of age from my study.

At the outset of my research I did not plan to include any participants under 18 years old but this evolved as I engaged with refugees. The first interview with an under 18-year-old refugee happened when I was conducting interviews at refugees’ homes. I went there with my interpreter who had asked his friend, also a Congolese refugee, to introduce us to refugee women living in his neighbourhood. Despite the fact that I had given instructions regarding the age limitation, I was introduced to a 16-year-old girl. After a lengthy discussion with her explaining the implications of taking part in my study, she still wanted to be interviewed. Her de facto female guardian was also present during the interview, because the participant preferred that.

On another occasion I was approached by a refugee boy, 17 years old at the time, after my presentation at the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) conference held in Kampala and hosted by the RLP. He asked to be included in my study because he thought that the issues I presented were important not only to him but also to the refugee youth in general. After talking with him in more depth, I understood that my research would be missing a crucial aspect if the perspective of the youth could not be incorporated into it. At the same time, RLP asked me to write a working paper on the refugee support groups, one formed by the youth. During my data collection with the youth group, RLP's officers were consulted throughout the process of involving youth in the research. In addition, informed consent to interview youth was sought both from their parents/guardians and from the youth themselves. It is essential to gain the young person's own consent rather than relying on the assumption that their gatekeepers' one-off permission to interview them would be sufficient (Warin 2011).

The third 'space' where I engaged with young refugees was the interviews and visual data collection exercises held at the Young African Refugees for Integral Development (YARID) refugee community. At YARID, I ended up engaging with some boys and girls under 18 years old who were there to study English. Here they took part in the diary and photographing exercises. I ended up building long-term relations with some of the youth because of my repeated visits and use of multiple data-collection methods with them.

#### ***4.8.3. Positionality and reflexivity***

My position in relation to my informants needs to be addressed. In general, it is understood that reflexivity is "a helpful conceptual tool for understanding both the nature of ethics in

qualitative research and how ethical practice in research can be achieved” (Guillemin and Gilliam 2004: 262–263). In particular, I felt the need to address the issue of ‘trust’ between myself and the respondents as I understand that ‘trust’ has an impact on every step of the research (Norman 2009, Fujii 2009). I aimed to build trust-based relationships with the refugees through seeing some of them regularly. I also encouraged my informants to ask questions about my research and about my life as a Finnish student living in the UK. Often by sharing the fact that I also was an active church member both in Oxford and in Kampala, I was able to engage in conversations, particularly on issues of faith, at an intimate level. I also gave my email address and phone number to those who requested it. This was important in order to stay in touch with the participants during and after my stay in Kampala.

Issues to do with refugees’ expectations in terms of research outcomes are also important (MacKenzie, McDowell and Pittaway 2007). High and sometimes unrealistic expectations were something that I constantly struggled with. I was often asked for something, not only by refugees but also by officers; mostly this was money for food, rent, medicines or studies but I was also asked for assistance in terms of resettlement, employment, getting refugee status, finding a ‘sponsor’, or becoming a friend or a counsellor. Having to turn down many of these requests made me feel extremely incompetent in regard to addressing in most cases genuine plight. As my interaction with refugees sometimes created asymmetrical, yet highly complicated, relationships in terms of power (Lammers 2006a), I aimed to respond to some of the requests the best I could.<sup>46</sup> In terms of the question of

---

<sup>46</sup> Sometimes this meant giving people money for rent, school fees, assisting a girl who had been raped in getting treatment, or paying for a bus ride for a refugee man who needed to go back to his wife who had just given birth to twins after he had been unlawfully arrested for months. At times I ended up praying with my informants when they initiated it, and sometimes I would direct them to the counselling services offered at the RLP. I also ended up helping the RLP youth club to make a music video.

giving, I decided to provide all of my informants with a small reimbursement for their travel and time, and when possible offer them some drinks or snacks during our meetings, except during fasting.

#### ***4.8.4. Consent, confidentiality and anonymity***

For any research involving people, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity are essential issues. During data collection I would always start the session by stating clearly my aims and the implications of taking part in this study. I would make sure I gained my participants' verbal informed consent. Even though I see that gaining verbal consent, in particular with refugees, was more appropriate than asking them to sign my informed consent form, I sometimes showed the form to the participants and on every occasion explained its contents in detail. Perhaps I should have asked the officers to sign the informed consent form, but in the interview situations it often did not feel appropriate or necessary after already gaining oral consent. Also, ensuring ongoing rather than one-off informed consent was important.

I explained to my informants that I would keep the data confidential in the sense that I would not reveal their identity. This meant that I would never refer to anyone by their real name and would not give details which might lead to the revealing of their identity. During my engagement with the refugees, I never asked them to provide me with their full name. Most often, I only describe the informant's characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity and how long they had lived in Kampala; however, when I go into a deeper analysis of a particular person I use pseudonyms to protect my informants' anonymity.

When it comes to the officers interviewed, I explained to them that I would refer to them by their title and organisation. However, when I began to write my thesis I sometimes felt that this was not enough to protect their anonymity. Therefore, when explaining something sensitive I may refer to a certain organisation not by its name but just by indicating whether it was a NGO or a government office. In order to ensure anonymity, I also decided not to refer to the officers by their exact title, because in small organisations this might be too revealing.<sup>47</sup>

Writing about different refugee communities posed the most difficulties. In trust research, the question of how to treat the potentially conflicting viewpoints which may emerge in studies investigating the different sides of a trust relationship is a common ethical challenge (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012: 12). As my aim was to analyse inter-community relations in particular, I felt compelled to refer to the communities by their name. This, however, puts the leaders of these communities in a difficult position as people in Kampala might know who they are. To make sure that my research would not harm them, I adopted a writing style where whenever something sensitive was described by the leaders I would not refer to them by their title. Also, when it comes to some of the sensitive information regarding particular communities, such as the CRCU, I made sure on several occasions that I gained their full consent to use the materials they provided me.

Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity was also related to the questions of where, when and in whose presence I would conduct interviews. This is particularly important when working with urban refugees who sometimes prefer to remain hidden in a city for security reasons (Macchiavello 2003, Landau 2004). I respected refugees' choice of location to

---

<sup>47</sup> When the exact title of the informant is not provided, I have included the interview date into my reference.

meet, and I often interacted with them at the RLP or different refugee community offices or churches. I did not conduct many interviews at refugees' homes because some of them wished not to be seen with me to avoid any suspicion from their neighbours. On occasions when I saw some of my informants on the streets of Kampala, I left it to them to decide whether they wished to stop and talk to me in public.

In addition, the use of interpreters presents ethical challenges to do with confidentiality. Two of my regular interpreters, also Congolese refugees, worked professionally as interpreters with the RLP and they were aware of the need for extreme confidentiality. The other two interpreters worked as language teachers in a refugee CBO. I had lengthy discussions with them about issues to do with confidentiality and accuracy in interpretation. At the beginning of each interview, I would ask the interviewee if he or she felt comfortable talking in the presence of the given interpreter. On a few occasions my respondents decided to use their friends or relatives as their interpreter because they trusted them more than my regular interpreters.

#### ***4.8.5. Representation of findings and trusting the data***

Ethical issues are also pertinent in my presentation of the findings; in particular, in relation to the issues of 'truth' and 'lying' in my data. As my data analysis relies broadly on discourse analysis, I understand that the premise of my analysis is not to discover the 'truth' but rather to interpret various statements held as taken for granted or as 'truths' by particular people or groups. Methodologically, "the contextual nature of situated research practices is now widely recognised and geographical stories are seen as exactly that – socially constructed narratives specific to time and place" (McDowell 2001: 88).

Examining issues of trust and mistrust played out in spatial contexts has significant implications for the methodologies adopted, and studies which discuss ‘trust’ should especially consider the ‘trustworthiness’ of the data. Trust research, in general, poses ethical questions because it “covers topics that are sensitive in nature, either within an organization or community, or between groups” (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012: 12).

To begin with, it is understood that the constant negotiation of power, apparent in refugee situations, creates competing ‘truths’ (Turner 2010: 159). Furthermore, since it is taken at face value that trust is dialectical, meaning that both refugees trust/mistrust protection institutions and hosts,<sup>48</sup> and protection institutions and hosts trust/mistrust refugees, the data collected from both refugees and institutions are subjective and based on people’s interpretations. Additionally, it is understood that “the value of oral testimonies... does not lie solely in the truthfulness of their content. It also lies in the meta-data that accompany these testimonies” (Fujii 2009: 148). Meta-data refers to the “information people communicate about their interior thoughts and feelings” (Fujii 2009: 148).

Thus, rumours and stories, among other types of expressions, told by refugees and officers were considered as being as valuable as their personal experiences. These rumours, memories, gossip, conspiracy theories and metaphors should not be dismissed in critical social research but rather considered as an integral part of informants’ lives. This is because research is not about data as such but rather about the world that the data can reveal (White 2000, Coulter 2009). In refugee studies, these idioms have been used to

---

<sup>48</sup> No primary data were directly collected with the Ugandan hosts, mostly because of ethical reasons related to refugees’ security and their wish to remain ‘hidden’. Thus, the analysis of the relations between the refugees and the hosts is based on other sources of data, such as officers’ and refugees’ reflections on the host-refugee relations, and also on observing refugees’ everyday interactions with Ugandans and ‘community policing’ meetings where RLP officers and the police held information sessions jointly for refugees and Ugandans.

construct the so-called ‘refugee experiences’ as refugees often use various types of expressions to make sense of their everyday lives in exile (Coker 2004). Yet this kind of analysis is often absent both from policies and official histories of various refugee situations (Sandvik 2012).

Even though I accept the subjective nature of my data, I took care on several occasions to cross-check some of the rather controversial information I obtained. For instance, when it comes to the accusations made by refugees about various protection institutions, my aim was to investigate also the perspectives of these institutions. Also, regarding the conflicts within or between some of the refugee communities, I always attempted to gain multiple viewpoints on particularly controversial events described to me. The data triangulation, however, did not always materialise at the level I hoped for despite my continuous efforts. Nevertheless, as I accept every story shared with me as indicative of the respondent’s worldview, I incorporated all these various discourses into my analysis no matter if they might be rumours, gossip or testimonies.

#### **4.9. Concluding discussion**

Given the emphasis of my research on ‘space’, a diverse and flexible methodological approach was required. As outlined above, this research combines interviews, observation and FGDs with supplementary visual data collected through time-space diaries and participatory photographing. This methodological richness also ensured data triangulation and appropriate data for detailed use in a single case-study approach. In the following four empirical chapters, I aim to use the analysed data in a way that best answers each of my research questions, and thus meets the overall aim and objectives of this research.

## **Chapter Five: INSTITUTIONAL SPACES BETWEEN REFUGEES AND THE OFFICIAL PROVIDERS OF PROTECTION**

### **5.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, the ‘protection space’ provided to Congolese refugees by the protection institutions is examined by exploring the refugees’ views of their formal protection in the city of exile. I address the question of the ways in which ‘trust’ affect refugees’ relationships with the protection institutions. I also interrogate how refugees’ experiences of protection/space/trust were influenced by the evolving contexts and by the intersections of their individual characteristics. Throughout the chapter I investigate how the physical, imagined, lived and relational elements of space are reflected in refugees’ experiences of institutional trust manifested at different scales.

This chapter focuses on the, often shared, discourses of institutional trust among individual refugees informing this study. It is understood that even if building a coherent, collective ‘refugee discourse’ is impossible, among the refugees in Kampala “a fragmented body of shared memories circulated: in conversations with refugees, experiences of compatriots or friends often became a part of the collective experience, and later gave meaning to individual perceptions of how refugees were treated” (Sandvik 2012: 115). The issue of institutional trust between particular Congolese refugee communities and protection institutions is discussed in Chapter Eight in relation to refugees’ ‘communities of trust’.

The chapter is divided into two main analytical sections. In the first section I investigate the conceived spaces of institutional trust, namely refugees' imaginations of the formal protection architecture in the city. 'Trust' is explored as a discursively created emotion and practice (Candlin and Crichton 2012) based on reason, routine and reflexivity (Möllering 2006). I focus on the issue of 'institutional trust', which is a crucial aspect of formal refugee protection (Hynes 2003, Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005). It refers to people's trust in institutions, which is affected by various trust norms and values (Braithwaite 1998), as well as by repeated encounters with these institutions and their 'access points' (Luhmann 1979, Giddens 1990). I interpret both refugees' and institutions' discourses of telling the 'truth', and the practices of misrepresenting and mismanaging refugees through the lens of trust research. The emphasis is on the less visible, emotional forms of trust that are particularly hard to identify (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012: 11).

In the second section the physicality of the official protection architecture is analysed by discussing how refugees experienced their right to the offices of the protection institutions. The examination focuses on two formal spaces: the UNHCR and the IAU offices. Both of these spaces were essential, shared spaces of formal protection for the urban refugees in Kampala. Nonetheless, refugees' right to these physical spaces was heavily limited. I investigate refugees' discourses related to these 'protection spaces' through some of the theoretical ideas related to the 'right to the city' (Lefebvre 1996, Mitchell 2003). In particular, I ask how and why refugees' right to these formal spaces of protection was restricted, and how refugees challenged and negotiated these limitations. Central to my overall analysis is linking the concepts of 'protection', 'space' and 'trust': I analyse how refugees limited right to these physical spaces had an impact on their sense of institutional trust toward the formal providers of protection.

I conclude that refugees' relationships with the key protection institutions were largely characterised by mutual mistrust. This widespread institutional mistrust caused refugees to question the role of the formal protection system, and to suggest that rather than providing protection some of the institutional practices and representations made them feel insecure. In summary, the institutional 'space of protection' was seen by refugees largely as a space of insecurity and mistrust.

## **5.2. Imagined spaces of institutional trust**

There were several key protection institutions involved in the formal refugee protection in Kampala. They included the police, the Department of Refugees/OPM, UNHCR, and its only implementing partner IAU. By using implementing partners, UNHCR has increasingly outsourced its direct interaction with and putting into practice of its programmes for its clients. UNCHR's operational partners in Kampala, who work rather independently of UNHCR to support refugee protection, included RLP, Jesuit Refugee Service, African Centre for the Torture Victims, Amnesty International Uganda and the Finnish Refugee Council, among others. In addition, several other bodies, such as KCCA and LCs, took part in the practicalities of refugee protection, but they were not as involved in the overall coordination and policy-making as the abovementioned institutions. This chapter focuses on refugees' relationships with the key protection institutions, namely UNHCR, IAU and OPM (Figure 4). Reference is made to others when appropriate.

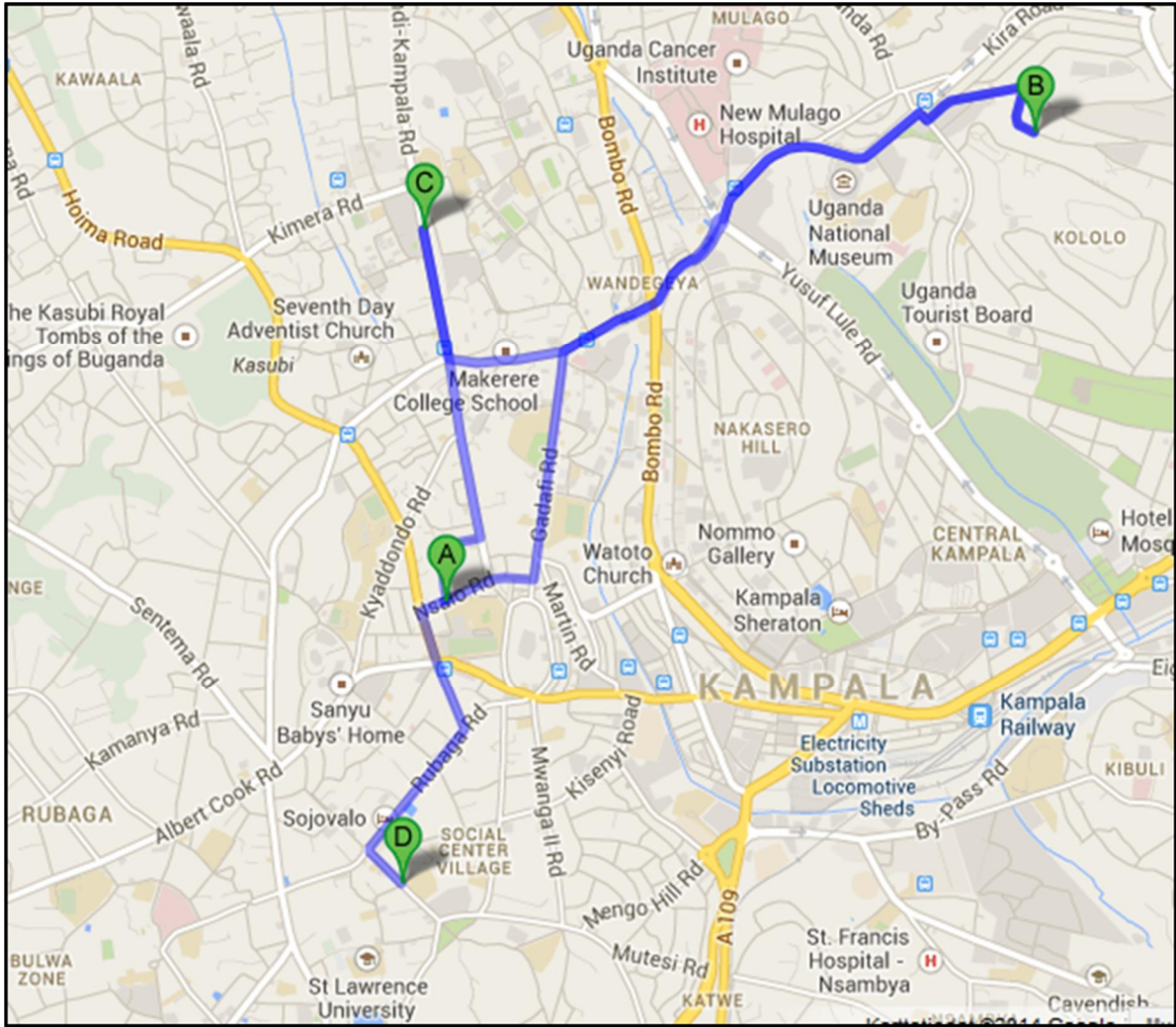


Figure 4. The main protection institutions in Kampala: A) Refugee Law Project, B) UNHCR, C) OPM and D) IAU (Source: Google Map of Kampala; the locations are approximate).

According to the institutions, refugee protection in the city of Kampala had improved significantly since the adoption of the 2006 Refugee Act and the partial implementation of the UNHCR’s 2009 urban refugee policy. Cooperation among them had also increased and been enhanced over recent years: the key organisations took part in the UNHCR-organised coordination meetings in order to discuss the overall refugee situation and particular cases for referrals. These monthly coordination meetings were, however, often postponed, which hampered cooperation.

Despite the increasing number of institutions in refugee protection in the city, not all of the institutions had similar levels of responsibility or influence on refugee-related matters, and some of the institutions felt that they should have played a more significant role in this. In particular, the micro-scale actors, such as the LCs who were responsible for the administration or security of their zones (LC1) and parishes (LC2) and the KCCA who planned services for the inhabitants of the city, were largely ignored by the official protection architecture, which was more focused on the protection institutions that operated at the national and international scales. The formal protection scheme, moreover, lacked sufficient funds and man-power, and the fact that UNHCR had only one implementing partner in the city (i.e. IAU) was seen as a shortcoming by some of the NGOs and refugees.

### ***5.2.1. “It is not good to talk about everything that is the truth”: narratives of telling the ‘truth’***

Analysis of individual refugees’ institutional trust discourses and practices revealed that the relationships between refugees and protection institutions were largely characterised by mutual mistrust. As “trust always invokes the potential for *mistrust*” (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 3), risks associated with over-trust and trust violations can cause the negatives of trust. Also, trust can erode if not exercised or as a result of opportunism (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012). In the case of the Congolese refugees in Kampala, their institutional mistrust was largely due to initial, repeated trust violations and the consequent lack of trust exercise: many asylum seekers were trustful of the institutions and the formal protection they offered upon their arrival but, after repeated trust violations, refugees became reluctant to take the risk of trusting these institutions. Other studies with a focus on

refugees' institutional trust have shown similar trust patterns which erode over time (Hyndman 2000, Hynes 2003).

The patterns of these shared trust violations are examined in more detail in this chapter, in particular by focusing on refugees' challenges of telling the 'truth', and on refugees' complaints of the protection institutions misrepresenting and mismanaging them.

Regarding the issue of telling the 'truth', the most common cause of mistrust between refugees and the protection institutions was dissimulation. As will be demonstrated, refugees repeatedly argued that the officers did not believe them and consequently did not take their claims for protection seriously. Some of them also argued that researchers should not rely on the data that the officials gave, but rather come to the refugee communities to reveal the 'truth' of their situation: "Those in Geneva do not go to the field. They believe the information that is given by the officials. But it is good to enter the community to get the real information."<sup>49</sup> This perception led to the negative emotions that refugees expressed when talking about the institutions and their experiences of dealing with these institutions. As explained in the literature of trust, affect-based trust stems from emotional bonds and support (Möllering 2006), and therefore emotions with negative connotations decrease trust or lead to mistrust (Dunn and Schweitzer 2005: 736). In general, refugees held negative emotions toward the key protection institutions, and the prevalent institutional mistrust was born out of this emotional landscape.

Overall, refugees' dissatisfaction and suspicion toward the protection institutions was embedded in their common view that Congolese refugees were not protected in Kampala

---

<sup>49</sup> 1 CRCU observation (See Appendix 2 for more information).

like other refugees because they were so numerous in the city. As a consequence of this perceived discrimination, Congolese reinforced their common identity as refugees with rights and presented their everyday life as a struggle to access their ‘right to the city’ (Lefebvre 1996) and its protective spaces. The ‘Congolese problem’ of dealing with the official protection architecture was explained by a 39-year-old male refugee accordingly:

[I]n general in the Congolese community we have a problem, and those problems do not just concern me as an individual. And the problems we are having are the way that the Ugandan different services work. Congolese cases are rarely worked on. The system is a way of making us suffer, a system of imposing things on us. We do not have a right to talk about our problems and to be heard.<sup>50</sup>

Given the two-way nature of trust between a trustor and a trustee (Möllering 2006), it is important to not only analyse the trust discourses presented by the refugees but also by the institutions. The officers of the key protection institutions suggested that lying was a real challenge and some suggested that a large percentage of refugees’ stories were not credible. Subsequently, the officers argued that they were compelled to question refugees’ stories and not to automatically trust them. At times, mistrust can be a normatively and rationally logical outcome (Jasinski 2010), and the officers proposed that they were in such a situation.

According to some of the officers, the issue of lying was related to the prevalent ‘paranoia’ among the Congolese refugees. The officers frequently referred to the particular mind-set that the Congolese refugees had especially in relation to resettlement to a third country. Resettlement is one of the three classic ‘durable solutions’ advocated by UNHCR alongside with voluntary repatriation and local integration into the country of asylum. The Congolese refugees informing this study categorically stated that the issue of mistrust was

---

<sup>50</sup> M12 (See Appendix 1 for more information).

based on the officers' perception that all the refugees wanted was resettlement and were willing to do anything for it. This idea was raised, for instance, during my interview with a male leader of a refugee community:

[T]hey [the IAU officials] say "you people are joking; you just want resettlement." No, no! There is a situation which leads people to be called refugees. But it is not a choice. It is not somebody's blame that 'my name is a refugee.' No. It is just a situation. And there are some of the counsellors [at IAU] who do not understand what the meaning of a refugee is.<sup>51</sup>

Refugees' quest for resettlement was seen by the officers as an attempt to expand their 'protection space' but sometimes with false pretences; refugees were accused of manipulating not only their mind but also the space of their body. In writings on space, it is recognised that the body has a fundamental role in our experiences and representations of space (Lefebvre 1991, Knott 2005). As seen from the following interview quotation with an OPM officer, the space of the body and trust were seen as closely related concepts:

You see refugees are human beings who are capable of doing anything. And we have seen and we have known that these refugees, when they come, some of them come with set minds and they come with expectations. ... [T]hey come expecting to go to a third country. They look for all sorts of ways to see that they are resettled, which is hard for us. ... Someone becomes vulnerable to himself... She or he makes themselves very vulnerable. They even fall sick; they want to do anything because of the resettlement. This is beyond us because they come with pre-set minds that when I go to Uganda it is like a connecting country to another one. It is not true.<sup>52</sup>

Yet rather than agreeing on these bodily representations of vulnerability, not telling the truth in every situation was explained by a refugee man by reference to the Congolese culture:

In the Congolese culture when you say directly the truth to someone, you are like, you have disrespected that person. That is the reason why you are seeing that people are affected by a lot of problems, but they do not know how to talk about it

---

<sup>51</sup> Community leader, 17.1.2011 (See Appendix 2 for more details).

<sup>52</sup> OPM officer, 7.1.2011 (See Appendix 2 for more details).

freely. There is a saying that ‘it is not good to talk about everything that is the truth.’<sup>53</sup>

Refugees, however, realised that not telling the truth could negatively affect their prospects of being protected and resettled, and they advocated for a behavioural change within the refugee population.<sup>54</sup>

Furthermore, Congolese refugees argued that the protection system in general discouraged them from speaking the truth and consequently they were unable to access or extend their formal ‘space of protection’. A number of refugees admitted that upon their arrival in Uganda they felt compelled to lie to the police and to the OPM in order to be able to stay in the country. They suggested that because of Ugandan’s involvement in the conflict in the DRC they could not always express the real reasons behind their flight as explained by a refugee man:

Just to add, that we as refugees believe that, yes, clearly at the police, OPM, IAU you cannot tell the truth about what happened in Congo. That is obvious. Those are just lies to get around. Because of security reasons you come up with a story that you can tell the police.<sup>55</sup>

The nationality and the ethnicity of the officer could also have an impact on whether refugees were willing to speak truthfully. This was, in particular, the case with white, and in particular Belgian, officers due to the memories of colonialism. Refugees also claimed that telling the truth about the reasons why they fled the DRC to IAU officials was not feasible in the early 2000s because the Congolese intelligence services used to come to the IAU to spy on refugees.

---

<sup>53</sup> FGD6 (See Appendix 2 for more details).

<sup>54</sup> 1 CRCU observation.

<sup>55</sup> FGD6.

Clearly then, the macro-level regional geopolitics<sup>56</sup> had an impact on refugees' sense of institutional protection and trust. UNHCR has also recognised that 'protection space' expands and diminishes according to changes in the political, economic, social and security environments (UNHCR 2009a). This also shows how the wider historical, political and cultural contexts (Singh 2012, Welter and Nadezhda 2012) affected refugees' sense of institutional trust. In particular, recognising that conflicts within the DRC and the lack of trust of formal institutions may have affected refugees' abilities to trust the protection institutions in Uganda is important.

As has already been explained, the DRC has experienced several extended armed conflicts and consequent forced migration (Clark 2008: 2).<sup>57</sup> This instability has been caused and sustained by the absence of a functioning state (Paddon and Lacaille 2011), and the conflict and violence have affected the entire society. The functional state has been absent since the 1970s, and "this has left a bitter Congolese paradox: a state that is everywhere and oppressive but that is defunct and dysfunctional" (Stearns 2011: 126). Consequently, as Stearns (2011) among others has observed, everyday life during the conflict has been dominated by fear and distrust – both in relation to individuals and various groups, but also of the state and its different institutions. Mafia-like networks and bribing dominated administration during the years of the conflict, and the political system has rewarded ruthless behaviour. This was possible, particularly in the eastern parts of the Congo, where the state has been practically non-existent (Dunn 2003: 150). This part of the country has been controlled by warlords and strongmen who have been involved in extensive pillaging. Thus, it is important when analysing eastern Congolese refugees' accounts of trust in

---

<sup>56</sup> The relationship between refugees' experiences of protection and national and regional geopolitics is further discussed in Section 6.4 of Chapter Six.

<sup>57</sup> See more detailed discussion in Chapter Two.

Kampala to recognise the context of their flight, which may have influenced their abilities to trust each other and different institutions.

Refugees were, moreover, unsure which organisation or authority was truly in charge of their protection in the city of exile. They also suggested that the relations between these institutions were politicised. This shows how the wider political context of the entire protection structure affected refugees' trust, or the lack thereof, in particular institutions. Refugees argued, for instance, that UNHCR was under the control of the Government of Uganda – a situation which had, according to them, jeopardised their formal protection. Refugees also suggested that institutional economical gain was a driving motivation to sustain their plight, as was articulated by a male refugee:

I want just to talk about the government vis-à-vis UNHCR. Refugees do not know which door they should knock on to get an answer on the issues concerning them, because the refugee problem has been politicised. They send us to the IAU and yet IAU is the state. ... And at the end of the day, you get tired and you knock on the door of the OPM. But OPM is also the state. And as you know the state cannot solve your problem, because they know that if they facilitate your solution, they will never receive the funds again that they receive out of refugees. The UNHCR has also lost its credibility, because maybe they also fear to be expelled or chased from the country.<sup>58</sup>

Given this perceived politicised 'space of protection' refugees had to navigate, they suggested that, at times, they were compelled to lie in order to be able to access formal protection, in particular the 'durable solutions' provided by the UNHCR. This was because of the 'wall' between them and the UNHCR. This 'wall' was perceived by refugees both as an imagined and physical boundary which separated them from the arguably truly protected space in a third country as described by a 55-year-old refugee man who had lived in Kampala since 2008:

---

<sup>58</sup> FGD6.

[B]etween us and the UNHCR there is a wall; they have put up a wall and we are unable to access UNHCR. If they could break that wall it would facilitate us to meet UNHCR. We well know that refugees can get resettlement. ... But is it possible for all of us to lie so that we can access resettlement? Also to allow you to access UNHCR protection you must have been here four or five years and with a lot of lies... We have to lie and forge documents for your file so that they can agree for you to access protection. It is not easy. It is not my habit to lie.<sup>59</sup>

Given the institutions' recurrent accusations about refugees lying in order to access resettlement, some of the refugees in Kampala advocated ending the practice of refugees having to receive written security reports from the police or medical reports from the doctors to support their case. According to them, this practice nourished corruption in the formal protection system, and consequently "this makes resettlement being accessible to only those refugees who have money and who can easily corrupt."<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, the overall lack of material assistance in Kampala was explained by some refugees as due to corruption in the protection institutions: the officers were accused of selling some of the non-food items meant for refugees in the local markets. Additionally, corruption was related to the lack of direct physical access to UNHCR and IAU offices.<sup>61</sup>

Besides discussing the broader historical and political contexts and some of the individual characteristics, which had an impact on refugees' trust decisions (Möllering 2006), the issue of 'access points' (Giddens 1990) requires examination because trust is built up through repeated, assenting experiences (Luhmann 1979). Refugees, in general, had varying experiences of interacting with individual officers working for the institutions, and their role was seen as crucial by the refugees. When positive encounters took place, they were often associated with meeting an officer who "just touched the pocket"<sup>62</sup> in order to

---

<sup>59</sup> M40.

<sup>60</sup> Written report by a male refugee, 24.4.2011.

<sup>61</sup> The lack of physical access to UNHCR and IAU is discussed in more detail in the following section (5.3).

<sup>62</sup> M1.

give financial assistance to the refugee client from their personal means. Sometimes refugees had befriended officers whose clients they had been for an extended time, and they respected the time and the psychosocial support they received from these individuals.

Refugees also placed high hopes on incoming staff. At the time of fieldwork they, for instance, discussed the potential of the new UNHCR officer who was initially seen as being on the 'refugees' side'. Later on more critical assessments about this officer, however, spread among the refugees as they expressed a sense of increasing disappointment with the fact that the officer had been unable to change the working culture of UNHCR. As seen from these examples, institutional trust is manifested through 'access points' and evolves over time (Hynes 2003), because trust "develops sequentially over a sustained trust period" (Norman 2009: 86).

As the encounters between refugees and the 'access points' of the protection institutions were regularly characterised by mutual mistrust, this had a negative impact on refugees' perceptions of the entire institution. For instance, some refugees suggested that they were 'punished' by individual officers when expressing their true concerns and feelings. A male refugee who had been working as a human rights activist in the DRC explained how UNHCR could not accept his criticism. Moreover, he claimed that a UNHCR officer, who had treated him "like a rebel", advised him not to criticise the organisations if he wanted to be supported:

When he [the UNHCR officer] learned that we were involved in human rights issues in South Kivu, he gave us two conditions: if you want help from UNHCR, keep your mouth quiet, and if you do not want any help from the UNHCR, you can continue your work on human rights. We continued with my friends. And currently

as I speak I do not expect any help from UNHCR. This is why quite a number of refugees do not want to talk.<sup>63</sup>

Congolese refugees in Kampala often claimed that the officers working for the main protection institutions tended to “dehumanise” (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005: 293) them and categorise them as a “difficult population” (Hyndman 2000: 130). Some refugees suggested that the officers showed a patronising attitude toward them, which further discouraged the refugees from being open. This was argued by a male refugee during one of the FGDs:

[Y]ou know these offices where you can go, the first thing they do is to minimise. The problem which might be affecting you, when you come in front of a person who minimises you, you feel like you are affected. First, you do not have courage anymore to ask your rights, because you are minimised. Second, they consider refugees as less than normal human beings. ... And yet he knows that through refugees he is getting his employment and benefits.<sup>64</sup>

As seen from this discussion, beliefs, stereotypes and emotions, among other factors, may have an impact on the level of trust (Hall and Symon 2012: 139). Blaming refugees has also been used by humanitarian institutions to rationalise their institutional failures and this has caused refugees to lose their trust in them (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005). At times, institutional mistrust has become so prevalent that the situation can be described as a ‘culture of disbelief’ (Griffiths 2012). I suggest that in the context of Kampala, refugees’ mistrust toward the protection institutions, in particular UNHCR, OPM and IAU, was reaching the state of a ‘culture of disbelief’.

---

<sup>63</sup> FGD6.

<sup>64</sup> FGD6.

### ***5.2.2. Misrepresentations and mismanagement***

In addition to the conflicting narratives of telling the ‘truth’, discussed above, refugees suggested that the protection institutions’ practices of misrepresentation and mismanagement of refugees caused them to mistrust these institutions. In this section I examine refugees’ trust discourses related to these practices and consequently engage with the issue of institutional trust not only as a discourse but also as a practice. This is because, “trust in its discursive nature should at the same time be seen as a practice” (Candlin and Crichton 2012). Moreover, as trust operates at different ‘scales’ of social order (Candlin and Crichton 2012), I examine how these institutional practices were interpreted by refugees from multiple spatial scales ranging from the body to the larger structures of the protection architecture.

Hyndman (2000: xxii) has suggested that because refugees often refuse to be categorised or managed, the politics of representation have become, in some cases, more important than humanitarian operations on the ground. This has sometimes led to ‘semio-violence’, a “representational practice that purports to speak for others but at the same time effaces their voices”. In the case of Kampala, refugees also suggested that the protection institutions imposed a practice of ‘semio-violence’ on them. This practice of misrepresentation took place at different scales.

As already discussed in the previous section, among the Congolese refugees physical appearance associated with the space of the body (Lefebvre 1991, Knott 2005) was an issue that created mistrust in the protection institutions. Congolese were known for making every effort to look presentable; looks were essential to their culture, particularly in an

urban context. However, according to the OPM officer: “Congolese are flash, really flash.”<sup>65</sup> This led officers to suspect that the refugees did not need protection. Refugees, however, did not understand this perception as articulated by a female refugee:

For the purpose of hygiene you do everything you can to remain clean before you go to the office, and when you reach there they tell you that, “You look healthy. What kind of assistance are you looking for again?” Do they want us to look shaggy so that they can know that we are suffering?<sup>66</sup>

These ideas about refugees’ appearance can be discussed from the viewpoint of the traditional Congolese urban *La Sape* culture (i.e. dressing up in designer suits brought back from Europe). Congolese *sapeurs* have demonstrated how consumption practices were linked to a “cosmology of modernity”, and this culture of dressing up has been associated with efforts to build reputation and wealth (Newell 2012: 14–15). The “Congolese national relationship to fashion” has even been interpreted through metaphysical abilities and as a religion. More widely, clothing has been used in the DRC to indicate political and ethnic affiliation (Newell 2012). As shown above, in Kampala some of the officers linked the appearance of the Congolese refugees to some extent to the ideas associated with the *La Sape* culture. These ideas were also related to the dominant livelihood options that most of the Congolese had in Kampala; the sewing and selling of fashionable Congolese women’s clothing (*bitenge*) and jewellery, and hairdressing. Thus, refugees’ presentable and habitually fashionable appearance signalled to the officers their assumed ability to overcome their so-called ‘protection problems’.

Refugees also categorically rejected the media-driven perception of a crying, starving, and unclean refugee. This became apparent after the 2011 World Refugee Day (WRD)

---

<sup>65</sup> OPM officer, 7.1.2011.

<sup>66</sup> FGD8.

celebrations during which the UNHCR poster (Figure 5), which hung at the Old Kampala football pitch where the celebrations took place, and also at the IAU and OPM offices, was heavily criticised by two male refugees, among others:

In IAU there was the same poster with a photo of a crying woman. I was worried because it gave many ideas. Are refugees a community where everyone just cries? My point of view is that this photo does not reflect who is a refugee. We should have a positive attitude toward a refugee. He is a human being like any other. Taking pictures of refugees who are crying for donations and for manipulation is not a good idea.<sup>67</sup>

They are doing marketing on our excuse. They are taking advantage on our suffering. Pictures that they took are not true. They put these pictures so that organisations would give money. If you ask around here no one of us is ever assisted.<sup>68</sup>



Figure 5. UNHCR poster at the WRD celebrations in June 2011 (Source: Lyytinen 2011).

As seen from these examples, the scale of the body became relevant to the discussion on the practices of misrepresentation and the subsequent spatialities of protection. Congolese

---

<sup>67</sup> 2 CRCU observation.

<sup>68</sup> 2 CRCU observation.

refugees' sense of bodily dignity and physical appearance was central to their understanding of being protected, and the officers' opposing views on this were seen by refugees as a misunderstanding of what it truly meant to be a refugee. The general misrepresentation of 'refugees' and 'refugeehood' by the protection institutions was perceived by the refugees as something that further affected their ability to access the formal spaces of protection. These observations are supported in the trust literature, which shows that trust can be subject to "social forces such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and other socio-cultural factors that shape who trusts, who is seen as trustworthy, and in what contexts" (Candlin and Crichton 2012: 5).

At a larger scale, some of the refugee informants suggested that the protection institutions misrepresented the entire Congolese refugee population of Kampala. This was due to the fact that many of the officers claimed that egoism was a defining feature of the Congolese refugee population, as articulated by a NGO officer:

I think generally, I may be wrong, but generally the group of Congolese is mean. Mean in the sense that they are self-centred, they do not think of other people. So, they do not like to see other Congolese benefit if they do not benefit. They are not organised at all.<sup>69</sup>

An UNHCR officer also shared this perception:

Talking about their organisational skills, I think that there is a problem, but then we keep on assisting them. The problem is much related to a sense of egoism, if I can say. I mean it is not only that but it is one of the problems that has something to do with egoism, because they have difficulties in terms of identifying their leadership. I mean the leaders and they have been having difficulties in agreeing even who would represent them as a group. And of course they are broken down to smaller, smaller groups.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>69</sup> NGO, legal officer, 16.8.2011.

<sup>70</sup> UNHCR officer, 21.9.2011.

In general, the refugees informing this study saw that the institutions reinforced – if not created – this perceived egoism by manipulating and corrupting refugees to work and spy for them. Subsequently, some of the refugees identified “most of our fellow refugees as hypocrites and betrayers” because they were willing to “sacrifice your fellow Congolese to get personal gain.”<sup>71</sup> Others, however, thought that this prevalent disunity was actually reinforcing the Congolese refugee population: “Unity equals force. Or is division in our case the force? Do we fear that if this person touches me, he will hurt me?”<sup>72</sup>

Egoism was, however, not seen by refugees as something distinctive to the Congolese way-of-being but rather as being caused by living in exile. The lack of formal protection forced refugees to compete for scarce support. Therefore, refugees suggested that they were vulnerable to manipulation by the protection institutions. Consequently, they argued that if refugees had more independence from these institutions, they would be more united and act more supportively toward each other:

If you are rearing a chicken and your neighbour is doing the same, why would you release your chicken into the compound? If you [refugees] do not give food [protection] to the chicken [other refugees], it goes and eats the neighbours’ [institutions’] food. Congolese in Uganda are not enemies to each other, but can lie to get food.<sup>73</sup>

Arguably, this misrepresentation and negative stereotyping of refugees by the protection institutions was an element that made refugees mistrust these institutions. Together with the misrepresentation of the ‘refugee appearance’, these trust discourses on the practices of misrepresentations were often referred to by the refugees informing this study and they represented the different scales that trust decisions routinely took place on in refugees’ and officers’ everyday lives.

---

<sup>71</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

<sup>72</sup> 7 CRCU observation.

<sup>73</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

Besides these misrepresentations, refugees made accusations regarding various protection-related management practices. Some accused the authorities dealing with their cases of using their files and life stories to resettle someone else. A lawyer working for a NGO suggested that this was a challenge, in particular during the RSD process: “When they come in numbers, they are not granted a group status, there is a mix of these groups. You will find that REC [the Refugee Eligibility Committee] will use your story ... as mine because of the confusion at the police.”<sup>74</sup>

In addition, the OPM practice of posting the names of those who had received refugee status on the wall outside the OPM office (but within the compound) was criticised by some refugees. According to them, this was a risky practice for those who had fled because of personal persecution. Yet they felt they had no chance of changing this system. The fact that refugees’ names were posted on a physical structure which was located in a semi-public space caused some of them to feel insecure in the very same physical space which was described by the protection institutions as a protective community space. This observation resonates with Sandvik’s (2012) and Nah’s (2012) conclusions on the dual nature of the offices of the protection institutions when it comes to urban refugees’ experiences of accessing these ‘spaces of protection’.

Another management-related issue which contributed to mistrust between Congolese refugees and the officers was the lack of response and information that the refugees received from the officers. This was verbalised by a refugee woman who during a FGD argued that “after you have been heard, they promise to call you back. ... Despite the fact that they promise, and when you see the fact that they are not fulfilling their promise, they

---

<sup>74</sup> NGO, legal officer, 16.8.2011.

are not calling you back. ... Again it is just an empty promise”.<sup>75</sup> According to the officers minimal contact with refugees was due to their overwhelming workload, which made it difficult to keep track of an individual client.

Some of the refugees informing this study accused the institutions of not only verbally but also physically abusing them. These accusations of misbehaviour have a long history and they have been documented in previous studies (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005, RLP 2005). During my fieldwork a few informants referred to refugees being beaten by guards or police called in by the officers. Repeated accusations included vivid descriptions of how refugees, even minors, had been ‘tortured’ in the offices of the protection institutions during demonstrations organised by the refugees. Again, these formal spaces of protection were characterised in refugees’ discourses not as truly protective but rather as insecure spaces.

Additionally, refugees perceived that authorities and organisations held particular attitudes about their presence in and right to the city (Mitchell 2003, Attoh 2011). This had, according to them, shaped the overall management practices in place at the time of my fieldwork. Many refugees, and also some of the more independent organisations working with refugees in Kampala, suggested that despite the flexible laws and policies that allowed refugees to settle in cities, most authorities and UNHCR officers did not want increasing numbers of refugees in urban areas. This was because of the intensified pressure on infrastructure and the host–refugee relations. Thus, what refugees claimed was that the officers told them to go back to the rural refugee settlements. This again widened the gap between refugees who wanted or felt compelled to stay in Kampala and the institutions.

---

<sup>75</sup> FGD8.

In Uganda, as shown in previous studies, officers have traditionally perceived the refusal to relocate to a settlement as proof that refugees were in no real need of protection (Sandvik 2012). During my research period, OPM, IAU and UNHCR all admitted that they encouraged refugees to go to the settlements if they were not able to take care of themselves and their families in Kampala. In order to stay in Kampala one had to be self-reliant and even though the legal protection standards were supposedly similar in the rural settlements and in the city, physical protection was not guaranteed in Kampala. Therefore, as suggested by an OPM officer, “if you decide that you are going to move to Kampala, there are definitely conditions to meet.”<sup>76</sup> The main reason, according to OPM, for not providing the same level of social and material protection in Kampala in comparison to the settlements was because this would act as a pull factor: “If we are to provide the same provisions in the settlement and in Kampala, I do not think that we would have settlements. Everybody would be in Kampala.”<sup>77</sup>

Given this narrow understanding of where refugees should ideally be located in order to be eligible for comprehensive protection, a lawyer working for a NGO argued that the problem of extending the available ‘protection space’ in Kampala was to do with the fact that UNHCR’s country office in Uganda had a different policy and practice to what the UNHCR headquarters in Geneva had decided in terms of urban refugees. According to this lawyer, UNHCR’s country office was “radically ignorant” of the global UNHCR urban refugee policy.<sup>78</sup> Others also suggested that this ignorance of the policy was due to the limited funding and human resources, and the outdated mind-set that the UNHCR and

---

<sup>76</sup> OPM officer, 7.1.2011.

<sup>77</sup> OPM officer, 7.1.2011.

<sup>78</sup> NGO, lawyer, 12.1.2011.

OPM still held in terms of urban protection.<sup>79</sup>

The discussion of whether refugees should be contained in the rural settlements or allowed to access urban areas was debated during the IASFM conference, held in Kampala in July 2011.<sup>80</sup> The Ugandan Minister for Disaster Preparedness, Management and Refugees at the time, Stephen Malinga, had “called for an immediate end to the policy of encampment of refugees” because according to him “camps did not work” (Oola 2011). The Minister suggested that refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs should be allowed to integrate locally in Ugandan villages, towns and cities. This was welcomed by the urban refugees, but also taken as an unreliable promise, at least partly because OPM had, according to some of the refugees, refused the Minister’s suggestion. A male refugee who attended the conference explained the debate in the following words during one of the community meetings:

Also, the Minister of Disaster and Refugees contemplated the issue of settlements [at the IASFM conference]. He said that sending people to the camps is very bad. ... Himself he used to be a refugee in the US and he was not in the settlement in the US. He was given a normal life and opportunities for him to do business, school, work. And today he is an important person. This is an example that the Ugandan government should burn those settlements. Refugees should be integrated. They should be able to practice their skills. Twelve hours after the Minister [had spoken], OPM officials... OPM refused the Minister’s idea of closing the settlements. They accused that the Minister is new and he has no experience; he had no idea what he was saying. NRC [Norwegian Refugee Council] and some organisations also opposed the idea of settling refugees outside camps. But for the Minister, we really applauded!<sup>81</sup>

Clearly then, refugees and institutions held conflicting ideas about many of the protection-related management practices. This, again, amplified refugees’ institutional mistrust, because people are more likely to mistrust institutions that operate against their values (Jabareen and Carmon 2010: 447).

---

<sup>79</sup> NGO, refugee officer, 18.1.2011.

<sup>80</sup> Observation, IASFM conference, 3–6.7.2011, Kampala.

<sup>81</sup> 4 CRCU observation.

To sum up, the Kampala-based Congolese refugees informing this study categorically argued that the official protection architecture in the city had failed. They perceived that UNHCR and the Government of Uganda ought to have been responsible for their protection, but in reality they felt that the key protection institutions had abandoned them. Consequently, refugees systematically argued that they had to look for protection from other sources. Refugees proposed that their real sense of protection, if it existed, came from distinct informal and metaphysical sources, thus disregarding the role of the formal protection attempted to be provided by the institutions.

Refugees informing this study, consequently, conceptualised the entire notion of ‘protection’ in a somewhat different manner compared to the main protection institutions. They included not only legal and material elements (the key aspects that UNHCR and OPM focused on) but also the physical and psychological well-being of their body and mind in their conceptualisation of ‘protection’. Therefore, the human body was perceived by the refugees as the most intimate space of protection, together with the notion of spiritual protection provided by God. Additionally, refugees saw that their financial and livelihood security affected their sense of protection. Lack of food, shelter and other basic needs was perceived by them as causing insecurity. Negotiating their way in the physical landscape of the city was also associated with their sense of protection in terms of their urban fear. Protection was, moreover, perceived by the refugees in relational terms among themselves, between different refugee communities, and between them and the protection institutions and the Ugandan hosts.

All of these different elements of ‘protection’ identified by the refugees are discussed in the following empirical chapters. This is important because the conventional definitions of

‘protection’ and to some extent also the scholarship on refugee protection have highlighted the perspectives of institutions over the ideas of the affected people. Therefore, it is important to understand that the “affected populations often conceive of ‘protection’ quite differently to those who seek to implement protection programmes” (Addison 2009: 4).

### **5.3. Physical spaces of institutional trust**

In this section I examine refugees’ experiences of accessing the physical institutional ‘spaces of protection’ within Kampala. For the purpose of this section the concept of ‘protection space’ refers to the physical offices of the UNHCR and its implementing partner IAU. These two formal ‘protection spaces’ provide an interesting case study when the politics of space and refugees’ ‘right to the city’ (Mitchell 2003, Lefebvre 1996) and its micro-scale spaces are explored.

Following Sandvik’s (2012) interpretations of the “shadowgraphy” of the physical and invisible protection architecture of Kampala, I suggest that the physical, imagined and lived elements of protection and insecurity are important in refugees’ experiences of negotiating their access to these institutional spaces. This is because, whereas humanitarian personnel commonly see ‘protection’ as enjoyment of rights, others, including refugees, may define it primarily as physical protection (Addison 2009: 4). Nevertheless, refugees’ discourses on the physicality of their protection are intertwined with their imaginations and narratives of the invisibility of their city (Sandvik 2012). Thus, examining how refugees’ discourses of ‘representational space’ regarding these institutional micro-spaces reflect the institutions’ ‘representations of space’ (Lefebvre 1991) is central to my analysis.

### ***5.3.1. “Between the UNHCR protection officers and me there is a gap”: refugees’ lack of direct access to the UNHCR***

The Congolese refugees informing this study generally agreed that UNHCR should have been the organisation responsible for their formal protection. However, in reality, refugees perceived UNHCR as not delivering meaningful protection. During a FGD, a refugee woman, for instance, suggested that: “In our point of view the UNHCR was supposed to protect us, but unfortunately the UNHCR does not protect us at all. The only advantage is that we have identification and we cannot be arrested.”<sup>82</sup> Thus, some refugees still upheld the idea of UNHCR as providing legal protection for them, but in their everyday material, psychosocial and spiritual struggles they had nothing to do with the organisation. Not having direct access to the UNHCR office also made refugees think that the organisation had abandoned them.

Refugees were not allowed to enter the UNHCR country office which was located in an upper-class residential area of Kololo parish. Sandvik (2012) has provided a detailed analysis on the history of “exclusion and disengagement” of the UNHCR office in Kampala. According to her, in 2004 UNHCR “embarked on ‘a strategy of disengagement’ by moving its Kampala branch office from the relative outskirts of Kololo to deep within the interior of that affluent neighbourhood” (Sandvik 2012: 115–116). This relocation required, according to her, questioning UNHCR’s conceptualisation of ‘protection space’; rather than securing protection for refugees, the office argued for the need to preserve its own safety.

---

<sup>82</sup> FGD7.

At the time of my fieldwork, refugees could access UNHCR protection, resettlement and community service officers through IAU. UNHCR also had an extension office at the Department of Refugees/OPM where they could meet refugees. In the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy (UNHCR 2009a), which was also gradually being implemented by the UNHCR Kampala office, it was, however, stated that:

UNHCR will respect a number of basic principles with regard to reception arrangements in urban areas. First, no refugee or asylum seeker will be prevented from having *direct access to UNHCR offices* and staff members, although such access will, of course, have to be carefully regulated and supervised and take full account of security considerations (UNHCR 2009a: 30, emphasis added).

Having direct access to the main UNHCR compound (Figure 6) in Kololo was, however, not possible for the refugees. The lack of direct access to the UNHCR office was rather well known among the refugee population in the city. Nevertheless, some of the refugees still tried to access the office, and they could be seen waiting outside the barricaded compound. At the time of my fieldwork a group of 22 refugees who had been living in the city without a ‘durable solution’ for more than a decade also organised sit-ins in front of the secured office.



Figure 6. UNHCR County Office in Kololo parish of Kampala (Source: Lyytinen 2011; picture taken from inside the UNHCR compound).

Asylum seekers who were new to the city, however, did not necessarily know that the UNHCR office in Kololo was unreachable for them. For instance, a 33-year-old male asylum seeker, who had fled the DRC because of the high-level political murder of his uncle, had been in Kampala only a week at the time of the interview. Before reaching Uganda he had been detained in Kigali, Rwanda where the ICRC had assisted him in prison. Thus, he assumed that the international community, represented by UNHCR, among others, would protect him in Kampala. When this expectation did not materialise, he was confused and upset about the situation:

I was asking from passers-by where the office of UNHCR is and they directed me to Kololo. I got there on foot and I was denied access. I was denied access! I said that it was an emergency situation: “I am really in a great concern of security; just let me talk to them... What the next step will be, I do not care about it, I would just like to inform them about my situation.” I had practically been denied access. I was very, very disappointed as I had to come back. Afterwards another refugee told me that I cannot access the UNHCR service directly, but I have to pass through IAU and from IAU maybe they can hear about my situations. But even to get to the IAU is a long process. I have to go there only on Monday and even then you have to

wake up early in the morning because there are some people who sleep out there...<sup>83</sup>

Furthermore, lack of direct access to the UNHCR office had led some of the refugees to be confused about the relationship between UNHCR and other organisations, as suggested by a 39-year-old male refugee:

Between the UNHCR protection officers and me there is a gap. There are other people who are between us. I mean, I want to talk about these organisations like RLP, IAU and OPM. Before you meet these [UNHCR] protection officers you should pass through them. You need to pass them. And that situation does not allow us to meet them. You can spend several years, four years, trying to see them.<sup>84</sup>

Given the lack of direct access to UNHCR office in Kampala, and the difficulty of seeing UNHCR officers, most of the refugees did not trust the UN Refugee Agency. Consequently, they did not feel that the UNHCR provided them with any meaningful sense of protection: “I think that UNHCR is the one who could take that responsibility of protecting us though it has rejected it.”<sup>85</sup> Thus, refugees’ physical experiences of accessing formal ‘protection spaces’ had an impact on their imagined sense of protection and in particular created a sense of institutional mistrust. My observations on Congolese refugees’ perceptions of UNHCR in Kampala are supported by Sandvik’s (2012) study, which provided a similar account regarding the situation in the early 2000s. According to her (2012: 115), “in the imagination of asylum-seekers and urban refugees, memories of negligence and acts of transgression committed by UNHCR and its staff loomed large.”

As the scholarly literature on ‘protection’, ‘space’ and ‘trust’ has shown, all of these concepts can be interpreted in different ways, and often competing discourses on them

---

<sup>83</sup> M49.

<sup>84</sup> M12.

<sup>85</sup> M2.

arise between different individuals and institutions. Therefore, it is important that the institutions' accounts of protection/space/trust are examined, in addition to the refugees' discourses. During my interview which touched on the issue of refugees' physical access to the UNHCR office, the UNHCR officer I engaged with did not agree with the refugees' perception. According to the officer:

That [perception] is wrong. Precisely it is the opposite: they [refugees] have access. But what is the problem here is understanding what it means to access the UNHCR building, to access UNHCR officers... And of course you also have to look into possible constraints... Apart from the staffing constraints accessibility is there.<sup>86</sup>

Thus, UNHCR recognised that refugees may have had restricted access due to a limited number of staff. At the time of the field research, the UNHCR country office in Kampala had one senior protection officer, four other permanent protection officers, and a few other temporary protection staff, such as interns. According to the officer, refugees had direct access to their protection staff, but this interaction did not take place in the main UNHCR office located in Kololo parish. The reason why UNHCR staff did not see refugees physically in their country office in Kololo was because of the prevalent idea of outsourcing their direct work with refugees to their implementing partner. The past difficulties they had faced in the Kololo office also had an impact on UNHCR's decision to distance themselves from their clients:

Why we came to this formula [of seeing refugees at other locations] is because we experienced very nasty incidents here at the office. You would have refugees at our gates here in the neighbourhood, like 150–200 just in the gate there and, you know, sometimes in a very unruly fashion. ... It is very much about how you perceive things, because our office in Kampala is not only meant for the refugees in Kampala. Our office in Kampala is representative of the entire refugee [population] in the country, which means Kampala and the settlements. So, for them it is like "oh, Kampala is for us", which is wrong. ... But then we also realise that this is indeed a problem that when you have an opportunity to see them, they might not be really 100 per cent open. In black and white, you know what I mean. So, they would just write their side but we also have our side of the story, also about how

---

<sup>86</sup> UNHCR officer, 20.9.2011.

they behave. And one of the areas which is a bit worrisome, which we are trying to mitigate, is the so-called behaviour of recycling, like you have refugees who would be determined to have all the best in terms of counselling and then they would come again, come again, three times, four times, five times...<sup>87</sup>

What this account indicated was that despite its liberal urban refugee policy, some of the officers at UNHCR in Kampala still perceived refugees as a potential security threat and as ‘troublemakers’ who, when having contact with the UNHCR officers, were perceived to act in a deceptive manner. Moreover, refugees were accused of using UNHCR services to an excessive degree. This perception of urban refugees as ‘troublemakers’ was dangerous because “if UNHCR staff members regard and treat all urban refugees as potential trouble makers, then they are all the more likely to act in such a manner” (Obi and Crisp 2002: 8).

Furthermore, according to the UNHCR officer, Congolese in Kampala specifically targeted protection services, instead of counselling and community services. This was, according to the officer, because of the wish to be resettled rather than because of real protection concerns. Blaming of refugees by the protection institutions is a rather common reaction in humanitarian settings where the protection delivery is seen to have failed (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005). In this case, refugees were blamed for making the systems fail and for overusing the ‘wrong’ services. Yet the Congolese in Kampala suggested that even though their biggest problems were protection-related, most of them lined up at IAU to see a counsellor and not a protection officer. This was because the likelihood of getting access to a counsellor was better than getting access to a protection officer.<sup>88</sup> The role of counsellors was, however, debated and questioned among the refugees, as articulated by a male refugee during a community meeting:

---

<sup>87</sup> UNHCR officer, 20.6.2011.

<sup>88</sup> ICRCU observation.

As Congolese we need to wake up. If we need counselling and 90 per cent of us are Christians, why cannot we just go and meet the pastors? Why do we only go to IAU for counselling? In IAU they just add problems in your life. As Congolese we need to know our problems. Also, we do not need counselling; we need protection. It has been years that the ladies are fighting to see a counsellor at IAU. We Congolese are like cows. I do not know what kind of witchcraft this is.<sup>89</sup>

Moreover, according to male community leader, protection institutions, such as UNHCR, did not believe that their real needs were protection-related:

I have tried to mention them [UNHCR] the problem, but they say “you [the Congolese] may be the biggest community, but we think that most of the people who come to meet a protection officer, their case is not protection-related.” But I know that most Congolese are protection cases. ... Concerning what happened in Congo, the concern should be protection.<sup>90</sup>

Given the lack of direct access to the UNHCR office in Kololo, most of the refugees did not even know where UNHCR was physically located. That said, others had settled in Kampala because of the UNHCR presence in the city; the close proximity to the UNHCR office was seen by some as meaning they had a better chance of being resettled. Since urban refugees increasingly use the internet in order to find out about the protection opportunities (Danielson 2012), in the case of Kampala, refugees may have got a false understanding of where to access UNHCR officers and services. This was because the UNHCR country webpage for Uganda (UNHCR 2012b) only had the street address (together with the city map and opening hours) of the main UNHCR country office in Kololo. There was no mention of the fact that refugees were prohibited from entering this space.

Moreover, hardly any of the refugees informing this study were aware of the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy (UNHCR 2009a). After hearing about it, many of them

---

<sup>89</sup> ICRCU observation.

<sup>90</sup> Community leader, 17.1.2011.

hoped for more information on the new policies and laws governing their stay in Uganda. Most of the refugees who had lived in Kampala for an extended period of time thought that nothing had changed in practice since UNHCR started to implement the new urban refugee policy in 2010. According to UNHCR, however, there had been significant improvement in terms of programmes and facilities for refugees in Kampala compared to the previous years. When it came to the implementation of the new urban refugee policy, UNHCR in Kampala was still, at the time of the fieldwork, in the process of finding ways to do this. Thus, they were “not yet very actively”<sup>91</sup> implanting the policy, but what they had realised during this preparation period was that the new, rather ambiguous policy should have been introduced hand-in-hand with a budget increase. However, “the resource basket has not been extending; it has been shrinking.”<sup>92</sup>

To conclude, I suggest, in the words of Sandvik (2012: 121), that “despite UNHCR’s official embrace of rights-based humanitarianism, the manipulation of space and the attendant growth of the ‘invisible city’ increasingly precluded any kind of meaningful refugee involvement in protection activities”. Thus, in Kampala it has been, and still was, clear that UNHCR’s protection policies were not in line with the actual practices they implemented on the ground, or more precisely the absence they had created in the city. This observation justifies “the need for sustained and critical scholarly attention to UNHCR’s urban refugee management” (Sandvik 2012: 121). Also, in order to discover refugees’ distinct ‘representational space’ in relation to that of the UNHCR’s ‘representations of space’ (Lefebvre 1991), a combined analysis of ‘protection’, ‘space’

---

<sup>91</sup> UNHCR officer, 18.1.2011.

<sup>92</sup> UNHCR officer, 18.1.2011.

and ‘trust’ was essential, because refugees and institutions had distinctive ideas of all of these entangled concepts.

### *5.3.2. Sunday nights and Monday mornings at InterAid Uganda (IAU)*

As has already been discussed, despite the significant increase in the number of registered forced migrants in Kampala, UNHCR had only one official implementing partner, IAU, in the city. This had increased the pressure on IAU’s service delivery for refugees.<sup>93</sup> IAU’s office was located in Mengo parish and, like the UNHCR office, it was also highly guarded and refugees’ access to the office was limited and controlled. Despite this, IAU officers considered it as forming an important protective community space for the refugees in Kampala:

This place is also regarded as a community centre; this is where they [refugees] come. This is where they meet. This is actually more utilised I would say, before the community centre [the UNHCR-established António Guterres Community Centre]. But when they want to meet, we provide them space. ... Once in a while they come here but ... they have their own communities and places, churches and sometimes they meet in those structures.<sup>94</sup>

IAU had recently changed its policy in terms of access to refugees. Before 2008 it opened its doors only for the extremely limited group of so-called ‘urban caseload’, which consisted of a few hundred of the most vulnerable refugees identified by UNHCR. Medical referrals from the settlements were also able to access the compound. However, when the number of urban refugees kept growing, IAU, together with UNHCR and OPM, realised that it could no longer keep other refugees from accessing their premises and some of the

---

<sup>93</sup> The Jesuit Refugee Service was in charge of providing protection for the most vulnerable asylum seekers in Kampala.

<sup>94</sup> IAU officer, 12.1.2011.

services. According to the IAU “nowadays any of the 38,000 refugees can walk in and IAU does not restrict their access.”<sup>95</sup>

Despite the fact that IAU saw itself as an open and welcoming ‘protection space’ for the urban refugees and their communities, most of the refugees informing this study regarded the office space as something that was unreachable and unsafe to them. Some argued that it was physically risky to try to enter IAU due to their experiences of physical abuse in the office. Most of the Congolese refugees also found accessing IAU challenging because of the limited times at which they were allowed to enter the compound. Every refugee nationality present in Kampala had been allocated a specific weekday for appointments with the IAU and UNHCR officers. Emergency cases were, however, dealt with every weekday and also on Saturdays. The Congolese, which comprised more or less half of the refugees and asylum seekers in the city, were received every Monday. Early on Monday mornings there was a long queue of Congolese refugees outside the IAU office (Figure 7). The office opened its doors at 8AM and refugees would be lined up according to the service that they were looking for. Men and women had separate lines. However, since the Congolese only had one designated day for their appointments, most of them did not get an appointment.

---

<sup>95</sup> IAU officer, 12.1.2011.



Figure 7. Congolese men's queue outside the IAU office in Mengo parish of Kampala on a Monday morning (Source: Lyytinen 2011; photo modified to ensure anonymity).

Given the temporality of being able to access this 'protection space', the analysis of refugees' experience of space and time is intertwined (Massey 2005). Refugees in Kampala used to sleep outside the office in order to be able to get a meeting with the officer they wished to see. According to the official IAU documents (IAU 2009) refugees did not, however, camp outside the office at the time of the fieldwork. The IAU officer interviewed was also reluctant to suggest that refugees were sleeping outside their office again, but she could "not rule out"<sup>96</sup> that this was happening.

Refugees, however, categorically argued that they had to sleep outside the IAU office in order to maximise their chance of getting an appointment with an IAU or UNHCR officer. Refugee men, women and youth had various personal reasons why they saw sleeping outside the office as a risk to their security. What the analysis of refugees' access to formal

---

<sup>96</sup> IAU officer, 12.1.2011.

'protection space' revealed was that most of the Congolese felt that their physical 'right to the city' (Mitchell 2003) and its protective spaces had been denied. As a result, this enhanced refugees' institutional mistrust of IAU and the entire formal protection architecture.

Even though refugees in general shared this experience, their discourses of the lack of access to the IAU office were characterised by their individual circumstances. A 44-year-old refugee woman, whose young child was physically disabled, for instance, argued that she had to pay in order to see the UNHCR protection officer, because she had no option of sleeping on the street with the disabled child:

I tried to see the protection officer that time, but it was impossible for me. I did all in my means: I looked for money to pay those people who sleep outside [the IAU office]. It was the way I met the protection officer for the second time. Yes, I paid that money to those people. I paid 20,000 UGX [5 GBP]. Those who sleep there are just Congolese who do not have any means. You see, it is a business; it is a job because they do not have any means. Nothing to eat, nothing to live with. You may want to see the protection, but there is no way, nothing to do. I have never slept there. I cannot do so according to the situation of this kid.<sup>97</sup>

A 23-year-old Munyamulenge Tutsi man, who had fled the DRC because of a family-related land conflict, had been attacked and raped in Kampala by the people who had caused him to flee the DRC. He saw going to IAU as a security risk because so many Congolese would be assembling there at the particular time, meaning his persecutors could find him. Another issue was that he could be discriminated against by the other Congolese at IAU because of his distinct looks, which clearly revealed his ethnic background:

It is difficult to get access [to a UNHCR protection officer] because I am afraid. Because when you are there [at IAU] to get those appointments you have to be there early in the morning. And for me, I am afraid to go there in the morning because they [the persecutors] can come back and I can be killed. ... And one day per week is not enough for us Congolese. Maybe for others but for us Congolese it

---

<sup>97</sup> F20.

is not enough. We are so many Congolese here in Uganda. To see the protection it is not easy. Because there are those who sleep there and those who sleep there are not going to see the protection. They sleep there to gain money, to make money. And, that money, I cannot afford to pay it, because it is 20,000. I have never met UNHCR protection.<sup>98</sup>

This example shows the shared risk that the Banyamulenge Tutsis<sup>99</sup> had when trying to access UNHCR and IAU. Congolese could access IAU only on Mondays, their designated day, yet “when there are Banyamulenge in the line to wait to get an appointment with an IAU officer, other Congolese say that we are spies and we cannot access the office.”<sup>100</sup> The Congolese of other ethnicities, however, argued against Banyamulenge having their own day or line to meet the IAU and UNHCR staff. For them that would have been a sign of sustaining divisions imported from the DRC to Kampala, as was articulated by a male refugee:

We saw our brothers, the Banyamulenge; they came and complained that they cannot go in the same queue as the Congolese. They wanted their own line. ... This reminded me of what happened in our home country when some people claimed to be a minority. It created a hot discussion and I am afraid that the same discussion has shifted to Uganda. ... This means that Banyamusha, Balumba, Banande; each tribe should have their own line. That is impossible! We should keep away from politics.<sup>101</sup>

Moreover, a 64-year-old male refugee, who was seriously sick and who passed away a few weeks after the interview at his home, explained how difficult it was for him to arrange a meeting with the UNHCR protection officer due to his ill health and age:

It is quite impossible to get the appointment. My own experience is that I send one of my sons to sleep there on Saturday, wait all of Sunday and to get the appointment on Monday, which means that he spends more than two days there. It happened three months ago. I have sent him twice. And today we do not know. It looks like we are rejected...<sup>102</sup>

---

<sup>98</sup> M23.

<sup>99</sup> The distinct ‘protection space’ experienced by the Banyamulenge Tutsi community in Kampala is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight, in particular in Section 8.3.2.

<sup>100</sup> FGD3.

<sup>101</sup> 7 CRCU observation.

<sup>102</sup> M44.

Accessing IAU was problematic not only for the disabled, the elderly and ethnic minorities, but also for unaccompanied minors. One of them, a 17-year-old boy who looked after his younger sister, had tried to see the UNHCR protection officer many times. After repeated failures he had given up trying. This boy had arrived in Kampala alone in 2006 but over the course of five years in Uganda had not managed to meet a UNHCR protection officer:

Sometimes I go to IAU to see people, but I fail. As for me, when I came here other Congolese told me: 'you must go and see protection with your sister'. Last time we left the church [where they stayed] early in the morning, at five [AM]. We started to walk so that we could meet the protection. When we reached [the IAU] there is a line, at five [AM] there are too many people. I have been there four times since last month. ... I gave up and I never go there again. ... I do not think I can go there again. I give up. I am not going again. Because before I went with my sister and you have to wake up in the morning and we go by foot. But at night we fear.<sup>103</sup>

As can be seen from these interview extracts, refugees from various backgrounds and with distinct characteristics saw that their specific features and experiences as limiting their access to and consequent trust in IAU. This conclusion is in line with the overall observation that trust can be linked with individual identity elements (Candlin and Crichton 2012, Behnia 2004). However, even though refugees' accounts of their lack of access to IAU emphasise their individual features and situations, they understood that their experience of denied access was shared with other Congolese refugees who had their own distinct reasons why accessing IAU was dangerous and difficult for them. Given this shared experience, the elected community leader for the Congolese refugees in Kampala argued that the refugee population was left in charge of their own physical protection:

In the Congolese community, I think that the physical protection is not there. Each one has to take care of his protection. So, we have to be careful. In terms of legal protection, there are also some challenges because, to me, meeting with the protection officer of UNHCR is somewhat difficult. We are over 50,000 refugees in this urban area, and we [the Congolese] only have one day to meet with the

---

<sup>103</sup> M36.

protection and those are ten people who can meet a protection officer in a week. ... We can have people there who have been living here for 11 years who have not met the protection officer.<sup>104</sup>

This abandonment by the authorities suggested by the refugees was, however, not supported by the institutions. IAU, for instance, perceived that in general the system of seeing refugees was working well, even though they also recognised that one day for the Congolese was not necessarily sufficient:

Congolese come on Monday. It is our busiest day... It is not enough [for the Congolese]. That is why we have the opening [for emergency cases on other days]... The reason why we came up with that kind of a procedure was that other nationalities complained that the Congolese were the only ones accessing the services. And we realised that the number is so big, so they could be the ones turning up in bigger numbers. So, the complaints were addressed by allocating days. So, now there are no complaints.<sup>105</sup>

In addition, even when refugees got an appointment, given the limited budget received from UNHCR, IAU was not always able to support them. The lack of resources due to the growing number of urban refugees was recognised not only by the refugees but also by the Ugandan authorities, as expressed by an OPM officer:

[I]f you settle yourself in Kampala, you know, it is a very high price you are going to pay, because InterAid does not have their own account. Everything comes through UNHCR. If I am able to give you painkillers and yet you need surgery... You know, that is why the settlement has its benefits.<sup>106</sup>

Besides the limited physical access, refugees also had to navigate the political space which surrounded the protection institutions. At times, difficult and politicised relations between UNHCR, IAU and OPM had an impact on the functioning of the official protection system and caused confusion among the refugees. In 2010, for example, there was a period when UNHCR stopped seeing refugees at the IAU office. According to some of the UNHCR

---

<sup>104</sup> Representative of the CRCU.

<sup>105</sup> IAU officer, 12.1.2011.

<sup>106</sup> OPM officer, 7.1.2011.

officers this was because the agreement of cooperation between these two organisations had expired and the new contract had not yet been signed. The IAU officer, however, suggested that at the time “there were a lot of issues that we could not handle.”<sup>107</sup> Therefore, OPM took over the provision of space for UNHCR officers to meet refugees, and the UNHCR senior protection officer established a temporary arrangement with the Congolese refugees in which all of the new Congolese protection cases would have to go through the elected male leader of the CRCU prior reaching UNHCR.

According to some of the refugees, the senior protection officer set up this system as a reaction to the ban that IAU had implemented on the male leader; he and other key members of the CRCU were not allowed to access IAU because of the disagreements between IAU and this particular community.<sup>108</sup> Refugees, however, interpreted this special arrangement as a sign of a conflict between IAU and UNHCR. They suggested that IAU was not pleased with these arrangements because they had fewer clients coming in, and would consequently lose out in terms of funding. Therefore, the refugees argued, IAU organised for UNHCR to return to their office while the UNHCR senior protection officer was on a mission abroad. Clearly then, not only the physical but also the imagined and lived spaces of protection, which were often highly politicised, affected refugees’ sense of protection and institutional trust.

---

<sup>107</sup> IAU officer, 12.1.2011.

<sup>108</sup> This and other disagreements between refugee communities and institutions are further explored in Section 8.4 of Chapter Eight.

#### **5.4. Concluding discussion**

In this chapter, refugees' lack of right to appropriate and participate in the production of formal spaces of protection (Lefebvre 1996, Purcell 2003) was discussed with a special reference to the issue of institutional trust. Thus, the analysis of refugees' sense of trust and their 'right to the city' were combined.

It is concluded that refugees individually experienced disappointments when interacting with the institutions led to increasing mistrust with the formal protection system in Kampala. To some extent this mistrust varied between the diverse institutions and also between different officers, or 'access points' (Giddens 1990). Also, the wider political and historical context was important for the development of institutional trust, as well as the erosion of it (Singh 2012). Refugees reasoned their mistrust in the protection architecture through the discourses of lying, misrepresentation and mismanagement by the institutions. Officers, however, had very different perceptions on the abovementioned issues.

Additionally, refugees suggested that their experiences of a lack of physical access to the protection institutions reinforced this institutional mistrust. Their trust discourses in regard to the physical spaces of protection were largely formed around their individual characteristics. Even though it is recognised that individual features can have an impact on the making of trust decisions (Candlin and Crichton 2012), refugees shared the similar experience of having been denied access to these institutional micro-spaces of protection, and this had led to increasing mistrust. However, the officers working for these institutions perceived the 'protection space' they offered to refugees in a rather different manner: UNHCR argued that refugees had direct access to their office and the IAU did not readily

admit that refugees were sleeping outside their office, perceiving their office as a ‘safe community space’. To conclude, protection officers’ “representations of space” were to a large extent distinct from refugees’ lived “representational spaces” (Lefebvre 1991).

Given this overall institutional mistrust, Congolese refugees informing this study suggested that they lacked formal protection in the city of Kampala. They also argued that rather than providing protection some of the institutional practices and representations made them feel insecure. In short, the institutional ‘space of protection’ was seen by refugees largely as a ‘space of insecurity and mistrust’. This is because urban refugees often share similar problems in particular places, such as the offices of the protection institutions (Nah 2011).

The stories and perceptions presented in this chapter were largely from the viewpoint of refugees and were representative of the experience of living as a Congolese refugee in Kampala as it was described by the refugees informing this study. However, as Sandvik (2012: 121) has suggested, refugees’ narratives of everyday urban struggles characterised by mistrust and quest for agency can be seen as an illegitimate version of the ‘truth’ by the institutions. This is because:

Memories of everyday interactions [between institutions and refugees] are lost or ignored. ... As the map of refugee experiences resides in the inferior and illicit realm of memory, invoking this realm means calling on an *illegitimate* version of the past.

What this chapter has shown is that refugees’ imaginings of formal ‘spaces of protection’ can be perceived as illegitimate or incorrect by the protection institutions, and vice versa. However, it was understood that when issues of trust were examined, it was important not

to dismiss any story, testimony or rumour, because they contextualised the perceptions, fears and challenges of trusting and being trusted.

## **Chapter Six: PHYSICAL SPACES OF PROTECTION AND HOST-REFUGEE RELATIONS**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The main focus of this chapter is on the physical forms of protection and insecurity that refugees experienced and imagined in the urban environment. Consequently, in this chapter I define ‘protection’ essentially as physical ‘security’ or ‘safety’. This conceptual take is in line with the protection literature, which points out that ‘protection’ can be defined as “seeking to assure the safety of civilians from acute harm” (O’Callaghan and Pantuliano 2007: 1). Also, whereas humanitarian organisations commonly see ‘protection’ as enjoyment of rights, others such as states, militaries and civilians themselves can define it primarily as physical protection (Addison 2009: 4). Since refugeehood is, arguably, largely characterised by ‘insecurity’, I additionally consider a sense of ontological security, which can be understood as “the notion of safety, routine and trust in a stable environment” (Hawkins and Maurer 2011: 143), as being central to the understanding of refugees’ experiences of urban protection.

I examine how refugees used and appropriated urban space; their ‘sense of place’ and ‘right to the city’ to its different areas, neighbourhoods and micro-scale places. This analytical angle requires another theoretical clarification. I suggest that the analysis of protection and insecurity has to focus on the evolving contexts of social relations and spatial configurations at the different geographical scales. Consequently, my analysis focuses on shelters and neighbourhoods (i.e. micro-scale), different parishes and other areas of the city outside refugees’ immediate residential areas (i.e. meso-scale), and the

city at large (i.e. macro-scale). The importance of this analytical approach comes from the review of studies on urban refugees, research on people's 'sense of place', and studies on the conceptualisations of 'protection'.

First, according to UNHCR, the notion of 'protection space' evolves according to changes in the political, economic, social and security environments (UNHCR 2009a). Therefore, it is understood that the macro-level changes in regional and national spheres can influence the sustainability of refugee protection in a city. Yet it is the meso- and micro-level understanding of urban refugee protection that has been highlighted in previous studies, suggesting that particular attention should be paid to not only different areas and neighbourhoods but also to distinct buildings and forms of shelter (Nah 2010, Russell 2011, Sandvik 2012).

Second, in the theoretical literature on space it has been proposed that people's 'sense of place' has implications for their "sense of identity, feelings of belonging, inclusion and exclusions, whether it is on the scale of the family, the 'community' or the city" (Phillips, Davis and Radcliffe 2007: 230). Therefore, particular analytical attention is required to understand refugees' 'sense of place' across different geographical levels.

Third, the analytical approach being focused on different scales reflects the wider conceptualisations of the spatiality of 'protection'. The egg model of 'protection' (Slim and Bonwick 2005: 42), for instance, refers to the responsive action to "stop, prevent or alleviate the worst effects of the abuse", which can be interpreted as physical abuse of the body at the very micro level. It also talks about the remedial action that includes tasks aimed at restoring people's dignity and ensuring adequate living conditions. Thus, the

physical and material living conditions at the micro- and meso-scales are central to the analysis of protection. Lastly, the task of environment/capacity-building action represents changing the society as a whole to act according to the internationally accepted protection norms. The macro-level manifestations of protection are, therefore, also central to this conceptualisation of protection.

As this model has been suggested to put “an end to the protection–assistance dichotomy” (Evans Barnes 2009: 10), I take that there is no analytical justification to preserve the traditional distinction between the materiality of assistance and immateriality of protection. Thus, I understand that refugees’ conceptualisations of the notion of ‘protection’ may include both imagined/spiritual and also physical/material elements.

Even though I emphasise the physicality of protection, I recognise that it is closely associated with the relational approach to protection characterised by the issue of ‘trust’. In this chapter I investigate refugees’ experiences of generalised and particularised social trust in regard to other urban residents, in particular the ‘Ugandan Other’. I analyse particularised social trust between refugees and their Ugandan neighbours and generalised social trust in terms of refugees’ social contacts with the unknown Ugandan residents of the city and the urban population at large. Thus, the analysis of ‘trust’ also reflects the different spatial scales incorporated in this chapter.

Besides the interview data, I use participatory photographs in order to paint a fuller picture of refugees’ understandings of the spatiality of their city of exile. In the following section, I examine the micro-scale spaces of protection and insecurity.

## **6.2. Urban micro-scale spaces of protection and insecurity**

### ***6.2.1. Home and shelter***

Refugees found shelter in various places in the city. In this section I examine three different places representing a ‘home’ or a shelter in Kampala: rented houses, churches and an alleyway. In regard to each micro-space, my aim is to analyse refugees’ relational and physical spatial experiences of living in these forms of shelter.

#### ***6.2.1.1. Rented houses***

Most of the refugees lived in relatively poor conditions. Many Ugandans, however, faced similar housing problems to the refugees because these two groups shared the same residential areas. The deprived living conditions were due to the overall rapid and uncontrolled urbanisation which had taken place in Kampala over recent decades (Cities Alliance 2009, KCCA 2010).<sup>109</sup> Given these conditions, “African host-governments see the situation in their urban centres being exacerbated by the presence of refugees who are said to compete with nationals for scarce employment opportunities and social services” (Kibreab 1996: 131). This was also to some extent the situation in Kampala. Refugees, however, argued that on top of the shared urban challenges they also experienced specific problems relating to their particular status. In the next section the focus is on these elements which refugees’ suggested characterised particularly their housing issues and the consequent insecurity.

---

<sup>109</sup> For more discussion on the uncontrolled growth of Kampala, see Section 2.3 of Chapter Two.

The most common form of a ‘home’ for the Congolese refugees was a rented house. A ‘house’ is a vital form of shelter in urban areas, and providing refugees access to secure housing during their stay in exile is important because at its best a proper shelter can enable the recovery of sustainable livelihood, provide protection, offer privacy and dignity, and support household and community coping strategies (Shelter Centre 2010: 13).

The people with whom refugees’ shared their house ranged from members of their nuclear family to extended family, friends and acquaintances. Single men and women often shared their house with friends from their church or, in the case of the Banyamulenge Tutsis, people from the same ethnic community. The living conditions were often crowded. For instance, a young female asylum seeker lived in Nsambya in a small, one-room house with her sister, her sister’s husband and their nine children. The space was, according to her, “shameful”<sup>110</sup> because they only had one room for all 12 of them. A married woman with four children also explained how the scarce living space (Figure 8) made family life difficult:

We are renting the place we are staying in. It is not very good, because we just have one room. All of us we are in the same room and it is not really very good for the education of our children, because we all sleep in the same place. But even though it is just one room it is very difficult for us to pay the rent.<sup>111</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup> F9.

<sup>111</sup> F2.

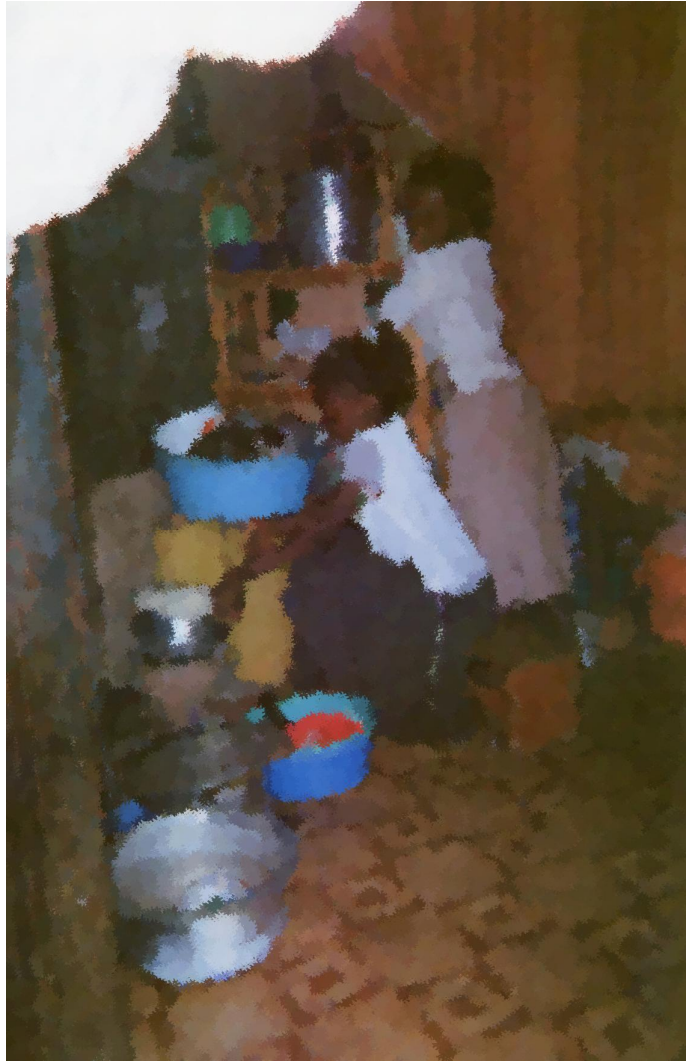


Figure 8. A refugee woman's photograph of her one-room house presenting the kitchen corner (Source: Participatory photographing photo modified to ensure anonymity).

At the end of the month, finding the money for the rent was difficult. Rent for a small one- or two-room house varied between 50,000 and 200,000 UGX per month (13–50 GBP) depending on the neighbourhood and facilities. Refugees categorically suggested that Ugandan landlords charged them more than Ugandans. This was done, refugees argued, because Ugandans perceived the Congolese as rich because of the natural resources in the DRC. Congolese refugees have experienced a similar kind of discrimination based on their assumed wealth in other African cities, such as Nairobi (Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano 2010: 24).

In terms of the infrastructure, housing in Kampala was challenging and many of the refugees could only afford to rent a single-room house in the low-income neighbourhoods of the city. Most of the population (54 per cent) of the city, however, lived in one-roomed houses (*muzigos*) (KCCA 2010). Many informants lived in crowded houses without electricity, sanitation or running water. Sanitation facilities were commonly shared with other people living in the same neighbourhood. This meant that the washroom facilities were outside the house. This was seen as a security risk, especially by refugee women and children who were concerned about their physical security and health.<sup>112</sup>

Refugees' living arrangements were often not straightforward, and identifying their sense of 'home' in the city of Kampala was challenging. For example, a young Munyamulenge asylum seeker boy<sup>113</sup> lived with his family in Kasubi. Despite having his family in Kampala, he was unable to sleep at his parents' house. The house they rented was just one room and in total the family had nine members. Thus, his father had arranged for the male siblings to sleep at the house of a member of their congregation. The boy reflected on his living arrangement accordingly:

We sleep there and in the morning we go back home. ... The *house* is close by. It is like a ten-minute walk from *my home*. We normally go there like 9PM. We try to go there when it is not too dark. I always go with my other brothers. I leave that place at 6.30AM.

This practice of not being able to sleep in a place perceived as a 'home' was shared by others. Some of the refugee men, for instance, explained that they could not stay in their rented house with the rest of their family due to security reasons. By occasionally sleeping elsewhere, they aimed to protect their families from a possible attack. Also, a 23-year-old

---

<sup>112</sup> FGD7.

<sup>113</sup> M33.

male refugee,<sup>114</sup> who was in Kampala alone, did not sleep where he perceived his ‘home’ to be. His living arrangements included sleeping in a church, but spending a significant amount of time at his pastor’s place in another parish. Consequently, according to him, the pastor’s house (Figure 9) represented a home to him:

In Kireka, this house is for the pastor. This is the pastor’s house because every day I go there... *My home* would be the pastor’s house; in the church I only sleep... My pastor told me that instead of spending all day in the church, “you can visit me and my house. And you can stay inside the fence. After that you can go where you are sleeping.” ... Those people are my pastor’s children. This *family* loves me so much.”

Moreover, his explanation of the pastor’s house was characterised by a sense of belonging to a family which he did not have elsewhere in Kampala. Therefore, having been able to access this physical space of protection had affected his sense of home and family – both of which he lacked in the church space where he slept.



Figure 9. Pastor’s house and children which the informant identified as his “home and family” (Source: Participatory photographing; photo modified to ensure anonymity)

---

<sup>114</sup> M30.

A number of refugees had experienced evictions leading to a sense of insecurity about losing their shelter. In humanitarian situations, Boano (2011: 38) has observed that:

Loss of property and housing is not only severe material damage, but it also carries a powerful symbolic erosion of security, social wellbeing and place attachment. ... This loss seriously erodes the very meaning of life and its continuity in space and time.

As seen from this reflection, refugees' loss of shelter can significantly affect their sense of protection bound in time and space. This was also the case in Kampala. The reasons why people were evicted or otherwise had to move within the city were various, and some were related to their status as refugees. Some of the refugees had been forced to move to a new place because the people that they lived with were resettled. Others moved because of exceptionally poor living conditions and insecurity in particular neighbourhoods. This was often caused by difficult relations between refugees and their Ugandan neighbours. The inability to pay rent was also a continuous security risk. Moreover, refugees suggested that Ugandan landlords discriminated against them due to their status and due to their large families. Sometimes the refugees who were unlawfully evicted tried to turn to the protection institutions or local counsellors (LC1s) for help. However, more often they were provided with a temporary shelter by a church. In the following section I discuss refugees' experiences of staying in church buildings.

#### *6.2.1.2. Church buildings*

As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight, churches provided an important sense of community and belonging for the majority of the Congolese refugees informing this study. In this section, I focus on the idea of the church as a physical shelter. In previous studies it has been recognised how LFCs, including churches, can have "key resources that

equip them to provide basic services [in humanitarian situations, and] religious buildings may be used for storage, information hubs, shelter and protection” (Fiddian-Quasmiyeh and Ager 2013: 5). The church also has a long tradition of using its buildings as a ‘sanctuary’ (Marfleet 2011). In recent years, this sanctuary movement has experienced a resurgence, in particular in the Global North. Less scholarly literature has, however, paid attention to this physical and spiritual feature in the context of the Global South – an aspect that this study provides some new insights into.

In general, shelter was provided for refugees by Congolese and Ugandan denominational and Pentecostal churches.<sup>115</sup> In 2011, there were at least 50 Congolese churches in the city.<sup>116</sup> The majority of these churches were located in Katwe and Nsambya parishes where most of the Kivutian Congolese lived. An estimated 80 per cent of all of the refugees interviewed had stayed in a church at some point during their stay in Kampala, mostly upon their arrival. This was due to the fact that only a few of my refugee informants had a specific plan to come to Uganda or more specifically to Kampala, because they did know anyone in the city prior to their arrival. Given the importance of the church, refugees who upon their arrival in the city were looking for their lost relatives focused their search on these refugee churches.

In this chapter, I use the New Life Centre Church (NLCC) located in Rubaga parish as an example to discuss the church as a physical space of protection. NLCC was at the time of the fieldwork attended and led by both Ugandans and Congolese. Initially in 1994 the

---

<sup>115</sup> Ugandan Catholic and Anglican churches did not provide shelter for refugees, and thus many of the Catholic Congolese had decided to join denominational and Pentecostal churches. This ‘denominational conversion’ is further discussed in Section 8.3.4. of Chapter Eight.

<sup>116</sup> FGD13.

church was set up by a Congolese bishop who at the time lived in Uganda. Throughout the history of the church refugees had attended and lived in the church.

The NLCC provided the refugees with a combination of support because the Ugandan pastor had realised “that the church cannot continue by only giving spiritual guidance without meeting their [the refugees’] physical needs.”<sup>117</sup> Therefore, the church provided a place where refugees could sleep: it functioned both as a secular space of shelter and as a sacred space of spiritual services and worship. Drawing boundaries between secular and sacred spaces is often not straightforward (Knott 2005), and reconciling these two functions was argued both by the refugees and by the pastors to have potentially jeopardised the more sanctified element of the church building. The pastors were, however, willing to do this because they firmly believed that providing shelter for refugees was what the Bible taught them.

The NLCC rented a small wooden building along the busy Rubaga road (Figure 10). In order to pay the rent they relied on their member’s donations and ties, and “even the refugees give when they can, just like the Bible says: ‘give what you have’.”<sup>118</sup> Overall, the Ugandan pastor of the NLCC believed that the physical shelter, and the associated sense of belonging they were able to provide, reinforced refugees’ sense of protection in Kampala:

When the refugees come to the church they feel more protected. When they are in the church, the church gives them remedy of the word of love. But in the refugee camp they do not really mind about that. They just give you protection, and you are under the arm of the Government. But here they are freer. I think that if the church could give them physical protection, I think that the refugees would feel more protected than in other areas.<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>117</sup> Ugandan pastor, 16.8.2011.

<sup>118</sup> Ugandan pastor, 16.8.2011.

<sup>119</sup> Ugandan pastor, 16.8.2011.

This example also shows how the Ugandan pastor conceptualised ‘refugee protection’ in spiritual terms, like many of the refugees taking part in this study. He also saw that his church offered refugees a sanctuary based on what the scriptures taught on refugee protection.



Figure 10. NLCC in Rubaga (Source: Lyytinen 2011; photo modified to ensure anonymity).

During the summer of 2011 seven Congolese refugees stayed in this small church. In the following section, I discuss the unique and shared experiences of living in the church through the eyes of Robert and Patrick and their families.<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>120</sup> All names have been changed to protect the informant’s anonymity.

One day I met Robert<sup>121</sup> by accident on the street near the OPM. He initiated our conversation by asking me: “hey sister, are you born again?” After discussing our shared faith with him, he invited me to visit his church where he lived and worshipped. Robert was in his early 40s and he was a Bangubangu from South Kivu. He had a wife and a two-year-old daughter. Robert had fled the DRC with his wife because of a family conflict which was caused by his father’s polygamy. They had stayed in the church for two years ever since their arrival in Kampala in 2009. Initially someone at the Old Kampala police station had advised him to find this particular church which was known in the city as one of the oldest ‘refugee churches’. Robert and his family’s everyday rhythm was shaped by the fact that they occupied a church building (Figure 11): “We sleep in the church and early in the morning we wake up because we pray. We sleep on the mattress after the people have left.”



Figure 11. NLCC in Rubaga before a Sunday service (Source: Lyytinen 2011; photo modified to ensure anonymity).

---

<sup>121</sup> M38.

Robert was not only sleeping in the church but he also considered himself as an evangelist of the NLCC. He had worked as a preacher in the DRC, and wanted to continue spreading the gospel in Uganda. His wife also sang in the worship choir. Often refugees who stayed at churches contributed to the activities with their music, teaching and other gifts.

Even though the church provided Robert and his family with a place to sleep, he did not feel physically safe in the church building or in the city of Kampala at large. This was due to his fear of persecution spilling over from the DRC to Uganda. For him this persecution could have taken a form of a spiritual battle:

I do not feel peace even here in Kampala, because there are many problems here in Kampala because of insecurity. ... In Africa we have the witchcraft spirit. They can do something bad to you to [make you] disappear...

Subsequently, as it is important to pay attention to refugees' conceptualisation of 'protection' in terms of the spiritual realm, it is necessary to reflect on refugees' understandings of insecurity in supernatural and spiritual matters. Schnoebelen (2009: 43) has, for instance, argued that "workers at international organisations and non-governmental organisations must be aware of the tenacity of witchcraft beliefs, the very real threat they can create for individuals, and be willing to provide protection..."

Another Congolese man, 37-year-old Patrick,<sup>122</sup> also lived in NLCC. His entire story of flight and living in exile was centred on the notion of church. Patrick had escaped the DRC in 2004 because of the ethnic conflict in his father's church. In Kampala, Patrick continued working as a driver from Uganda to Kenya, until he developed serious health problems. He believes that he was poisoned by the members of his congregation in the DRC who came

---

<sup>122</sup> M48.

to kill him in Kampala. After that he went to live in the camp, but his wife became sick and they had to return to Kampala for treatment. An unfortunate situation developed as his wife was charged by IAU for forging a medical document. Consequently, Patrick was arrested for questioning on this at the IAU office, and he was beaten at the Old Kampala police station. The pastor of the NLCC helped to get him released. This example shows how the protective actions of the church can be extended beyond the immediate church building. Ever since he was released, he has lived in the church and his family members at the pastor's house due to the lack of space in the church building. This was not an optimal living situation, as explained by the words of Patrick:

I am responsible for my family... It is not good. Sleeping in the church, you just sleep there but it is not like in a house. I just sleep there but my mind is where my family is. The church is a place to pray and that is why they are staying with the pastor. For children it is OK but for my wife it is problematic. A woman would like to have her own house but now she is not controlling it.

This case study of NLCC shows how refugees remained compelled to sleep in churches for various reasons. Even though refugees commonly found a sense of physical protection based on the provision of shelter and 'belonging' to a community of believers, they also raised concerns about the lack of protection in regard to the spiritual battles and the associated sense of metaphysical insecurity. Thus, it was important to recognise the church buildings as 'sacred spaces' and as "geographical locations that instil and perpetuate a variety of feelings that affect human experiences and activities [such as protection and trust]" (Finlayson 2012: 1). As seen in the case of Kampala, given the limited space, lack of privacy and, above all, the use of a sacred space as a physical shelter, refugees often perceived that they lived in a church as a last resort before either becoming homeless or shifting to the rural refugee settlements. One of the shelter options homeless refugees had established in Kampala is examined in the following section.

### 6.2.1.3. *The “Struggle” – an alleyway as a shelter*

When refugees could not rent a house or find a church to sleep in, they had to find alternative places to stay in the city. Sometimes the last solution was to stay temporarily outside a police station or IAU office (HRW 2002) or to sleep in an abandoned bus (Sandvik 2012). In this section, I examine an alleyway located behind the RLP offices in Old Kampala as a form of ‘shelter’ for refugees. This short stretch of the street, known as the “Struggle”, had been occupied by homeless refugees of different nationalities for several years. Many of them were Congolese. Some of them were families with children and others single men. Some of the inhabitants were using drugs and other substances, and overall the open place was not safe, especially for the children. Quite often the inhabitants of the “Struggle” came to the RLP office but some of them had been banned from entering the office building because of their violent behaviour and previous tendencies of stealing. Thus, the RLP staff perceived some of them as a security risk.<sup>123</sup>

At the beginning of my fieldwork around 20 people lived in this alleyway where refugees had built their small shelters from any materials they could get hold of. On 2 July 2011, however, everything they had built was demolished and the inhabitants of the “Struggle” were evicted (Figures 12 and 13).<sup>124</sup> The land was technically owned by the City Council and in 2011 the KCCA commenced a widespread clearance of places like the “Struggle” throughout the city (Naturinda 2011). The KCCA also evicted extensive numbers of street vendors (Nalugo 2011). The initiative to clear the “Struggle” had apparently come from the local member of parliament (MP), who had bought a house in the same street where the

---

<sup>123</sup> The RLP office was, however, known for its open door policy and the fact that it did not have armed guards.

<sup>124</sup> Observation at the RLP and at the “Struggle”, 2.7.2011.

RLP offices were located. The MP had arranged for the police and the military to come and clear the area of the ‘unwanted neighbours’ these refugees represented.



Figure 12. Personal belongings of a refugee evicted from the “Struggle” (Source: A refugee boy).



Figure 13. Eviction at the Struggle on 2 July 2011 (Source: A refugee boy; photo modified to ensure anonymity).

After the eviction on a Saturday afternoon, the alleyway was empty (Figure 14). Yet the ‘unwanted neighbours’ of the MP had not moved very far: some of the inhabitants of the “Struggle”, in particular the women and the children, had moved under a tree next to the RLP office. They slept there under the open sky without any shelter. One girl had built a shelter around her from a broken umbrella.<sup>125</sup>



Figure 14. The alleyway after the eviction (Source: Lyytinen 2011).

The case study of the “Struggle” shows how refugees lacked their ‘right to the city’ (Lefebvre 1996) and its informal spaces. Therefore, some of the refugees who were unable

---

<sup>125</sup> Observation by the RLP, August 2011.

to find any form of shelter in Kampala were forced to relocate to the rural refugee settlements – an idea that was so unappealing that some preferred to risk their safety by staying on the streets of Kampala. Overall, the Congolese refugees in Kampala faced several shelter-related challenges widely recognised in other urban refugee contexts (Crawford et al. 2010), which greatly diminished their sense of physical protection in the city.

## ***6.2.2. Neighbourhood and relations with Ugandans***

### *6.2.2.1. Selecting a neighbourhood*

Most of the refugee informants lived in the Makindye and Rubaga divisions of the city. Thirty per cent of them lived in the Katwe parishes and 28 per cent in the Nsambya parishes of the south-central part of Kampala (Figure 15). These two areas were dominated by refugees from eastern Congo. Eastern Congolese also lived in Rubaga parish (eight per cent) and Makindye (eight per cent) parish. Banyamulenge Tutsis were typically clustered in the Nakulabye and Kasubi parishes. People from western Congo had taken up residence predominantly in Najjanankumb parish on the outskirts of the city. In addition, a few refugees lived in Old Kampala, Kireka, Mengo, Namugona, Kawempe, Wandegaya, Kibuli and Ndeeba (Figure 1). The presence of other Congolese was perceived either as a positive or a negative aspect of a neighbourhood depending on refugees' individual protection concerns.

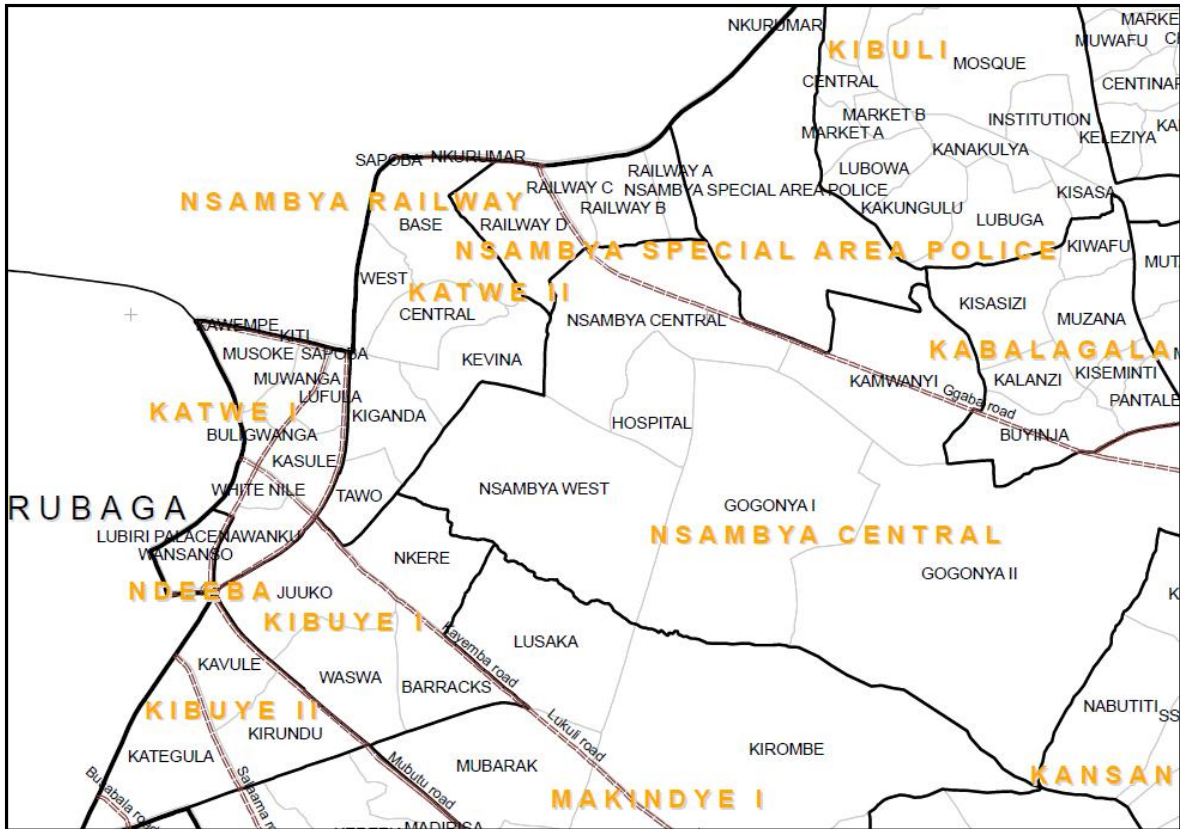


Figure 15. Katwe and Nsambya parishes in Makindye division, Kampala (Modified from KCCA 2013a, permission to use granted 2 August 2013).

In urban displacement settings, neighbourhoods are chosen on the basis of a range of criteria, including security, proximity to relatives and friends and affordability, among others (Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano 2010: 23). Finding a place to live in Kampala often happened through churches or other social connections. Most informants, however, felt that they had not freely chosen their neighbourhood but rather just happened to find themselves there. This was articulated, for instance, by a 31-year-old male refugee:

Life just takes you and you find yourself. When, for example, I was staying in Old Kampala I found someone who said: “Oh, I need someone to work for me, I have a certain compound to arrange, so I would need someone to be there for two months.” Then I go there by that condition.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>126</sup> M1.

For many refugees their home and the immediate neighbourhood were important places. For some these immediate areas provided a feeling of safety whereas others perceived the neighbourhoods as insecure places. If possible, refugees wished to move to areas that they perceived as generally secure. Yet the experience of changing neighbourhoods because of insecurity was common. For instance, a 51-year-old Mushi refugee man<sup>127</sup> who had lived in Kampala since 2010 had to move on several occasions due to neighbourhood-related insecurity. His family of ten people had adopted a strategy of shifting places for security reasons because he was concerned about intimidation by the people who had made them flee Bukavu in the DRC. In less than two years in Kampala the family had moved from Namugono to Kasubi, and then to Katwe where they lived at the time of the interview. At times the refugee man slept in his church to protect his family's safety by being separated from them. Later, the church rented a small house for the family in Kasubi. Their home was, however, attacked and consequently the man started to sleep in the church again. In Kasubi one of his daughters was poisoned and died as a result. After this the family decided to move from Kasubi to Katwe where they had found relative safety, at least temporarily.

If possible, some of the refugees wished to live close to the protection institutions and the police. Being close to the potential places of employment was also a criterion for those who could afford to choose where to stay. Living in the outskirts of the city was cheaper and more spacious but having to use public transport became a financial burden. Refugees who lived in the outskirts of the city, such as in Najjanankumb, were keen to emphasise the rural characteristic of the neighbourhood: the natural environment, animals and the peacefulness of living away from the busy city centre.

---

<sup>127</sup> M8.

Others who lived in more central areas of the city appreciated the services and shops found in their neighbourhoods, but criticised the noisiness and overcrowding of their living areas. Refugees who lived in more sparsely populated higher-income areas, such as Wandegaya, Rubaga or Mengo, had a completely different experience of living in Kampala. This was due not only to the physical side of their neighbourhood: the social relations in different neighbourhoods of the city also had an impact on refugees' sense of protection and insecurity. In the following section I discuss the relations that refugees had with their immediate Ugandan neighbours.

#### *6.2.2.2. Relations with Ugandan neighbours*

Neighbourhoods “comprise the smallest unit of urban social territory and political organisation” (Flint 2009), and analysing refugees' shared ‘social territory’ with the Ugandan residents in their neighbourhoods is essential. Thus, the analysis of neighbourhood relations includes examining the particularised social trust that lies between people who know and interact with each other (Levi 1998, Welter and Nadezhda 2012).

Refugees typically perceived that there were two main reasons for feeling insecure in Kampala. On the one hand, they feared the protection institutions,<sup>128</sup> and on the other hand, they felt unsafe because of “neighbours and our neighbourhood.”<sup>129</sup> In general, refugees had a rather neutral relationship with their immediate Ugandan neighbours. At times, they described how their neighbours had helped them in various ways. More

---

<sup>128</sup> This theme was discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

<sup>129</sup> FGD5.

commonly, however, they described their relations in a negative manner. Refugees understood that they had “an obligation to be OK with the Ugandan.”<sup>130</sup> Yet some of them argued that they only interacted with their Congolese, not Ugandan, neighbours.<sup>131</sup> Consequently, some of them suggested that they were “not really living with those [Ugandan] neighbours.”<sup>132</sup> This observation in part questions the examination of neighbourhood relations from the standpoint of particularised social trust. Thus, in situations where refugees did not interact with their neighbours, investigating generalised social trust was analytically more appropriate.

Refugees frequently suggested that their Ugandan neighbours blamed them and their children for any difficulties that took place in the neighbourhood. Consequently, some were afraid to leave their children outside the house unattended because their neighbours might harass or abuse them. Often refugees, especially single mothers, locked their small children inside the house for the time that they were gone. This was a clear indication of the physical insecurity they felt in regard to their neighbours. Some informants had experienced theft by neighbours and others had negative experiences of working for their Ugandan neighbours, as expressed by a refugee woman:

We are not loved by our neighbours. Whenever you work for them, at the end of the day they will not even pay you for the work that you have done. They just keep telling me that: “You are Congolese. You are here as our workers. We cannot afford to pay you anything.” So, we are confused. They keep us like slaves.<sup>133</sup>

Most commonly refugees suggested that their Ugandan neighbours harassed them vocally. This verbal abuse commonly referred to the unclear understanding by the Ugandans of why the Congolese refugees were in Uganda. According to a young refugee man, who had

---

<sup>130</sup> M21.

<sup>131</sup> M14.

<sup>132</sup> M40.

<sup>133</sup> FGD7.

lived in Kampala since 2010, his neighbours would ask: “They are Congolese, so why are they here? What is the reason for that?”<sup>134</sup> According to him, and many others, their neighbours vocally encouraged them to go back to the DRC.

At times, verbal harassment turned into physical violence. As an example of such a situation, I discuss a particular compound (Figure 16) in Nsambya parish where one Ugandan man had terrorised several Congolese refugees. The three refugee families living in immediate proximity to this man had reported the harassment and abuse to the LC1 but nothing had changed. The Congolese had turned to each other for their communal protection, as explained by a 39-year-old female asylum seeker who had lived in the city since 2003:

We have one neighbour here who is disturbing us a lot and he is saying that he is going to kill us, all of us Congolese in this place. ... He sometimes spits in our faces while talking to the children and you can see him moving around with a big stick. He is just talking, but if you try to reply, then he can knock you with that. Someone who says he will kill you, you have to fear. For me, I can say maybe the Congolese can assist me but not Ugandans; they would be on the side of the other fellow.<sup>135</sup>

---

<sup>134</sup> M18.

<sup>135</sup> F10.



Figure 16. The neighbourhood in Nsambya where many of the refugee inhabitants felt unsafe due to a Ugandan neighbour (Source: Lytinen 2011).

Another young single mother, who was new to Kampala, had also experienced the threatening behaviour of this Ugandan neighbour:

I am not very safe in Kampala ever since there are neighbours who disturb us. The man will show us who he is... He is our Ugandan neighbour. He is a drinker and a smoker. He has said that we have to fear. He can decide to do whatever. Personally I have not yet been attacked. He sometimes tries but he has not touched me yet.<sup>136</sup>

This young woman had considered moving to the refugee settlement with her baby because of her fear. She assumed that moving within the city would not provide a solution because according to her “many Ugandans in Kampala are not happy to have refugees living among them.” This example illustrates how refugees living in the same compound may have created protective responses to forms of shared insecurity in their immediate neighbourhoods.

---

<sup>136</sup> F8.

Besides the verbal and physical arguments between the refugees and their hosts, the idea of cleanliness in the context of neighbourhood relations was brought up by a number of the informants. Refugees suggested that Ugandans living alongside them had a different idea of what a clean and safe neighbourhood should look like and who was to be blamed for the general dirtiness, or impurity, of the neighbourhood. One refugee woman, for example, suggested that her Ugandan neighbours unfairly blamed the Congolese for the general uncleanliness:

You can find that you are living with other neighbours and you will have to get water from one specific place... And sometimes they bring water which has been poured in the cement somewhere on the floor. They will request that it be the Congolese who clean that place because it is probably the Congolese who have dirtied the place.<sup>137</sup>

Still, many of the refugees commented on the dirtiness of their Ugandan neighbours and the shared neighbourhood facilities. As part of the participatory photography project, one of the young refugee<sup>138</sup> men, who had lived in the city since 2008, paid particular attention to documenting the unclean and unsafe side of his extended neighbourhood. His photo narrative shows how the physical and the social relations in the city affected refugees' perceptions of urban insecurity:

A hut and a pile of rubbish (Figure 17):

This one is to show that sometimes we think that Kampala is a big city, but there is something which interested me to take the picture... This is the house, a hut. You would see those houses in the villages but not in city. This is something that affects people, the environment. They get a lot to diseases. And yet Kampala is the capital.

---

<sup>137</sup> FGD8.

<sup>138</sup> M23.



Figure 17. A pile of rubbish in Nsambya parish (Source: Participatory photographing).

#### A shower (Figure 18):

From a young period [age] one gets accustomed to see your mom bathing, but here in Kampala some women have been raped. When somebody is bathing inside, you can see her or him naked. The reason why, I think, that sexual violence is more here in Kampala because they no longer hide things. It is not private. Even when you are passing... Many people share a shower and they do not clean it... You can find... Sometimes you go inside without flip flops and something can eat your feet. There are many diseases, and there are other diseases that you cannot know.



Figure 18. A shared shower in Katwe parish (Source: Participatory photographing).

A dead dog (Figure 19):

This is a dead dog. It is in a *cabera* [a plastic bag]. Why I take a picture of the dead dog? You know, here it is not far from the people. It is near the people and you know what the dog has sometimes when it is buried? It has been there for two day and it begins to boil... It becomes big and it is going to explode and bad things are coming out. It happens when those things come and then you breathe the bad air inside of you. That is going to affect your body. It is KCCA who should take it out. They should remove the dust bins, but I do not know why they sometimes do not do that... Sometimes you find people in this country are paid money but they do not do their work.



Figure 19. A dead dog (Source: Participatory photographing).

This photographic illustration of the dirtiness, and the consequent insecurity, of Kampala by the young refugee man indicated the ‘sense of place’ he had about living in a particular neighbourhood of his city of exile. Even though he had found relative safety in Kampala, he perceived the living conditions to be so poor and the urban environment so unhygienic that he felt unsafe. This example shows how refugees’ sense of physical insecurity took many forms and was shaped by different elements, such as social and environmental contexts. In the following section on the meso-scale analysis of urban insecurity, I turn to examine how and why refugees perceived different parishes and locations outside their immediate residential areas as safe or unsafe.

### **6.3. Urban meso-scale spaces of protection and insecurity**

#### ***6.3.1. Mapping the safe and unsafe areas of the city***

##### *6.3.1.1. Unsafe areas of Kampala*

Besides the micro-scale of the home and the neighbourhood, refugees expressed a particular ‘sense of place’ at the meso-scale when reflecting on different areas of the city. In recent years, humanitarian programmes in cities have increasingly focused on mapping the safe and unsafe areas as they are experienced and perceived by the populations of concern (Campbell, Crisp and Kiragu 2011; WRC 2011b). These programmes have led to enhanced urban protection practices. The meso-scale areas of safety and insecurity were described by the Congolese refugees in relation to certain public spaces, roads, parishes or divisions of Kampala. The reasons for the insecurity outside their immediate neighbourhoods varied. For some, new and unknown places in general felt unsafe, whereas others sensed that particular areas of Kampala were not safe due to events that had taken place in those areas. Both individual experiences and general perceptions created by the media and by hearsay affected refugees’ ideas of about urban security.

Areas such as Kisenyi, Kawempe, Mengo, Nsambya, Katwe, Najjanankumb, Kabalagala and Kibuli<sup>139</sup> were perceived by some of the informants as precarious because people had been killed and abducted there. Kabalagala (Figure 20) was seen as a dangerous place because of the July 2010 terrorist attack by the Somali terrorist organisation Al-Shabaab, and also because of the presence of many Congolese in the area.

---

<sup>139</sup> See the map of Kampala, Figure 1 of Chapter Two.

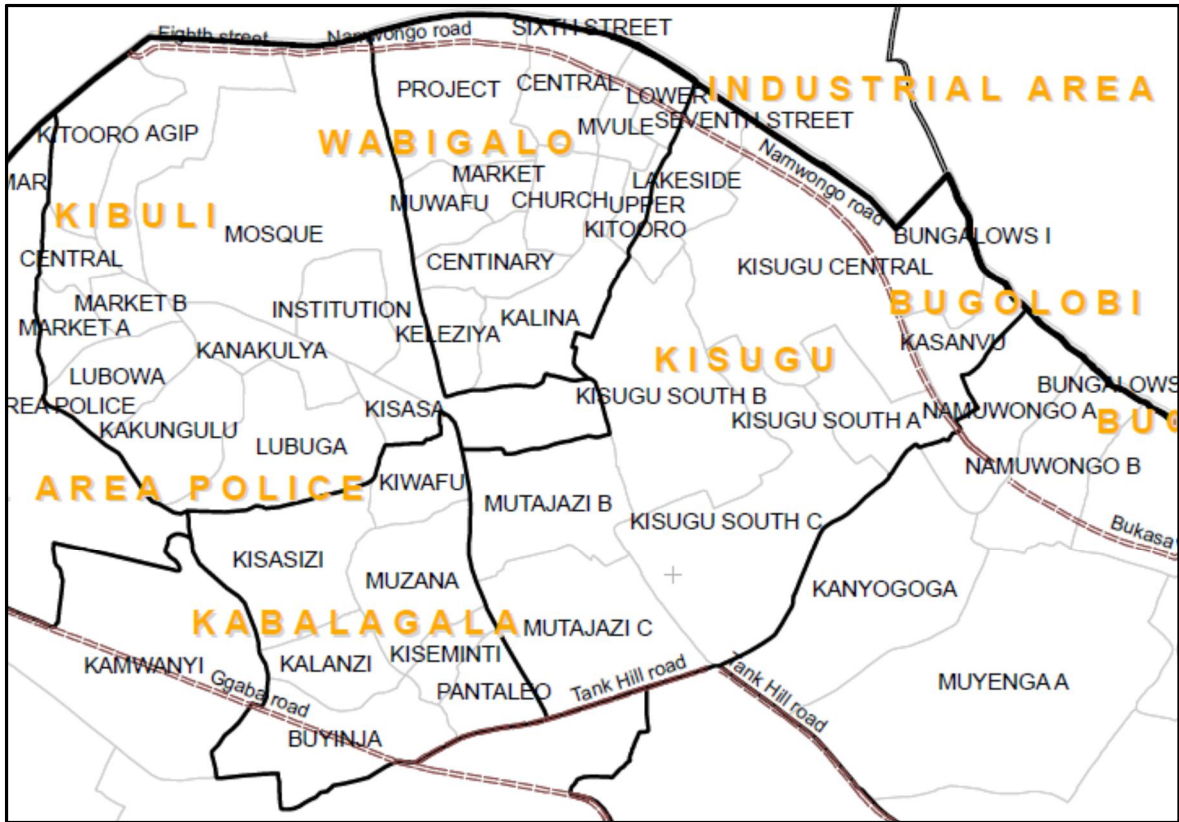


Figure 20. The areas of Kabalagala, Kibuli and the industrial area perceived by some of the refugee informants as unsafe (Modified from KCCA 2013a; permission for use granted on 2 August 2013).

In addition, the upper-class neighbourhood of Kololo where the Congolese embassy (and also the UNHCR country office) was located was understood, for example, by a 39-year-old refugee man as a risky place:

There are also some areas where I cannot go. Like that area of the Congolese embassy. There are some diplomats who come from the DRC and they move around and when they see you they say that we saw someone and they can plan something bad. That is the reason I cannot move to wherever I want to go.<sup>140</sup>

The town centre was recognised by the refugees as unsafe because there were bandits and because the police were perceived as being able to arrest refugees in these crowded areas more easily than in other locations. Several refugees argued that Owino market was an insecure place because of frequent pickpocketing and verbal insults that were directed

<sup>140</sup> M12.

toward them. Additionally, the downtown areas near old and new taxi parks were perceived as unsafe mainly because of the crowds. Some of the refugees, moreover, avoided cemeteries in the city. The industrial area was seen by a few of the refugees as unsafe because of the noise, and the city centre because of chaotic traffic. Others perceived Makindye (Figure 21), Old Kampala, Kabalagala and Kansanga as precarious because of the presence of prostitutes and street children. Some of the informants argued that areas where there were a lot of bushes and trees surrounding the narrow streets were unsafe.

Furthermore, politics and associated ethnicity in Kampala were understood by some to create a security risk. A 25-year-old male refugee, who had lived in the city since 2009, for instance, explained how he felt insecure for this reason: “I feel unsafe because of the tribalism of citizens. They always say that they will kill us at election time [in February 2011].<sup>141</sup> Areas of the city where the Ugandan opposition were known to be active in recruiting people, including Congolese, into politics and voting around the election time were imagined as dangerous. For instance, a 39-year-old unregistered male, who had lived in the city for less than a year, suggested that Nateete (in Rubaga divisions) was a neighbourhood that he avoided for political reasons:

Here in Kampala I do not like to go to Nateete: Never, never! There are the politician men there. They want to talk about bad things... That place is full of people who are always talking about politics and they are even thinking of how they can recruit people to go to the forest [to work for rebel groups]. Those are Ugandan. I do not like to go there for that reason. It is for the opposition, Besigye [the Ugandan opposition leader, Kizza Besigye]. This is a place where a lot of people do not like the government. They talk to everyone; they do not know who is a refugee. And I do not want to go there.<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>141</sup> M16.

<sup>142</sup> M7.

Refugees' perceptions of the fear in the city were based both on stereotypes of particular areas and their individual experiences of particular places. In regard to individual experiences, a 52-year-old female refugee living in Najjanankumb parish of Rubaga division was particularly afraid of the Kirombe zone of Nsambya (Figure 21) because she had been attacked there by a man. She also perceived Kabalagala (Figure 21) as unsafe because she had been kidnapped there. Furthermore, not only individual experiences but also more general images of particular areas of Kampala had an impact on refugees' perceptions of the city. For instance, a 52-year-old male asylum seeker who had been in Kampala since 2010 perceived areas where the local news reported that people had been killed as unsafe. Also, he suggested that Kabalagala and Lugogo were dangerous places because of the terrorist attack in July 2010.

The urban insecurity was not only spatially centred but it also focused on a particular time, and therefore the examination of urban insecurity must incorporate both spatial and temporal analyses. The anniversary of the terrorist attacks and the elections affected the overall security situation of Kampala at particular times of the year. For many of the refugee informants the city and its different areas became dangerous in the evenings after dark. A 19-year-old refugee girl, for instance, described a particular time of fear of specific places:

Makindye, Kabalagala and Owino market are unsafe. There are some places in Makindye if you pass there in the evening around 8 or 9PM there are some guys who can beat you and they pick whatever you have in your hands or bag, and then they run away. It is a dangerous place. I do not usually go out in the dark. I have heard that many people say that Kabalagala is a dangerous place in the evening. But I do not know why.<sup>143</sup>

---

<sup>143</sup> F14.

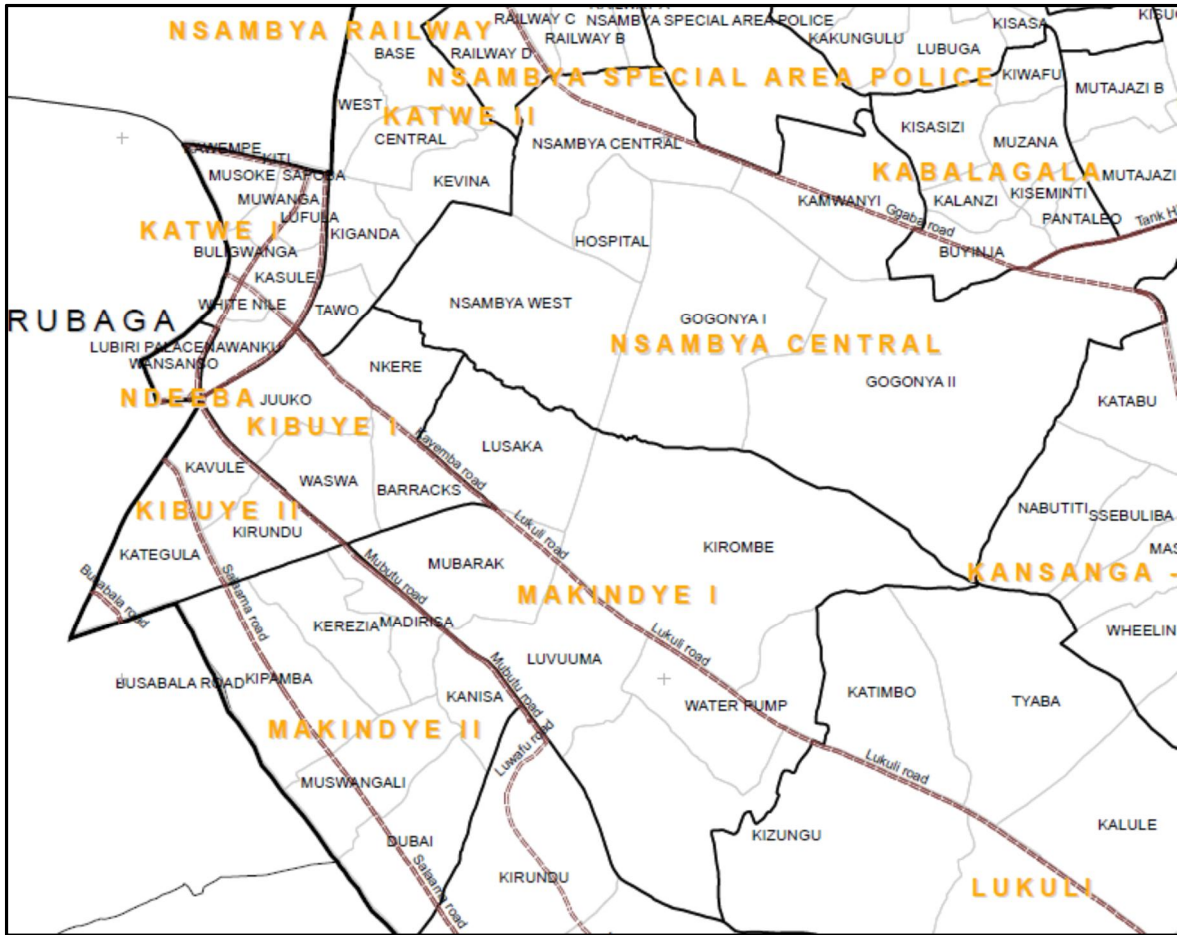


Figure 21. Areas of Makindye, Katwe, Nsambya and Kabalagala perceived by some of the refugee informants as unsafe (Modified from KCCA 2013a, permission to use granted on 2 August 2013).

Not only times of year or day but particular sites within the city outside refugees' residential areas were considered by the informants as precarious. This perception became particularly obvious through the participatory photography exercise that enabled refugees to portray buildings and sites around the city which they deemed insecure. A young refugee man, for instance, had a clear idea about the building sites of Kampala (Figure 22). After having lived in Kampala for more than three years, he perceived them as particularly dangerous, yet common, places where children played:

The kids have been abused and raped... It used to be teenagers but nowadays there is something like sacrifices and there is something called rape for kids, to rape kids. You see the kids and they tell you that I have been raped in the broken house. Those are the kind of houses where they used to rape kids. This is a broken house, a rape house. And sometimes the kids have been slammed, the head cut off. Child

sacrifice. Every day there is something strange happening in Kampala. ... A man has an animal heart. They do not have a heart of a man, you always kill each other. There is something called... I do not know, magic. Witchcraft. Sometime you can see somebody and when he takes someone he disappears. I did not believe it, but it happens. They put you a mask and you fell out... and they kill a child. And something that used to happen in Kampala, they remove the skin, not the flesh, but the skin only.<sup>144</sup>



Figure 22. “A rape house” (Source: Participatory photographing; photo modified to ensure anonymity).

The Congolese refugee population had experienced increasing numbers of abductions over the course of 2010/11.<sup>145</sup> These abductions targeted mostly children and women, but some men had also been kidnapped. The abduction of children was, in particular, associated with witchcraft. The fear of being kidnapped and killed for witchcraft was expressed by a Munyamulenge asylum seeker boy:

I do not feel safe in Kampala because of witchcraft. It also makes me not to move at night because that would risk me to get my head to cut off. And I also avoid going far because then I risk coming back home late and that is also a risk. I walk everywhere.<sup>146</sup>

---

<sup>144</sup> M23.

<sup>145</sup> General discussions with the RLP officers and with the Congolese refugees and their leaders.

<sup>146</sup> M33.

In addition, an undocumented man<sup>147</sup> told me about how his child was kidnapped by Ugandans for child sacrifice to be used by witch doctors. The child would have been killed had they not found her before it was too late. The LC1 of his zone helped him to search for the child, but the refugee man did not report the incident to the police because “I did not know that I was supposed to do it because in our country there is nothing like reporting to the police.” This implies that he did not trust the police institution due to his previous experience in the DRC and perhaps also due to his precarious undocumented status. The refugee man was convinced that the abduction had taken place particularly because they were refugees:

So when I consider all these problems, I do not feel safe. I think that this has happened to me because I am a refugee; because the citizens of Uganda wonder why we ran away from our home country and sought refuge in Uganda. That shows clearly that it was because we are refugees.

Refugees thus had an idea of insecurity not solely as something physical but also as spiritual. In the act of kidnapping for witchcraft both of these elements of insecurity were articulated. Given these shared discourses of insecurity, lack of physical protection in Kampala was deemed to be a major concern by the refugees. Consequently, the idea of the entire city of exile being unsafe was shared by a number of refugees. Some of the refugees, however, identified safe areas of the city, which are discussed in the following section.

#### *6.3.1.2. Safe areas of Kampala*

Some of the informants perceived only the areas where they lived as relatively safe because they did not know what was happening in other parts of the city. Locations such as Nsambya, Kibuye, Nakasero, Kibuli and Makindye (Figure 21) were also seen as safe by

---

<sup>147</sup> M11.

some of the informants because of the close presence of the police. For others, freedom of movement in particular areas meant that those areas were protective. For instance, Nsambya, where many of the informants lived, was perceived by a 16-year-old girl as a free and safe place: “I feel safe in my area Sambia [Nsambya]. I feel free to work. I walk without fearing of something bad which can happen to me.”<sup>148</sup> For some of the refugees the only places where they felt physically safe in Kampala were the compound that they lived in and the communities that they attended. Some also perceived the protection institutions’ offices as protective places. A 56-year-old female refugee explained her broad sense of safe spaces in Kampala:

[I feel safe] at home, to be security at home. At church, to be security with almighty God. At Bondeko centre [a RCO], to be security with your friend. At some institution of protection, as InterAid, UNHCR, police, to be security with the institutions of protection.<sup>149</sup>

However, as discussed in Chapter Five, the protection institutions were also seen as places of insecurity by those refugees who were concerned about the potential presence of security agents or other persecutors from the DRC or because of the severe institutional mistrust toward these offices.

Some of the refugees perceived areas such as Kololo and Kampala Road as secure because of the socioeconomic affluence of these locations. Rubaga and Najjanankumb parishes (Figure 23) appeared harmless to others because it was relatively sparsely inhabited and quiet.

---

<sup>148</sup> Written report by a refugee

<sup>149</sup> Written report by a refugee.

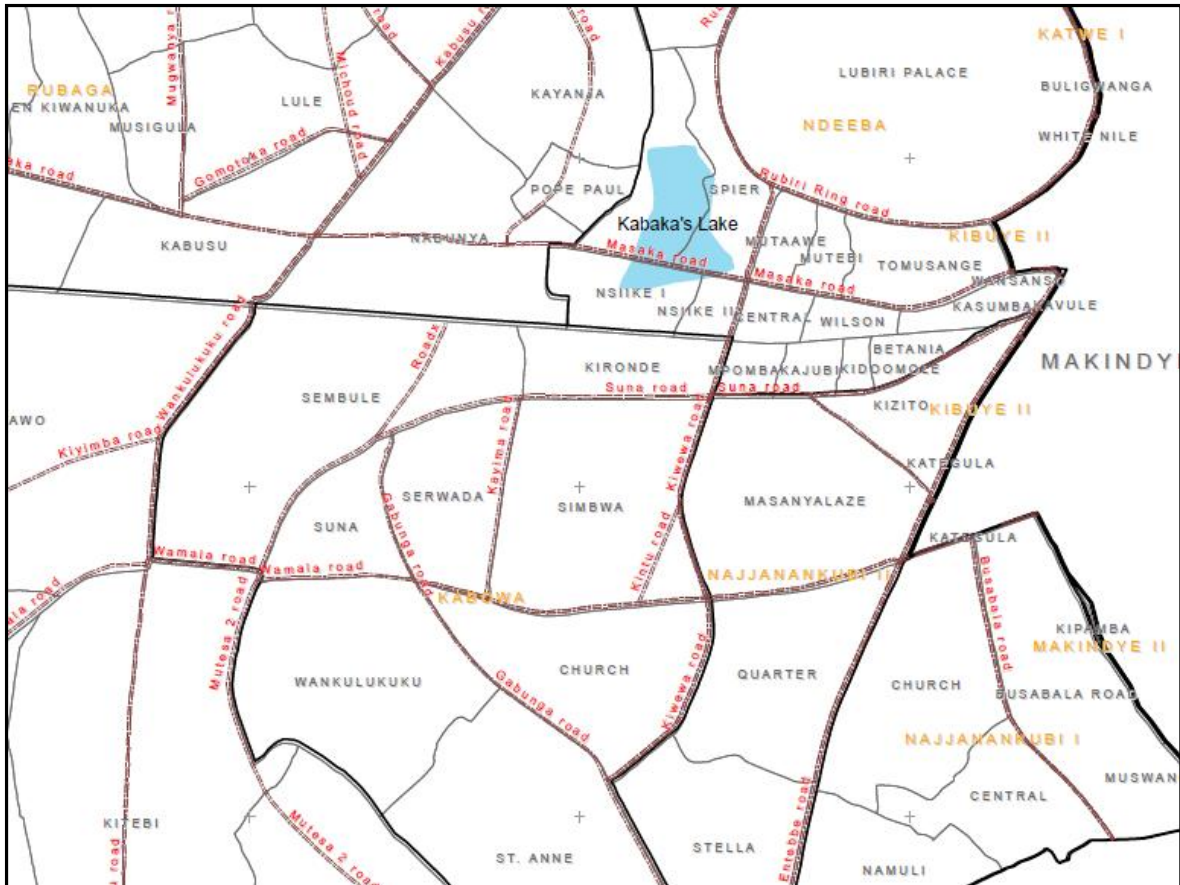


Figure 23. The areas of Rubaga and Najjanankumb perceived by some of the refugee informants as safe and protected (Modified from KCCA 2013a, permission to use granted 2 August 2013).

The presence of Congolese friends was also seen to have a protective effect by some of the refugees. In particular in Nsambya and Katwe (Figure 15), where the majority of the Congolese refugees lived, the aspect of having other Congolese around was understood to make the neighbourhood safe. This was, however, not always the case as already discussed. For some, the everyday encounters with essentially Congolese elements or events in the city were reassuring, as suggested by a Congolese refugee woman through her photographs. Figure 24 presents her Congolese friend who is preparing cassava leaves in a traditional Congolese way:

She is my friend. This is her life. She takes cassava leaves. In our country cassava leaves are our favourite green. She mixes green pepper, garlic, and cooks it in a

palm oil. You can put it in the fish too. It is very good. When I eat cassava leaves I feel like I am in the DRC.



Figure 24. A Congolese woman preparing cassava leaves in Katwe parish of Kampala (Source: Participatory photographing; photo modified to ensure anonymity).

She also argued that the visual presence of traditional Congolese occupations, such as tailoring, *bitenge* selling and crafting, made her appropriate certain neighbourhoods of Kampala such as Katwe and Nsambya. A few other refugees who also took part in the participatory photographing suggested the same, and therefore a number of their photographs represent signs of Congolese everyday urban life in the context of their city of exile (Figure 25).



Figure 25. Congolese crafting in Katwe parish of Kampala (Source: Participatory photographing photo modified to ensure anonymity).

Like seen, the participatory photography exercise provided refugees with a novel means of representing their sense of security in the city. A 27-year-old unregistered refugee man<sup>150</sup> who lived in Kampala alone argued for the relative safety of the city compared to his violent and traumatic experiences of living both in the DRC and in Rwanda through his photographs. He appreciated the free manner in which Ugandans conducted their business and everyday life compared to Rwandan society: “Kampala give own people all liberty, freedom to do anything you want.” He also referred to the system of *boda boda* motorcycles and how people were able to navigate the city based on the *boda* stages. This, he thought, was a sign of the city being well organised. Most importantly for him, not only the tight security in Kampala in the form of the visible presence of the police forces but also the mild climate made him feel safe in the city. Thus, both the man-made and natural elements of the city had a potentially ‘protective’ impact:

---

<sup>150</sup> M36.

This one [Figure 26] here is a roundabout in Kibuli. I wanted to show that here they have many security. This is a car like... this is a car for shooting something like tear gas. Wherever you go here in Kampala, there is a roundabout you find this car. There are more than two mostly. It makes me feel safe, because here in Kampala they like to protest. This is a car that can help the police to stop them.



Figure 26. Police forces at the Kibuli roundabout (Source: Participatory photographing).

This picture [Figure 27]; I like this place. When you are tired and you want to rest, so you go here and you rest under this tree. There are many streets. It is in Katwe. I take this photo. I take the cloud. Me, I like the temperature. This time pass and it was many sun. I take this picture when it was a temperature like this and I took it up. I do not like rain. I do not like sun either.



Figure 27. Trees and blue sky (Source: Participatory photographing).

To conclude, refugees' sense of urban protection was associated with the relative physical security found in Kampala compared to their experiences in the DRC. Refugees also suggested that some areas of Kampala were safer than others. The perceptions about insecurity were often based on their own experiences and/or the perceptions they had built from the media and rumours circulating in refugee communities. Urban security was, therefore, presented by the refugees as a complex notion which included physical, relational and spiritual elements, and took place at different spatial scales and at different times.

### *6.3.2. Movement and its limitations within the city*

I do not move. I am like a prisoner and I fear.<sup>151</sup>

The key protection institutions argued that securing sufficient ‘protection space’ in Kampala for the refugees was their key undertaking. According to the officers, central to this task was to guarantee refugees’ freedom of movement and freedom to access services, as explained by the IAU and UNHCR officers:

To me it [protection space] would mean that a refugee would be able to survive in a country of asylum and be able to access services. Already some of these have been provided in the 2006 Act: freedom of movement and things like that. People are free, they are free to live where they want, they can access services. They are free to do what they have to do.<sup>152</sup>

One, I would give credit to the Government of Uganda. They do not restrict the movement of refugees. Two, the UNHCR urban refugee policy identified that protection space should be the locations wherever the refugees are.<sup>153</sup>

Officers associated the notion of protection space closely with the idea of freedom, and in particular freedom of movement, which is also mentioned as a specific indicator by UNHCR in its attempts to measure the extent of ‘protection space’ (UNHCR 2009a, Morand and Mahoney 2013). The sense of freedom was not, however, always present in the lives of the urban refugees despite the official policies and laws advocating for it. In general, Congolese refugees who took part in this study had found relative safety and protection in Kampala compared to their experiences of war and violence in the DRC. Yet they were hesitant to argue that they were protected or free in Kampala. For some of the refugees the lack of ‘freedom of movement’ was perceived as a security risk.

---

<sup>151</sup> M43.

<sup>152</sup> IAU officer, 12.1.2011.

<sup>153</sup> UNHCR officer, 20.9.2011.

Refugees perceived the notion of ‘freedom of movement’ in different ways. Most of them recognised that their freedom of movement was a legal right as explained by a 31-year-old refugee man who had been living in Uganda since 2001: “I am allowed to go wherever I want. I am even allowed to go to Tanzania or Kenya. The Government [of Uganda] allows someone to do that.”<sup>154</sup> Given the legal right to movement, some of the refugees travelled in and out of Kampala as part of their livelihood strategies. Some of the refugees, however, felt that even though their mobility was guaranteed by laws and policies, they were unable to exercise it for psychosocial reasons related to urban fear.

At times it was security concerns that restricted my informants from going to particular areas of the city. The general feeling of not belonging to Ugandan society and being a foreigner made some of the refugees hesitant about moving extensively around Kampala. Asylum seekers who were relatively new to the city and did not have official papers felt especially insecure about using the city space. Overall, urban fear sometimes limited refugees’ mobility in the city, as explained by a male informant: “In Kampala, as far as security is concerned to myself and due to the fear I have, I can be stopped from reaching some other areas.”<sup>155</sup> Even reaching Kampala from the refugee settlements was restricted by the official requirement of receiving a permit to leave the settlement and to settle in the city. This requirement undermined refugees’ true freedom of movement in Uganda (Sharpe and Namusobya 2010).

Given this insecurity, some of the refugees preferred limiting their movements and rather stayed at home or in the close-by neighbourhood. For instance, a 22-year-old single female

---

<sup>154</sup> M1.

<sup>155</sup> M1.

asylum seeker who was new to Kampala and did not leave her house without being escorted:

I am always here [at home]. I do not have a job. ... I cannot move from here [home] by myself. I really do not go out by myself. If I am not going with the mother of these children, then I can look around for someone who can escort me. You never know. Maybe I can meet someone... Those people [who persecuted her in the DRC]...<sup>156</sup>

Others limited their movement for security reasons only during the night time. Consequently, the time of movement was judged to be important according to the refugees. Most of them felt safe enough to move around the city during the day and in the presence of many people. However, in the evenings the majority of the refugees would not leave their homes. A 23-year-old refugee man expressed how he felt unsafe at a particular time of the day:

I fear [moving around during the night]. I may pass on the route where there are many people and there is sun, full sun. When sun is shining, people will see me. I can go because I know that nothing will happen during the day. In the evening I fear. ... I am not safe anywhere in Kampala. I am not safe, because every time, they may follow me after. They may follow me after, but for me, I do not know them... If I knew them, I could report it to the police: "This man wants to kill me."<sup>157</sup>

The city of Kampala was divided into 99 parishes under five divisions. The inhabitants of the city often navigated the urban space by referring to different parishes. Most of the refugees had visited a number of different parishes in Kampala, but for some the city was much less familiar than for others. The number of parishes that the refugee informants<sup>158</sup> had visited varied between two and 37 parishes. On average they had been to 11 parishes. Accordingly, refugees' mobility in the city varied significantly.

---

<sup>156</sup> F8.

<sup>157</sup> M30.

<sup>158</sup> Data from 47 refugee informants.

During a usual week in Kampala,<sup>159</sup> most of the refugees attended English classes in Nsambya, Old Kampala or Najjanankumb. Some also attended computer classes in Kabalagala. The other common places where the majority of the informants went regularly were churches located in different areas of Kampala, such as Nsambya, Najjanakumb, Nakulabye, Katwe and Makindye. Many of the informants also visited friends and relatives in different areas of the city. Some of them regularly went to areas where different protection institutions were located. These included Mengo (IAU) and Old Kampala (RLP, Old Kampala police station and OPM). Refugees also regularly went to the various markets to do shopping. These markets were located at the city centre, Nakasero, Katwe and Kabalagala.

Refugees' livelihood options also had an impact on their knowledge of the city and the amount of their regular movement. According to the 2006 Refugee Act, refugees were allowed to work; however, most of them did not have a regular paid job that corresponded to their level of education. Many of them had informal jobs on an irregular basis. Some could not even explain how they survived financially. When asked about work and income, refugees typically indicated that they survived 'by the grace of God'. Some refugees in Kampala were also engaged in harmful work practices, such as survival sex, that put them at severe risk.

Men's work was mostly focused on particular sites and, therefore, differed from the typical spatially informed work that the Congolese women conducted in Kampala. Many women, but also some men, engaged in the business of *bitenge* (traditional Congolese women's clothes) selling. The women typically got their *bitenge* from producers in town and their

---

<sup>159</sup> Data from the 23 time-space diaries.

task was to resell them on the streets of Kampala or at potential customers' homes. After having sold the clothes, women returned the money to the producer and gained a small profit. Women also sold other often self-made products, such as hats, jewellery, food or soap. A key characteristic of the majority of women's work was its mobile nature, which shaped their knowledge and sense of the city.

This mobile nature of the work was associated with several challenges. Women often told stories about how potential customers or other people on the street had stolen the clothes. The KCCA authorities also arrested women who sold items without the required work and street vending permits. Also, if the KCCA officials found out that the women did not pay taxes, they could charge them. Often the women were unable to cover such payments, and when they encountered the KCCA or the police their only option was to bribe them with money or the items they sold, thus losing their income. Therefore, as explained by a refugee woman, who had lived in the city for more than three years,<sup>160</sup> every time that she conducted street vending, she looked out for people with yellow and green clothes, because the KCCA officials dressed in such uniforms. If she saw them, she ran away and tried to hide her products.

In addition, walking around the city was physically challenging particularly for the women who were sick, sometimes because of torture they had experienced in the DRC. Since the market for *bitenges* was not large, and there was some competition in particular areas, women had begun to travel outside Kampala for business when it was financially and time wise feasible. Choosing where to sell the products was also influenced by where promising customers lived, as explained by a female refugee: "It is not a fixed place where I sell the

---

<sup>160</sup> F4.

clothes, but it is just moving around. I can normally see rich houses, and I find a lady, a woman, and I propose “do you want to buy these”?”<sup>161</sup>

Walking on the streets of Kampala from morning to evening five or six days a week was not only physically exhausting but also posed security risks. In order to minimise them, a 44-year-old refugee woman had recruited one of her sons to accompany her:

My husband did not have a job so I was struggling and selling those women’s clothes, *bitenges*, and unfortunately I met with some people who stole my *bitenge* but did not pay for them. And I was really scared because they were about to kill me after... I reported it to the police but it has not been taken up. ... I was accompanied by one of my sons. Five of those eight children are sent to school, so the other three are staying at home, so I chose one of them to accompany me.<sup>162</sup>

Other refugee women had also adopted the strategy of having a male relative accompanying them while conducting their mobile livelihood strategies. A 15-year-old asylum seeker boy<sup>163</sup> explained how he had been recruited with his brothers to protect their sister while she sold *bitenges*. This guarding task had increased his mobility in and knowledge of the city.

Women who sold products on the streets of Kampala or door-to-door spent a significant amount of their time in public spaces and thus had become very familiar with the different areas and the ways to get around the city. On the one hand, the mobile livelihood had provided them with more freedom to move than perhaps they had before. On the other hand, work on the streets of Kampala involved risks as already mentioned. A 44-year-old refugee woman explained the risk of SGBV involved:

When you go to another place to sell, someone can call you and you find that you come across many problems. A man can call you and you think that he wants to

---

<sup>161</sup> F4.

<sup>162</sup> F24.

<sup>163</sup> M33.

buy your items, but he will rape you and assault you. Or just that he will engage in sex with you, or he will say that you have stolen something so that he can take your property. When you refuse to have sex with that person, that person can say anything against you, like that you have stolen something. So, you find that you have been beaten... And you will find that the little you had... well, you lose everything and the suffering starts again.<sup>164</sup>

Even though women perceived that their mobile livelihoods allowed them to know the city well, many of them lived in constant fear of being abused or robbed. Thus, their sense of the different areas of the city was sometimes characterised by insecurity, and in these areas they lacked a true sense of freedom of movement.

To sum up, some of the refugees were much more mobile within their city of exile than others. The amount and direction of movement were influenced mostly by refugees' sense of security, which was sometimes closely related to their livelihood options. In general, the refugee informants suggested that they did not enjoy a meaningful sense of freedom of movement within the city despite the laws and policies guiding it at the national level.

## **6.4. Urban macro-scale space of protection and insecurity**

### ***6.4.1. Host-refugee relations at the city level***

We ran away from Congo because of war, but even in Kampala it is like we have entered another war, because we do not have peace at all.<sup>165</sup>

Refugees' discourses of their everyday life in Kampala were characterised by their sense of physical and psychological insecurity. The insecurity they experienced was to some

---

<sup>164</sup> F24.

<sup>165</sup> FGD8.

extent caused by their overall perceptions of the city and the associated relationship with the Ugandan hosts, as summed up by a 32-year-old male refugee who had been in Kampala since 2002:

I know Kampala well. I have been here for a long time and I really know it. I can say all Kampala is unsafe because of the attention, the behaviour of Ugandans toward refugees. They do not really have a good heart or spirit, and that makes us feel unsafe, because you feel that you are in some places, but you are not really protected. Access to all places can be one way possible and another way not really, because as long as you know that you are living with people who do not like you, you can move but not in real freedom. Moving but in fear.<sup>166</sup>

Not all of the refugees, however, had such a negative understanding of their relationships, characterised by generalised social trust (Jasinski 2010), with the unknown Ugandans. According to the male refugee leader of the CRCU, refugee–host relations depended on the individuals: “Some people have a good relationship and you are living like a brother and a sister, but there are others who are extremely... They are kind of xenophobic.”<sup>167</sup> Given this observation, refugees distinguished between unsympathetic and tolerant Ugandans. According to a 55-year-old male refugee, there were two categories of people in Uganda: “those who have moved even to visit Kenya, Sudan, they are kind to us. But those who never left this area, they are not good with us.”<sup>168</sup> Thus, having been outside Uganda was seen by some of the refugees as a factor which made individual Ugandans more open-minded and tolerant than others.

The authorities and officers commonly described host–refugee relations in a positive manner. For instance, a LC1 chairman argued that: “We have the same challenges, but the

---

<sup>166</sup> M2.

<sup>167</sup> Representative of the CRCU.

<sup>168</sup> M40.

host community is not hostile. It is not hostile. The Ugandan community is not hostile.”<sup>169</sup> Ugandans were perceived by the officers as welcoming to foreigners, including the refugees, and this was explained by the cultural values of hospitality and the fact that many Ugandans had experienced what it meant to be a refugee, especially during the Amin period.<sup>170</sup> However, when problems arose between Ugandans and refugees, the authorities referred to the fact that the host population only “becomes hostile to the refugees if the refugees themselves misbehave.”<sup>171</sup> Some of them also referred to cultural differences between the ‘host’ and the ‘guests’, as explained by one of the LC1s:

The relationship is, yes, normal. But you see, when some people have a different behaviour... Sometimes these people [refugees] are very hot tempered. That is why we try to train these people to come down to our normality, to come down to our behaviour down here. But otherwise, we live here together.<sup>172</sup>

Some of the officers of the protection institutions recognised the fact that many Ugandans in Kampala, and beyond, were unfamiliar with the concept of a ‘refugee’ and the refugee law governing their stay in Uganda. Thus, sensitising the hosts in the city of Kampala, so as to avoid any misperceptions about the refugees, was seen as a key target for the protection institutions.

Most of the refugee informants reported verbal harassment by Ugandans. Typically the verbal abuse was related to politically or economically inspired concerns that the hosts had about the presence of refugees in the city. Refugees perceived that the *boda boda* drivers, who were everywhere in the city, were particularly hostile toward them: “Ugandans are not happy for us Congolese to be here. In most cases when you take a motorcycle, they

---

<sup>169</sup> LC1, 18.9.2011.

<sup>170</sup> Idi Amin was the President of Uganda from 1971 to 1979. His period was characterised by severe human rights violations and consequent forced displacements.

<sup>171</sup> LC1, 26.9.2011.

<sup>172</sup> LC1, 27.1.2011.

say: ‘when the time comes then we will burn your bodies.’ We are here in Uganda, and any time we can be killed.”<sup>173</sup> These motorcycle drivers were often educated young men who had to work in this way to avoid the prevalent unemployment in the city. Thus, their perception of refugees, and foreigners in general, was sometimes hostile given the employment situation they were in.

The economically motivated threats also had to do with the fact that the price of food, fuel and other living costs had risen significantly due to the general national and regional economic decline. The Congolese were, in particular, accused of being culpable in this by Ugandans, as a result of the widespread perception that they were rich from mineral trading and other natural resources found in the DRC.

The general discrimination against the Congolese refugees was, according to them, also due to the fact that they did not speak the same languages as the Ugandans.<sup>174</sup> Many experienced discrimination in various situations because of the lack of a shared language. Access to various services was difficult because of the language barrier. As a survival strategy to overcome the language problem the informants learned English and/or Luganda or other local languages. After learning the locally used languages refugees felt that life became easier. This was argued by a male refugee who had lived in Uganda since 2001:

The problem was [the lack of] Luganda. When I spoke Luganda then life became a bit easier to me. I could express myself. I started to express myself in Luganda, and I was trying to come up with a little English. So I found that life was a bit easier. That is when I joined now some other groups, friends; I started to make friends. I got friends around me, Ugandans and some other nationalities.<sup>175</sup>

---

<sup>173</sup> 7 CRCU observation.

<sup>174</sup> Congolese mostly speak Kiswahili and French and not the official languages of Uganda, which are English and Luganda.

<sup>175</sup> M1.

For the majority of the refugees their relationship with Ugandans was characterised by verbal harassment which took place in different places in the city: the markets, shops, *matatus* (minibus taxis) and streets. Consequently, the general atmosphere in their city of exile was often described as hostile, as expressed by a young refugee boy during one of the FGDs:

You must learn the shortcuts [to avoid harassment]. We live here in Kampala, but sometimes my [Ugandan] ‘friends’ start: “you, refugees, you have meeting, meeting.” They start to call us ‘Zairians’ and that hurts your heart. They call you an intruder.<sup>176</sup>

The general verbal harassment sometimes turned into physical abuse. Many refugee women, in particular, explained how they had been sexually harassed in Kampala by Ugandan men. Refugee men and boys also told how they had been physically molested by Ugandans. Some of the refugees perceived the verbal mistreatment they experienced as being even worse than the physical abuse. This was particularly argued by the members of the support group for torture survivors:

I can add that when we fled our country due to the torture we had gone through, and on our arrival here we find it is more terrible here than in our country. Torturing is not about being beaten or wounded, but also the way you are receiving a word from other people, the way they are talking to you. It is more terrible than being beaten.<sup>177</sup>

To sum up, the refugee–host relations in Kampala were characterised by general neutrality, which at times erupted as negative encounters between the Congolese refugees and Ugandan citizens. The majority of the refugee informants’ accounts of their relations with Ugandans were characterised by stories of verbal harassment and discrimination. This was caused by the common generalised social mistrust between refugees and their hosts – a mistrust which was only able to be overcome through close positive contact.

---

<sup>176</sup> FGD11.

<sup>177</sup> FGD12.

#### *6.4.2. Situating Kampala within the national and regional politics*

The national and regional economic and political situation had an effect on refugees' general 'sense of place' in Kampala. This is because in African urban politics, it may be "difficult to disaggregate local processes from national processes, and there can be complex interconnections between the two" (Goodfellow 2013: 7). Thus, it is important not only to focus on the micro- and meso-scale analysis on the experiences of protection and insecurity articulated by the refugees, but also to investigate how the city-level sense of insecurity was related to the wider political and economic contexts.

As already mentioned, the national and regional, and even global, economical decline had its effect on refugees' sense of insecurity in Kampala. It also affected the host–refugee relationships. Whereas the refugees felt that they were unable to sustain their basic needs, the Ugandans often argued against having more refugees living in the city precisely because of the economic disadvantages that they were believed to bring. A refugee woman, for instance, expressed her concerns about how Ugandans had told her that refugees were to blame for the high inflation:

For the last two days with this inflation, the Ugandan currency weakened against the [US] dollar. They have accused us as being responsible for the inflation and wherever you go, you can be slapped: "refugees are the one who have created the inflation." Whenever you are using public transport, everyone else will pay less but from you they ask for more.<sup>178</sup>

Ugandans reacted strongly to the increasing price of living in Kampala. During the time of the research there were regular demonstrations which often led to riots. Most of the demonstrations were initiated by the Ugandan opposition, and they started as "walk-to-

---

<sup>178</sup> FGD7.

work” protests led by the opposition leader Kizza Besigye. Soon these peaceful demonstrations against the increased cost of urban living, however, became violent in parts of the city. Before the demonstrations began, there was an important political event, the general elections, which also had an impact on refugees’ general sense of protection in the city.

Uganda had presidential and parliamentary elections in February 2011, and local elections in March 2011. Refugees, in general, feared election time because they received threats from the Ugandans inhabiting Kampala. Refugees were more concerned about the presidential elections than the local elections because the overall national politics in Uganda affected them more than local politics.<sup>179</sup> The threats that the refugees received during the election time were mostly verbal and were centred on the idea that if Museveni lost the elections, the Ugandan opposition would either evict the refugees from the country or kill them. Refugees were generally seen by the Ugandans as supporting President Museveni (Figure 28) and his National Resistance Movement party, which had been in power since 1986. Appreciation for the Government of Uganda and President Museveni was expressed by some of the refugees:

I say, “thank you.” Here the Government of Uganda is not bad because the government is trying to put us in a good condition, but the problem we have here is some of the people we have here. They are not good because all the time there is a problem which happens; they say “ha, we will show you after the elections”. So, this has put us in a big fear. But we are here in Kampala because we do not have somewhere else to go. But this is not a place where we want to remain.<sup>180</sup>

I have to pray God that Museveni pass.<sup>181</sup>

---

<sup>179</sup> Written report by a refugee.

<sup>180</sup> F2.

<sup>181</sup> Written report by a refugee.



Figure 28. President Museveni's election campaign poster on a wall in Rubaga parish of Kampala (Source: Lyytinen 2011).

The elections caused widespread concern among the Congolese refugees. They were, in particular, accused by Ugandans of coming to the country with the purpose of voting. By law, refugees were prohibited from voting or taking part in Ugandan politics in any way. The misperception of refugees' political involvement, according to the male representative of the CRCU, was related to the cessation clause on Rwandan refugees signed by Uganda, Rwanda and UNHCR in 2010. Given the precarious situation of the Rwandan refugees, some of them had begun to pretend to be Congolese in order to gain refugee status. The political alliance between Rwanda and Uganda was also recognised by the Banyamulenge

Tutsis who were particularly cautious about their position in regard to the elections. According to them the fact that Ugandans saw them as Banyarwanda, who had the right to vote because they had Ugandan citizenship, made them feel unsafe, as explained by a Munyamulenge man during a FGD:

The main challenge is the confusion when we are called Banyarwandan. In a political way Uganda can have a compatibility with Rwanda, but we are the ones who undergo the problems. The citizens of Uganda call us the Banyarwandan. Yet we are not them. Uganda sees that we are not refugees; that we are here only to support the one who is in power in Uganda. There is a political misunderstanding between Museveni and the opposition, and we are the ones who suffer the problems.<sup>182</sup>

Before the presidential elections in February 2011, refugees took some precautions in case violence broke out in the city. Since the Ugandans were also uncertain about their safety during this time, how refugees prepared for the elections was not that different from their hosts. Some refugees spent extended time, even a week,<sup>183</sup> indoors during the election period. They also faced challenges in relation to storing emergency food and water as explained by a female refugee: “I fear because people say that we must buy the stock of food because something bad will happen, and I have nothing at home because of money. God himself knows.”<sup>184</sup> Others avoided crowded places in the city to evade possible riots, and some intentionally reduced their movement in the city.

Some refugees wanted to leave Kampala for the time of the elections, but according to them there was “no way to go, because we are struggling for daily bread, so where to get money for transport. We are left in God’s hand to whatever could happen.”<sup>185</sup> To reinforce their protection, refugees were advised by the protection institutions not to move around

---

<sup>182</sup> FGD4.

<sup>183</sup> M15.

<sup>184</sup> Written report by a refugee.

<sup>185</sup> Written report by a refugee.

on voting days because then they might be accused of voting. The refugee leader of the CRCU also advised his community members on how to behave during the election period:

We inform Congolese regarding this election that people should not be involved in it; even putting on this [campaign] T-shirt or doing public campaigning. People are not supposed to participate. If you can buy something, have at least some stock in your house. That period you can be safe with your family.<sup>186</sup>

The RLP also instructed the refugees on how to act during the elections. During one of the many community policing events<sup>187</sup> that the RLP organised together with the Ugandan police forces in the different neighbourhoods of Kampala, it was made very clear that refugees were in no privileged position in regard to being protected during the elections. This was because “security is for everyone, and no special security will be given to refugees. Police protects every citizen of this country just including refugees.”<sup>188</sup>

Besides the elections, refugees were concerned about the riots and demonstrations that took place in Kampala. In 2011, especially after Museveni’s victory, the Ugandan opposition led by Kizza Besigye encouraged the so-called “walk-to-work” demonstrations and “ride-drive-and-hoot” campaigns which opposed the increasing prices of food and fuel and more generally government politics. In the spring and summer of 2011 these demonstrations occasionally turned into violent riots which the Government of Uganda banned and aimed to prevent with more violence (Smith 2011). Goodfellow (2013: 1) has suggested that these riots were inspired not only by the broader political events of the Arab Spring but also the increasing trend of “mobilisation of urban social groups into protests and riots [which] has institutionalised what might be termed ‘noise’ as the most meaningful form of political participation” in Kampala.

---

<sup>186</sup> Representative of the CRCU.

<sup>187</sup> Nsambya community policing meeting held on 17 November 2010, report produced by the RLP.

<sup>188</sup> Nsambya community policing meeting held on 17 November 2010, report produced by the RLP.

In refugees' accounts these "walk-to-work" riots were associated with some of the previous unrest, such as the Kabaka riots in 2009 (Kiggundu 2009), the terrorist attack that took place in July 2010 by Al-Shabaab (BBC 2010) or the Kasubi tombs unrest in 2010 (Gettleman and Kron 2010). Having experienced these previous disorders, some of the refugees reflected on these past events:

So many concerns... Even during the riot of King Kabaka [in 2009] a big number of Congolese were threatened with death, and we even lost two people who were killed. So, now that we are going into the period of election, we have no peace of mind. We are thinking about what will come out.<sup>189</sup>

During the 2011 demonstrations associated with the aftermath of the elections and increasing economic turmoil, some of the refugees experienced not only verbal but physical violence. A Congolese refugee man, for instance, reported that his son had been injured during the riots. Prior to this incident he had already lost one of his children in the violence in the DRC and another one had been abducted in Kampala. The child who barely survived the riots was his last child alive:

One morning our pastor [who they stayed with] sent the children to go and buy iron sheets. When they reached that place, it was the day of the demonstration. Those demonstrations took tyres and they burned them on the streets. They forced the children to pick those tyres and burn them. And put up a road block. The children say "no, me, I am just a refugee, I cannot involve in this." When he said that he is a Congolese refugee, the demonstrators pushed him to the fire and started to beat him. So, he was burned on one side of his body.<sup>190</sup>

The demonstrations also affected some of the refugees' income as they were unable to sell their products on the streets of Kampala, or they had been robbed during the riots and lost what they were selling. Generally, refugees felt that they were accused of being part of the riots even though they had neither initiated nor taken part in them.<sup>191</sup>

---

<sup>189</sup> Representative of the CRCU.

<sup>190</sup> FGD5.

<sup>191</sup> FGD12.

Additionally, the national and regional political situation, beyond the elections and the demonstrations, had an impact on refugees' sense of protection. At the time of my fieldwork many of the Congolese refugees had become increasingly afraid that the governments of the DRC and Uganda would force all of the refugees back to the DRC. This fear was associated with the cessation clause that was to be implemented in 2013 in regard to Rwandan refugees, and to the tripartite agreement signed in 2010 between the DRC, Uganda and UNHCR agreeing on the procedures for voluntary repatriation of Congolese refugees. Uganda's long history of involvement in the conflicts in the DRC also made some of the refugees question how welcome they were in Kampala. This was articulated, for example, by a female refugee during a FGD:

We are still living in insecurity because this is one of the countries that attacked our country, Congo, and the Ugandan military during the war raped our mothers, sisters and wives and killed our parents, friends and relatives. We came here in exile, and reaching Uganda we find that it is the country which provoked those kinds of insecurities in our lives and in our country. So, we can be here but without security. We came here seeking asylum as refugees while knowing that we are in a country which made us refugees today.<sup>192</sup>

Given these political perceptions and the prevalent institutional mistrust, the Congolese refugees at large did not trust the Government of Uganda or UNHCR to uphold the obligations of the voluntary repatriation agreement. Subsequently, refugees were concerned about being forced to repatriate before it was truly safe for them to return to the DRC, in particular to its eastern territories.

As seen from the above examples, refugees' sense of urban insecurity was not only influenced by micro- and meso-scale factors but also by the national and regional political and economic turmoil. In particular, the economic decline, elections, riots and the signing

---

<sup>192</sup> FGD12.

of the voluntary repatriation agreement affected their sense of security in Kampala. Thus, understanding refugees' macro-scale insecurity discourses was important for understanding of what the notion of the 'protection space' meant in their lives.

## **6.5. Concluding discussion**

Refugees informing this study interpreted the notion of 'protection space' in relation to urban space at different interrelated geographical scales. Their understanding of the concept included discourses of space characterised by physical, imagined, lived (Lefebvre 1991) and relational (Massey 2005) elements. The analysis presented in this chapter emphasised the physicality of refugee protection in an urban environment, but also shed light on the relational space of generalised and particularised social mistrust between the Congolese refugees and their Ugandan hosts. The examination also clearly showed that urban locations were spaces of imagination and spaces of representation (Tonkiss 2005; Phillips, Davis and Radcliffe 2007). Additionally, when investigating refugees' 'sense of place', it was important to not only focus on their discourses of protection but also of insecurity.

As has been shown, even if refugees found relative peace and security in Kampala compared to the DRC, they did not normally feel that they were truly protected. Thus, their 'sense of place' – the "set of feelings, emotions and attachments to the place" (McDowell and Sharp 1999: 201) – in relation to the entire city of exile was characterised by a sense of urban insecurity and social mistrust of the Ugandan 'Other' (Sandercock 2000), whether their neighbours or unknown inhabitants of the city. Refugees also associated urban

insecurity and protection in particular areas of the city ranging from their home or shelter and immediate neighbourhood to different parishes and divisions of the city.

Moreover, refugees' 'sense of place' was related to a particular time of the day or the year. Thus, refugees' 'sense of place' can be seen as an evolving process over time (Massey 1999). Finally, refugees related their insecurity to the broader economic and political events taking place in Kampala and at the national and regional level. The geopolitics of the everyday (Ramadan 2012) were, therefore, central to the understanding of refugees' discourses of urban protection. Thus, investigation of the micro-, meso-, and macro-scale discourses of protection was needed, as also suggested by previous research (Long 2010).

Since refugees' "experiences and perceptions of urban space (real and imagined) play a role in understandings of both 'self' and 'others', [and] sense of belonging", their 'sense of place' was also related to their "rights to space and other resources" (Phillips, Davis and Radcliffe 2007: 230). Consequently, the analyses of refugees' 'sense of place' and their 'right to the city' were interlinked. The 2006 Refugee Act governing Ugandan refugee policy, together with the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy, guaranteed refugees' 'right to the city' at the very basic level of allowing them to inhabit the city in the first place (Mitchell 2003). Despite this right they often felt unable to truly appreciate the freedom of movement and 'right to the city' invested in them by the Ugandan refugee policy.

The promise of "the right to citizenship for all" and "the right to shape and influence" (Amin and Thrift 2002: 142) had not materialised for the refugees in their city of exile, primarily because many of the informants felt that due to insecurity their everyday life in the city was restricted. Some of the refugees were unable to access certain areas of the city

because of fear based on real or perceived risks. Thus, insecurity was an issue that largely undermined refugees' experiences of protection in the city. Because this insecurity was conceptualised by the refugees as physical, relational and also spiritual<sup>193</sup>, approaches to overcome it need to focus on all these different yet interconnected elements.

---

<sup>193</sup> And to a lesser degree legal.



## **Chapter Seven: SOCIAL SPACES AMONG THE CONGOLESE REFUGEES**

### **7.1. Introduction**

In this chapter I examine spatially informed connections between ‘protection’ and ‘trust’ among the Congolese refugee population in Kampala. The main question I ask is to what extent did ‘social trust’ (i.e. inter-personal trust) play a part in the way refugees built social relationships and community structures among themselves in Kampala. I investigate the difficulties of forming communities, in particular from the theoretical standpoint of generalised social trust between individual refugees (i.e. the micro-scale of trust; Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012). In Chapter Eight I focus on analysing those community forms that refugees had established in Kampala from the viewpoint of particularised social trust within and between these communities (i.e. the meso-scale of trust). Thus, Chapters Seven and Eight are interrelated in their focus on social trust and community characteristics but shed light to the protection/space/trust nexus from different aspects of trust research.

Here I examine, in particular, how generalised and particularised social trust shaped refugees’ perceptions of each other. Particularised trust refers to trust in people you know, whereas generalised trust is trust in strangers (Levi 1998). The emphasis in this chapter is on the latter. In the trust literature, it has been stated that inter-personal social trust is highly context-specific and may depend on the characteristics of the individuals (Welter and Nadezhda 2012: 51). Following this theoretical take, I engage with the question of how refugees’ social trust was shaped by the contexts that they experienced over time and

space, and how the intersections of refugees' individual characteristics had an impact on their sense of social trust in Kampala. Again, my overall aim is to discuss how refugees' trust discourses reflect the issue of protection and the physical, imagined, lived and relational elements of space.

The chapter is divided into two main sections. In the first section, I discuss the reasons for the flight. I show how refugees' sense of protection and experiences of trust seemed to have varied over time and space. When examining the reasons why refugees fled the DRC, mistrust emerged as a key finding in the analysis of the conflict and persecution. Also, the ability to trust was critical to the journey to safety. Furthermore, upon arrival in Kampala, refugees had to rely on initial support from other people and this again required social trust.

In the second section, I analyse the manifestations of social trust in refugees' everyday lives in the city of exile. I examine, in particular, refugees' accounts of the spill-over effects of the conflict in the DRC and the related sense of fear of the 'Other' Congolese in the city of Kampala. Moreover, refugees' social trust is shown to be partly shaped by social networks and the social exclusion that took place within the city.

Lastly, I conclude that the social spaces among the Congolese refugees in Kampala were characterised to a large extent by generalised, but also particularised, social mistrust. Yet refugees had to trust other Congolese on their way to Uganda and also upon their arrival in Kampala. As will be further shown in this study, I suggest that, given the widespread social mistrust among the refugees, building strong refugee communities which would serve as meaningful 'protection places' was challenging but by no means impossible.

## **7.2. Trusting en route: refugees' flight from the DRC and arrival in Kampala**

### ***7.2.1. Trust-influenced reasons of flight***

In this section, I investigate displacement as a spatial strategy following Boano's (2011: 39) suggestion that:

[D]isplacement itself may be understood as a spatial strategy for improving the protection outcomes of those who have crossed political and physical boundaries fleeing persecution.

I examine how refugees understood that the context (i.e. the conflict-ridden society) and their individual characteristics influenced their experiences of insecurity and mistrust in the DRC, and consequently the decision to flee. I also examine how their flight discourses featured, on the one hand, institutional trust and, on the other hand, generalised and particularised social trust. In order to do this, I draw evidence from a number of interviews when explaining the shared elements of these discourses, but also focus on some key interviews which represent different flight-related trust discourses particularly well.

Refugees typically perceived the general conflict-related insecurity as an overall reason for their flight. Men often argued that they had to flee the DRC due to more targeted forms of persecution but women and youth, in particular, saw the overall situation in which they were in as causing them to leave the DRC. For them, having become a single mother, a widow or an orphan due to the generalised violence determined their decision to flee. Refugees' context-specific discourses of their decisions to flee were also characterised by elements of institutional mistrust, mostly in relation to the various rebel groups, the Government of the DRC and other government forces which had invaded the DRC.

Mistrust and fear of particular institutions was sometimes explained through experiences related to being recruited by various rebel groups. Some of the refugees, mostly young men, had spent varying periods of time in the forest as abductees with the rebels. The main rebel groups that influenced refugees informants' lives were the RCD, the various Mai Mai militias, Laurent Nkunda's Tutsi militia (the CNDP), Interahamwe (Rwandan Hutu militia) and FDLR.<sup>194</sup> In general, the 'Rwandan forces', including the various Rwandan-backed rebel groups, were accused by the majority of the informants of invading the DRC and causing them to flee.

Additionally, others had experienced political persecution because they refused to join certain political parties, or because their relatives had worked for the Mobutu regime or had been closely associated with Laurent Kabila. Often the political associations with the government and various rebel groups were intertwined in refugees' reasons for flight. For instance, an older refugee man<sup>195</sup> explained how the complicated political situation and the general conflict had made him flee in 2000:

Basically, I ran because of my sister's husband who during Mobutu took power in 1965. My brother-in-law was also part of that team who took power but after that they separated and formed a rebellion. And then they established themselves and there they fought Mobutu until Mobutu caught my brother-in-law. My sister knew Laurent Kabila. ... I got some money from Kabila and I started to sell fish and salt in North and South Kivus. My sister was killed in an ambush. Also, the Banyamulenge rebels came to my house and they hurt my wife. There were both Banyamulenge and Mai Mai fighting in that area.

These contexts discussed above provided a setting for the erosion of trust, in particular institutional trust in the government and other institutional bodies. Refugees' reasons to flee were, however, dominated by their stories of targeted forms of the conflict due to their

---

<sup>194</sup> See Chapter Two for a more detailed description of the rebel groups and their role in the conflict.

<sup>195</sup> M47.

specific characteristics. These characteristics, which affected both refugees' senses of institutional and social trust, had to do with their physical appearance and gender, family and 'community' relationships, and occupation, among other things. Typically these stories of individual characteristics were centred on the overarching theme of 'ethnicity'.

First, refugees explained the more targeted persecution and violence in terms of their or their relative's physical appearance. For instance, if you looked like a Kinyarwanda, some of the refugees suggested, the 'native' Congolese accused you for being a 'foreigner' (i.e. a rebel). These references to local violence targeting people who resembled Banyarwanda were dominant in refugees' reasons for flight. A 30-year-old man<sup>196</sup> explained how the government soldiers had attacked and tortured him in 2009 because he resembled the Rwandan-backed rebel leader Laurent Nkunda:

At night armed people came and knocked at our door [in Bunagana]. Then those armed people, or soldiers, told me that they requested 800 dollars or otherwise they would kill me because I resemble someone who looks like that leader of the rebel group of Laurent Nkunda. ... While I was there [i.e. hiding] some neighbours came and told me: "those soldiers have returned to your house and they have promised that they will kill you because you resemble Laurent Nkunda. For sure they will kill you and they have already burned the house." When I saw that I understood that I was really in insecurity. We decided to leave slowly, slowly up to the border until we reached Uganda.

The issue of gender was also raised by some of the refugee informants in their reasons for flight, and the space of the body featured particularly in women's narratives of fleeing. Women often described how their experiences of SGBV and the associated harm to their mind and body were important reasons behind their escaping their home areas.<sup>197</sup> Many of

---

<sup>196</sup> M10.

<sup>197</sup> "Sexual violence is one of the most horrific weapons of war, an instrument of terror used against women. Yet huge numbers of men are also victims" (Storr 2011). SGBV was also prevalent among the refugee boys and men in Kampala. I, however, only interviewed male refugees who had been raped in Kampala, and not in the DRC.

the women interviewed for this study had been raped in the DRC or on their way to Uganda. The perpetrators included military, rebels and civilians alike. Some of the women had been raped several times over the course of their lifetime, and the accumulated experiences of rape had influenced their decision to flee, as explained by one of my young informants:<sup>198</sup>

At that time I was living alone. It was 2010. I was raped by about three or four military men. After a while, I waited until I talked about the situation, I found myself pregnant. ... And he [the rapist] said that he would kill me, and even the kid would be killed. And at that time I took my decision to go away. I reached here in Kampala.

And I have just told you part of my life story, but my life story started since I was young, since I was a kid. I can talk about it. ... Because I am the first born in our family, they took me. They tortured me. You can see the scars on my body. I was ten years old at that time and they also raped me. They were torturing me for a long while but I did not tell them where my father was. Then they left us. That was the period of RCD rule. So, I fear when I got this second problem of being raped. And I decided to move. That is my story.

As seen from these examples, the individually targeted harm associated with people's physical appearance and gender could lead to institutional and inter-personal, or inter-communal, social mistrust, depending on the perpetrators.

Second, family and 'community' relationships, which commonly were driven by wider inter-ethnic quarrels, had also led to individually experienced persecution. These rivalries were to do with natural resources and land ownership but also with polygamy, inter-ethnic marriages and inheritance of chief positions, among other causes. Neighbours, friends and relatives had turned against the informants, and this had caused them to flee the DRC. Banyamulenge Tutsis had fled often because of land conflicts between them and the 'native' locals or because the Government of the DRC accused them of advocating for the

---

<sup>198</sup> F8.

rights of the Banyamulenge. The multiple scales of insecurity and the consequent interpersonal, communal and institutional mistrust were explained particularly well by an 18-year-old unaccompanied male asylum seeker.<sup>199</sup> His story of fleeing Goma featured not only polygamy and inter-ethnic family quarrels, but also the larger conflict which took place in North Kivu:

In 2008 we had a problem in the family; our mother who was pregnant passed away and my father at that time had two wives. My mother was a Tutsi by tribe and my father was Hutu, and the family of my father did not want my mother. They were blaming my father for having married a woman from that tribe. Then my grandparents were abducted by my mother's family members and they killed the wife of my grandfather. And then during the period of war, when they fought between our government and Laurent Nkunda, our father who was dealing with cows, disappeared just like that and we do not know how or where. We decided to leave with our neighbour. ... It was in 2009 in April.

Third, another reason to flee given by the refugees included occupation and other important social activities. Men, in particular, explained their persecution through narratives of the nature of their work. Many of the male informants were involved in reporting on human rights abuses that both the government and the rebels had conducted. Often the government forces (FARDC, the national army) had tortured the human rights defenders before their departure. A 55-year-old refugee man,<sup>200</sup> for instance, fled the DRC in 2008 due to having found himself in a situation of crossfire between the different fighting groups after having reported on their human rights abuses:

The reason why I left DRC, during those two years, since we were working with those three groups: government militia, Mai Mai and Nkunda, now we were becoming enemy of those three groups. It is because we were given the right information about the [abducted] children, but the government forces, FRDC, was not giving the right information to the international opinion, so they became the enemy of our NGO. We became the enemy of everyone.

---

<sup>199</sup> M29.

<sup>200</sup> M40.

Additionally, some of the women had been in powerful positions in the DRC, such as leaders of women's trading associations or teachers, and had been targeted mostly by rebels and the government because of their position in society. These forms of persecution typically manifested themselves as institutional mistrust toward the government and the rebel groups.

In previous migration studies it has been noticed that “religious factors may play a role in convincing or forcing people to leave their home country and to seek refuge” (Mayer 2007: 6). Some of the Congolese men who worked as pastors, or women whose husbands had been pastors, explained that they had to flee because they had been preaching “unity and love for your neighbour”<sup>201</sup> in the midst of ethnically driven local conflicts. Consequently, their discourses on the conflict featured the church as a space of persecution for warring tribes, and as a space of social mistrust at the personal and community level. This was shown, for example, by a 44-year-old refugee woman<sup>202</sup> whose reasons to flee the DRC were characterised by the local ethnic conflict which took place in her husband's church:

Since my husband was a pastor, it was a conflict in the church. It was during the war between Rwanda and Congo, when those Rwandese entered the Congo. Now there was a kind of confusion: They said that he [the husband] was a Rwandese and they wanted to assassinate him; they wanted to kill him in the church. He was the most powerful in the church. He was very clever in the church and God used him to preach to people. And he was loved by the people and people used to be able to understand what he was telling them. That was the most important thing. They wanted to kill the whole family...

Most of the refugees' discourses of the flight, however, featured both the wider societal context and individual characteristics, and these accounts typically included aspects of

---

<sup>201</sup> M11.

<sup>202</sup> F20.

both institutional and social mistrust. A flight discourse articulated by a 50-year-old male refugee<sup>203</sup> was a particularly representative example of these intertwined threats of insecurity and mistrust. His story of flight started with a description of the wider regional conflict and moved on to an individualised, ethnically motivated family conflict, which was tied into the localised community-based conflicts and rebel movements:

The main reasons why I came here, OK: political wars, tribal. And armed wars also. ... That was the Rwandese solders. What was bad for us now in the villages? Like me, my wife, she is not real Tutsi because her father is Hutu, but the mom is Tutsi. But because she took the likeness of her [Tutsi] mother (she is tall), now the family does not trust her because of the tribalism. They hate you when you do that you mix; you could have just got a Hutu. You do not have the love of both the Hutu and the Tutsi, because they say that she is mixed. She has no side.

Overall, given the particularised nature of the conflicts and persecution, and the involvement of multiple local, regional and international factors in the warfare, the line between victims and perpetrators had become difficult for the Congolese to distinguish (Vlassenroot 2012: 208). Furthermore, rebel groups had attacked the communities in which they had previously lived. The rebels also targeted community leaders and village chiefs, “a tactic that spread fear throughout entire communities” and that meant that “some of the victims would know their attackers by name” (HRW 2009: 12).

According to Stearns (2011: 36, 324), some Congolese have “seen enemies everywhere” and believe they should be “exterminated”. Conflict-ridden Congolese society has been characterised by people being suspicious that others were spies, and the conflicts and the lack of a strong state presence contributed toward allowing ruthless behaviour to survive. Consequently, protection of ‘sovereignty’ referred not to the state but to ethnically defined communities. According to Dunn (2003) it is essential to go beyond state boundaries and

---

<sup>203</sup> M50.

into the socially constructed boundaries in order to understand the politics of the Congo. This is to suggest that social identities have become increasingly important in the dynamics of everyday life and the conflict:

The social identities at play were not foregrounded in the nation-state. Rather, they were based on the construction and maintenance of other forms of boundaries, such as linguistic and ethnic division (Dunn 2003: 148).

Given all this, it has been suggested that the nature of the local, often ethnically motivated, conflicts had contributed to the deepening of particularised social mistrust among people living in same communities. Generalised social mistrust between people from different communities had also spread as a consequence of the conflicts (Lammers 2006b).

As conflicts and violence had affected the entire society, everyday life during the war became dominated by fear and distrust in relation to individuals and various groups but also in regard to the state and its different institutions. This observation is supported by the general trust literature, which suggests that generalised social trust might be influenced by the characteristics of a country. In particular, the history of the country can have an impact on the general levels of social trust between people. More specifically, a history of violence, as in the case of the DRC, can lead to a context where people, even second generations, find it difficult to build trust (Singh 2012). On the other hand, trust building can be facilitated between people or communities who share experiences of, for example, violence (Welter and Nadezhda 2012). To conclude, for further analysis it is important to acknowledge that both the context of the flight and the refugees' individual characteristics may have affected their ability and willingness to trust institutions, other communities and individuals in Kampala.

### *7.2.2. Trust and mistrust during travel and upon arrival in Kampala*

The acute nature of refugees' flight was characterised by a woman who said that "during the war even animals run with you, and you just flee."<sup>204</sup> For others, the decision to flee to Uganda took longer, and typically their flight was characterised by multiple displacements, which has been observed as the typical pattern of forced displacement in the DRC (Beytrison and Kalis 2013: 22). Most of the refugees had first sought safety and protection within their country. People from urban centres might have first fled to other cities or at times to the villages where they had relatives. Some had fled to the capital city of Kinshasa, and others crossed from South Kivu to North Kivu, and vice versa. Families were often split by accident or on purpose in order to maximise the chances of at least some of the family members surviving. However, localised conflicts kept displacing them over and over again.

When all the opportunities to seek safety inside the DRC were exhausted, people decided to flee to neighbouring countries. Some of the refugees had spent varying degrees of time in Burundi, for instance the Banyamulenge at the Gatumba camp, or in Rwanda. Further violence or losing their support networks in these countries forced them to continue to Uganda. The majority of the refugees did not specifically plan to come to Uganda or Kampala, but instead "just found"<sup>205</sup> themselves there. One woman did not even know that she had crossed the border until she recognised that people spoke another language, Luganda, and thus realised she had entered Uganda. Others had planned to reach Tanzania, but had to stop their journey in Uganda due to lack of means to travel any further. For

---

<sup>204</sup> F10.

<sup>205</sup> M1.

some, the decision to come to Uganda was based on the practicalities of having available means of transportation in the direction of Uganda.

The majority of the refugees informing this study had fled the two Kivu provinces which were located close to the Ugandan border. Thus, most of the refugees arrived in Uganda reasonably quickly. Refugees who came from further away than the immediate eastern areas of the Kivus experienced major difficulties during their flight. The travel typically began by them escaping a town or a city to the rural areas and hiding in the bushes, before reaching another town where public transportation could be obtained. The means of transportation the refugees used included trucks, buses, *boda bodas* (motorcycles), cars and boats. They also walked, sometimes lengthy distances. Refugees, who travelled independently, or with one or two other people, used mainly public transportation such as buses or shared taxis. Most took a bus from Goma or another border town to the border post, and from the border they took another bus to Kampala. If there were more family members fleeing at the same time, and if they had the possibility of using a car, they reached the border by car.

Many refugees met acquaintances during their flight from the DRC and were helped by them to continue their flight. They might have had distant relatives or business partners in the towns they passed by, or if they knew a church or a chief in the specific area, they were assisted by them. A female teacher<sup>206</sup> had, for instance, met her old students during her flight and been assisted by them:

We fled from South Kivu to North Kivu, and there in North Kivu I met some people who were my students who I was teaching in South Kivu. Those people

---

<sup>206</sup> F3.

helped me to pay for my transportation from Goma to here. From Goma we used a bus to the border, and from the border we took another bus up to Kampala.

This shows the importance of the particularised social trust that refugees placed on their existing social networks during their flight. Without accepting help from the existing social networks many of the refugees might not ever have been able to reach Uganda. At times, refugees also relied on the help of strangers. For instance, a 27-year-old male medical student<sup>207</sup> explained how he was assisted both by his existing contacts and an unfamiliar person:

When I escaped from the hospital I had someone [I knew] who helped me to move from Bukavu to Goma, but once in Goma I was not feeling secure and then I decided to come here [i.e. Uganda]. The same person is the one who paid for my transport to Bunagana, the border. There I found another [unknown] woman who saw that I was in a bad situation. I was not feeling well and that woman helped me with transportation from Bunagana to here.

Many refugees were offered transportation by unfamiliar Congolese who did business in Uganda. Some also travelled in the military trucks. The repeated stories of the so-called “angels of God”<sup>208</sup> or “good Samaritans”,<sup>209</sup> whom refugees had met on their way by chance or who had been sent by God as many of them suggested, demonstrates the significance of generalised social trust in others during the flight. This observation is in line with the fact that “religion often plays a role during the journey of a refugee to what may become his or her host country” (Mayer 2007: 7).

When reaching the Congo–Uganda border, refugees were confronted with another situation which required a trust decision. Both institutional trust in the administrative system and generalised social trust in the people working at the border were important at

---

<sup>207</sup> M19.

<sup>208</sup> M23.

<sup>209</sup> F20.

this stage of refugees' journeys. Most of the refugees crossed the border without travel documents or a visa and this meant that they had to trust that they would not be stopped from entering Uganda. The majority of the refugees did not experience any difficulties in terms of crossing the border, especially when they did it on a market day when it was easy to move between the two countries. In some cases the border was opened when an influx of refugees arrived. A few knew people who worked at the border post and were therefore personally assisted to leave the DRC.

Others, however, could not take this 'leap of faith' and consequently avoided the official border posts and used alternative means to cross to Uganda. One male human rights defender,<sup>210</sup> for instance, dressed up as a woman in order to cross the border safely without revealing his identity, and another young male<sup>211</sup> refugee was smuggled over the border by a lorry driver inside the truck container. Others had been hiding in *matooke* (local banana) trucks. All these different precautions show how refugees' journey at the border point was shaped by their sense of both institutional and social trust: the fact of hiding implied, on the one hand, that the refugees lacked trust in the administrative system of the border control and, on the other hand, it signalled a leap of faith that the refugees had taken when asking strangers to transport them in secrecy.

Only a small number of my refugee informants had a specific plan to come to Uganda or more specifically to Kampala. This was because the majority of the refugees did not know anyone in Kampala and had never been to the city before. Some of them, however, had family members or friends who had previously fled the DRC and were already living in the

---

<sup>210</sup> M22.

<sup>211</sup> M30.

city. Sometimes families that had been dispersed during the conflict would find each other in Kampala by chance. Some refugees heard that their missing relatives might be in Uganda and came with the hope of finding them. Others might have also known of a church or known a pastor in Kampala and their decision to flee to the capital city was influenced by their existing religious contacts shaped by particularised trust. In sub-Saharan Africa, religious contacts have been observed to be essential when refugees are fleeing their countries and finding their way to their cities of exile (Sommers 2001a, Amisi 2006).

Given that the majority of my informants did not know anyone in Kampala, in order to survive in the city, particularly during the very first days and weeks, refugees had to trust people they did not know. Thus, Congolese refugee men, women and youth began to establish limited social networks in order to find support in the strange city. This meant exercising their generalised social trust. These social networks of generalised trust included both bonding networks (among Congolese) and bridging networks (between Congolese and Ugandan/other nationalities)<sup>212</sup> (WRC 2011a). Establishing trust-based relationships with strangers was described by some refugees as something that happened rather easily. For instance, a male refugee<sup>213</sup> suggested that whenever you happened to meet a Congolese they would automatically assist you: “My wife was already here when I came. She found other Congolese, and you know when you meet other Congolese from your own country, they assist you. They take you to different churches and they assist you.”

---

<sup>212</sup> The focus of this chapter is on the relations among the Congolese. Bridging networks with the Ugandan hosts were discussed in Chapter Six.

<sup>213</sup> M27.

Others, however, found it much more difficult to trust and rely on people on arrival in the city. For some of the refugees, the first few hours in Kampala were particularly difficult as they were unsure where to go and what to do. This confusion upon arrival was expressed by a 31-year-old refugee man during one of our discussions:

[W]hen I reached Kampala, I discovered, I was moving around... When I came to Kampala by bus, I did not know where to go. I did not know anyone. From the bus, I came out of the bus, I looked to east, west, north and south; I did not know where I will take.<sup>214</sup>

The newly arrived refugees approached people randomly on the streets near the taxi parks where the bus carrying them from the Congo–Uganda border had left them. This initial encounter was often with a Ugandan stranger, but occasionally with another Congolese or a person of another nationality. This shows how refugees were compelled to exercise their generalised social trust. A few refugees approached police officers to ask for advice on where to go for registration and shelter. Most often, however, refugees wished to find a church – either a Congolese or a Ugandan one. Refugees were typically directed to one of the numerous Congolese churches located in Kampala by fellow Congolese but also by Ugandans. Thus, the church was typically the first point of call for newly arrived refugees.<sup>215</sup> Refugees frequently found an initial place to sleep in the church buildings or at the Old Kampala police station veranda, sometimes for an extended period of time. Accordingly, refugees placed trust in these institutions upon their arrival.

Sometimes the initial social and institutional trust that the refugees developed on arrival was not sustained because these institutions and individuals were unable or unwilling to support them for an extended period of time. In some cases, these initial relationships did,

---

<sup>214</sup> M1.

<sup>215</sup> The role of church in refugee protection is discussed in more detail in Section 8.3.4 of Chapter Eight and in Section 6.2.1.2 of Chapter Six.

however, last for years and the mutual support continued long after the initial arrival period. For instance, a young female asylum seeker who had arrived in Kampala pregnant after being raped in the DRC explained how she was supported by a Congolese woman, her ‘mother’, whom she had happened to meet at the bus station upon her arrival:

I did not know anybody when I came. And I am calling these ones my young sisters following the way their mother has been to me. I met with the mother of these children when I arrived there [at the bus station]. That moment [she was there] waiting for a customer who also came from the other side [Congo]. So, she saw me there and she asked, because I was there sitting and crying, and she asked me if I was Congolese. I said “yes” and because I was feeling so ill then she started talking to me. She offered me a place to stay.<sup>216</sup>

This type of informal assistance was, however, typically temporary because the relationship between refugees and their Ugandan or Congolese hosts would not always be sustained.

To sum up, the reasons for the flight, and the changing forms and periods of trust during the time of travel to and arrival in Kampala, were discussed above to provide some context for the examination of social trust between Congolese refugees who settled in the city of Kampala, an issue which will be discussed in more detail in the following section. This was established as an important analytical step given the fact that, like space and time, trust and time are interconnected and “the narrative lines connecting the past, present, and future are critical junctures in restoring trust” (Petee 1995: 181). In particular, in the case of refugees’ traumatic experiences of the flight (Hynes 2003, Daniel and Knudsen 1995), understanding how their past experiences might have affected their current experiences of protection and trust is essential.

---

<sup>216</sup> F8.

### **7.3. Manifestations of social trust in refugees' everyday lives in Kampala**

#### ***7.3.1. Spill-over effects of the persecution and navigating fear among the refugees***

As established in the previous section, on arrival refugees established a limited number of social connections with other Congolese refugees in the city. This required a certain level of trust. Increasingly, over time, many of them felt that they were not safe in Kampala, partly because of other Congolese. This shows how refugees' sense of trust and protection was tied into the context where they made their trust decisions. In refugee studies it has been observed that refugees' experiences of institutional trust often deteriorate over time (Hyndman 2000, Hynes 2003). This study shows that the same was the case with some of the Congolese refugees' generalised social trust toward other Congolese in their city of exile.

Given the various reasons for their flight, most of the refugees expressed fear about persecution spilling from the DRC into Uganda and affecting their lives in Kampala. Subsequently, persecution and violence experienced in the DRC were central elements in refugees' feelings of insecurity and social mistrust in Kampala. Interestingly, the longer the refugees spent in Kampala, the more insecure they sometimes felt. This was explained by a refugee man who had lived in exile since 2009:

What I am saying is the contrary [i.e. the security situation deteriorated after he gained refugee status] because I am getting a lot of problems in this country. Other people know me but I may not know them. I met with this person, who was a powerful person in our village [in the DRC], and it is now four times that they promised to kill me. There is someone from my village who is after me. ... They told me "if we have not killed you yet you can never remain in peace because we also have to kill you."<sup>217</sup>

---

<sup>217</sup> M16.

When discussing insecurity in Kampala, refugees sometimes expressed fear of the Congolese state and various rebel groups and militias which either opposed or cooperated with the state. This was particularly the case with the human rights activists who had documented atrocities in the DRC. Also, the Banyamulenge Tutsis who had escaped the violent attack in 2004 in the Gatumba refugee camp in Burundi and fled to Uganda feared a systematic government organised attack, as explained by a Munyamulenge man during a FGD:

Uganda and DRC are neighbouring countries. The rebels can enter Uganda any time. Other Congolese can come here and attack us. Even those who attacked the Gatumba just crossed the border. They took away our properties. Some working in Uganda are in powerful positions. They can order other Congolese to come here. To live here in Uganda does not mean it is a fact that we are safe.<sup>218</sup>

For a long time Ugandan authorities and UNHCR had known and recognised the presence of alleged security agents in Kampala (HRW 2002: 89). According to refugees some rebel groups from the DRC systematically recruited Congolese both from Kampala and from the refugee settlements.<sup>219</sup> In general it is known that refugees and IDPs have been recruited by armed groups operating in the eastern DRC (Tamm and Lauterbach 2010: 5). These forms of institutional persecution made it challenging for the refugees to sustain both institutional and generalised social trust in Kampala. This was because they had been persecuted by different institutions and thus, when meeting unknown Congolese, they could not be sure whether they perhaps represented these institutions.

Refugees who had fled their homes because of personal, often ethnically driven, conflicts with their neighbours, friends, church members, business associates or relatives seemed to have been afraid of possible 'revenge'. The context of their flight, therefore, had a

---

<sup>218</sup> FGD3.

<sup>219</sup> At the time of my fieldwork there were unconfirmed rumours that a branch of Laurent Nkunda's ex-militia was recruiting mostly Banyamulenge and Banyamusha refugees to fight in the DRC.

profound impact on their abilities to exercise both generalised and particularised social trust in their city of exile. Many refugees in Kampala feared that the people who had caused them to flee would come to Kampala on pretexts such as business or seeking refuge. The subsequent extensive generalised mistrust toward other Congolese was explained, for instance, by a 36-year-old refugee man,<sup>220</sup> who had fled the DRC because his father and older brother were detained by the rebels due to his father's affiliation with the Mobutu government. He suggested that the fear of the 'Other' Congolese prevented him from joining any of the Congolese refugee communities in Kampala:

I am safe 20 per cent and in insecurity 80 per cent. When you move around you risk being seen, so people can identify you, and you do not know what they are planning. They can even kidnap you. This happened to me last year... These were soldiers of Laurent Nkunda, but the faction of [Bosco] Ntaganda. They were the same [people] who detained my father and brother. Another problem is, like, those people who did bad things to your family, so you are a witness and they do not want you to be alive because you know what they did so it is best to eliminate you. Like going to the community; that I do not do.

Based on the analysis presented in Chapter Six, it is difficult to say to what extent refugees' sense of urban fear was due to their fear and mistrust, on the one hand, of Ugandans and, on the other hand, of other Congolese. Analysing this was difficult because the manifestations of and precautions relating to these two forms of social mistrust were closely related. Refugees, for instance, expressed a sense of fear about killing, abductions, rape, torture, poisoning, witchcraft and forced repatriations, among other things, when explaining what kind of 'revenge' they were afraid of when it came to persecution spilling over the international border from the DRC. Yet many of these causes of insecurity were also associated with their living in a city dominated by the Ugandan 'Other'.

---

<sup>220</sup> M32.

Refugees had adopted specific strategies to cope with this, at times, overwhelming sense of fear and associated feelings of mistrust toward other Congolese. Some avoided living in neighbourhoods where the majority of Congolese nationals lived. Depending on the severity of their fear, refugees also avoided places where Congolese normally congregated, such as the offices of the protection institutions and the various refugee communities. These strategies, among others, indicated that the refugees' sense of social mistrust toward the 'Other' Congolese had an impact on their use of and 'right to the city' (Purcell 2002, Lefebvre 1996). Additionally, a few of them attempted to hide their Congolese identity; they spoke English or one of the local languages of Uganda, and did not reveal anything about their past to other Congolese. This strategy of self-protection was elaborated on at length by a 31-year-old refugee man who had been in Uganda for a decade:

I got friends around me, Ugandans and some other nationalities. But I did not befriend any Congolese. I was getting feared that if, for example, I befriend a Congolese who is coming from the area that I come from, who can at one time inform the people there that the son of so [and so] is here, it can be bad for me. So I had to hide my identity. Before I came, I made sure that I should not show any Congolese my identity. To others I could tell my identity; but to Congolese people, refugee or non-refugee, but who is from Congo, I cannot my identity. They then could try to show where I come from, because our name... So I had to hide that one, and I took another name.<sup>221</sup>

These strategies of self-exclusion show how, besides using the physicality of the city, refugees also attempted to navigate the social space of mistrust. To sum up, as seen from the above discussion, the reasons for fleeing the DRC still affected refugees' everyday lives in the city of exile. The fear of the 'Other' Congolese (Sandercock 2002, Bauman 2001) in Kampala caused refugees to limit their use of city space and to mistrust other Congolese. The challenges related to the forming of refugee communities among the

---

<sup>221</sup> M1.

Congolese refugee population, in the midst of this situation, are discussed in the following section.

### ***7.3.2. Social exclusions and the challenges of (re)building communities***

Given the sense of fear and insecurity in Kampala among the Congolese refugee informants, some of them claimed that they could only trust a limited number of close friends and immediate family members; people with whom they had a close personal relationship with. This meant that while their particularised social trust in other Congolese was strong they were cautious about extending their trust to Congolese they did not personally know (i.e. they were reluctant to develop generalised social trust). Thus, refugees' trust-based social networks were typically rather limited, especially at the beginning of their period of residency in Kampala.

This observation is supported by previous studies which have indicated that Congolese refugees typically relied on limited social networks. Some studies have shown how they had relatively weak bonding social capital (i.e. relations among the Congolese) (WRC 2011a), which influenced their sense of a lack of a singular 'exile community'. In her study focusing on young Congolese refugees' decision-making processes, Clark-Kazak (2006) concluded that many of the young refugees she engaged with in Kampala stated that they had no 'community' in its traditional sense. Despite this, young Congolese spoke about the solidarity and support that characterised some of the newly established social and peer networks. Within these networks kinship and ethnicity played a role in strengthening a sense of belonging and trust (Clark-Kazak 2012: 13–14).

Lammers (2006a, 2006b), who focused her study in Uganda on young refugee men of whom some were Congolese, concluded that the young soldiers, artists and students did not feel part of a traditional 'community', as old community structures based on kinship or territorial boundaries did not apply to their lives in exile. For them, the 'remembered community' of their place of origin and the 'imagined or absent community' of their future plans presented a more significant form of community than the reality of the existing 'exile community' they found in Kampala. According to her (2006a: 314):

This knowledge implied a moral concern with that community, however distant or intangible at the time. In fact, the young men's actual and imagined relationships to these communities were crucial to their process of regaining a sense of self.

Amisi (2006) has suggested that the situation of being displaced and consequently lacking access to formal employment and social protection forced Congolese refugees in Durban, South Africa to rely on their family ties, if they had any. According to him, this led to the exclusion of others from these crucial networks, and increased generalised social mistrust and further exclusion within the Congolese refugee population living in the city. Also, within the Congolese society, and not only the Congolese diaspora, there seemed to be high levels of trust only among close family members, as "the close family ... represents an island of ontological security in which trust is closely linked to its members' basic identity" (Rubbers 2009: 635). Yet these kinship and family ties were often broken due to displacement and, in previous studies, it has been concluded that Congolese refugees in Kampala characteristically shared a longing for community structures (Russell 2011: 298).

As shown then, the previous literature supports the findings of this study in its suggestion that the Congolese refugees in Kampala were able to establish social networks with a limited number of other Congolese that they knew and trusted, but that rebuilding wider

community structures and establishing new ‘exile communities’ was perceived as difficult by the refugees due to the prevalent generalised social mistrust which characterised the relations among the Congolese refugees outside their immediate social circles.

When discussing the challenges of uniting the Congolese refugees and forming tight community structures in the city of exile, refugees mostly referred to two dividing factors: the associated spill-over effects of the conflict in the DRC manifested in Kampala and the disunity caused by the institutions providing protection for refugees.<sup>222</sup> When it came to the former, as already discussed, Russell (2011) in his study on church and bars as particular forms of ‘communities’ among the Congolese refugees in Kampala suggested that there was a clear relationship between the ongoing conflict in the DRC, insecurity in Kampala, and the weakness of the more established Congolese refugee communities.

According to him (2011: 298):

The most prominent activity that is denied in the absence of security and the right to belong to Kampala is the functioning of a community. Security, belonging and community are mutually reinforcing; the lack of belonging produces insecurity, insecurity prevents the development of the community, and the dearth of community compounds the sense that one does not belong in such a society.

Lammers (2006a, 2006b) also noticed the feelings of suspicion and distrust, which were prevalent among her urban refugee informants, sometimes manifested as gossip and betrayal of others. Her informants often pondered the questions of “who do I trust? Who is my friend? When shall I revenge?” (Lammers 2006b: 610). She further concluded that “war challenges the definitions and given boundaries of community” (Lammers 2006b: 612), and in the case of the Congolese, in particular, the conflict had affected people’s conceptualisations of ‘communities’ because the persecution and violence often came

---

<sup>222</sup> Disunity and insecurity caused by the protection institutions is examined in Chapter Five (at the individual level) and also in Chapter Eight (at the community level).

within the traditional community structures. For instance, as a distinct strategy various rebel groups have “deliberately attacked civilians [in] whose communities they had lived, accusing their neighbours of ‘betrayal’ and telling them that they would be ‘punished’” (HRW 2009: 12).

In order to understand these social boundaries within the Congolese refugee population in Kampala in more depth, I now turn to discussing the issue of ‘Otherness’ (Sandercock 2000). According to Lemarchand (2005: 33) in the context of the Great Lakes region, ‘Otherness’ can be associated with several ‘objective’ criteria, such as “language (e.g. ‘Randophones’ or Kinyarwanda speakers), country of origin (‘Banyarwanda’), place of settlement (‘Banyamulenge’, the people of Mulenge), ethnicity (Hutu and Tutsi), to which must be added *morphologie*, or body maps”. For him, in order to understand how these elements work in the construction of the ‘Other’ it is necessary to explore the imaginations of the ‘Other’ which, again, are related to changes in the national and regional politics. In the following section, I discuss the key elements that my refugee informants referred to when discussing the ‘Other’ Congolese: ethnicity and the associated physical appearance, place of origin in the DRC and place of settlement within Kampala, and language. All of these aspects contributed to the imagination of the ‘Other’ Congolese, the prevalence of social mistrust, and the consequent lack of a unified, singular exile community in Kampala.

It has been suggested in previous studies that “issues of ethnicity and race must be engaged when meanings of community are under question” (Lammers 2006b: 618). Even though the conflict in the DRC cannot be simplified into an ethnic conflict (Prunier 2009, Stearns 2011), discussion of ethnicity, or perhaps more accurately of ‘social boundaries’ as

suggested by Lemarchand (2005), is needed in order to understand the various social and spatial exclusions which took place in Kampala. In regard to ethnicity, according to Lemarchand (2005):

Whether socially constructed, manipulated, invented or mobilized, it [ethnicity] is a recent phenomenon, even when its roots are sometimes traceable to pre-colonial times (as in the case of the Banyamulenge). Its contours, moreover, are constantly shifting, as are the human targets against which it is directed. Communities seen as allies one day, are viewed as enemies the next. New collations are built for short-term advantage, only to dissolve into warring factions when new options suddenly emerge. In this highly fluid political field conflict is not reducible to any single identity maker. It is better conceptualised as involving different social boundaries, activated at different points in time, in response to changing political stakes.

First, refugees in Kampala mostly discussed ethnic divisions, or what they referred to as ‘tribalism’, when they explained the difficulty of trusting each other and forming strong communities. This was expressed by the elected leader of the CRCU in the following words:

In Congo, we fled war, and tribalism is one of the causes of the war. People were saying “we are from this area, we are from here...”, so some of those people have that idea even here [in Kampala]. They have xenophobia...<sup>223</sup>

The majority of the Congolese refugees in Kampala came from North and South Kivu provinces where the conflict was the most severe. Consequently, the ethnic divisions that were a major issue in the eastern parts of the DRC also affected life in Kampala, explicitly and implicitly. In the DRC there were over 200 ethnic groups (CIA 2013b), and in South Kivu, for instance, there were two major ethnicities, Bashi and Barega, and their relationship in the Congo was characterised by tensions. In Kampala these divisions, among others, were still evident to the Congolese. For instance, a refugee community leader explained how he saw these divisions having an impact in this community work:

---

<sup>223</sup> Representative of the CRCU.

They [Bashi and Barega] cannot be together. And they always have two [football] teams and they have to fight. Seriously, even in football. ... Those two tribes are in a permanent fight. Even here, it is not really very visible, but if you can just see how people behave, the relationship, it seems to be the same but not really...<sup>224</sup>

The physical appearance of the body (Knott 2005, Johnston 2009), associated with the issue of ethnicity, also induced mistrust among the Congolese. Refugees whose parents were of two different ethnicities were often caught between these clashes. For instance, a young undocumented male refugee<sup>225</sup> experienced difficulties because his father was Mushi and his mother was Tutsi from Rwanda. Even though he had Rwandan nationality and had lived most of his life in Rwanda, he identified himself as Congolese: “I want to be Congolese. ... In the life, in my soul, I am Congolese”. Yet he did not feel that he was accepted among the Congolese or the Rwandese refugees because of his background and distinct appearance. The Banyamulenge Tutsis,<sup>226</sup> the people from Mulenge, also claimed that they were discriminated against by other Congolese both in the DRC and in Kampala because of their “body map” (Lemarchand 2005). Even in the colonial times Banyamulenge were referred to as having a distinct morphology: they were described as tall and having high cheekbones and a thin, hooked nose (Stearns 2011: 59). Ethnic background and related appearance were seen by the refugees as an issue that excluded some of them spatially and socially from distinct formal and informal spaces of protection, such as the offices of the protection institutions or certain community spaces.

The second encompassing cause of exclusion was refugees’ place of origin in the DRC. Refugees often chose their residence in Kampala based on where people from their area of residence in the Congo were living. Consequently, the Kivutians, Banyamulenge and the

---

<sup>224</sup> Community leader, 15.7.2011.

<sup>225</sup> M36.

<sup>226</sup> The case of Banyamulenge Tutsis is examined in more detail in Chapter Eight.

western Congolese refugees all had their residential clusters in the city.<sup>227</sup> However, those who had severe insecurity concerns which involved people from the same area of the DRC avoided these overtly Congolese neighbourhoods.

These spatial divisions created social exclusions within the Congolese refugee population in the city. The spatial segregation affected, for instance, attendance at Congolese churches, RCOs and other community forums. Many RCOs and churches had a majority of people from a particular area of the DRC because of their living preferences in Kampala and consequent proximity to these communities. For instance, the different ethnicities of Congolese from the Kivu areas participated in different communities (especially in the Katwe and Nsambya parishes), whereas the Banyamulenge refugees joined communities in their residential areas, Nakulabye and Kasubi. Personal relationships and social networks characterised by strong particularised social trust, both at the individual or household level, were also frequently limited to people who came from the same area of the DRC given the close proximity of housing in the city of exile. However, as already explained, those with the most severe sense of fear of the ‘Other’ Congolese disassociated themselves from their fellow nationals and this led into situations where they did not routinely exercise generalised trust decisions. What these examples show is that the refugees’ sense of social trust in other Congolese was heavily influenced by the spatiality of their everyday life in the city of exile.

Given these spatial divisions between Congolese refugees from the western and the eastern DRC, and the Banyamulenge Tutsis, language was the third factor affecting refugees’ sense of unity and trust. This was because “most of the time people think that, as you do

---

<sup>227</sup> See the more detailed discussion in Section 6.2.2 of Chapter Six.

not speak the same language, you are different”.<sup>228</sup> In the DRC there were many languages but, in principle, people from the west spoke Lingala whereas people from the eastern Congo spoke Kiswahili. Thus, the eastern part of the country was often considered to be more a part of Eastern Africa than Central Africa. This language division was deeply rooted in the history and the politics of the country, as in the case of the Kinyamulenge-speaking Banyamulenge minority. According to the leader of a RCO these linguistic factions were present in Kampala:

Me, I can see it [the linguistic faction] even among our [football] players and our [language] students. I can see it. For example, people near you are speaking Lingala or Swahili: “Ah! You with your Lingala and you with your Swahili!” If people around you are speaking a language that you do not understand you just get up and join the ones who you can get. This is the reason why I tell them that it is good in the class to speak English. Try to speak English because it is the only language that can try to unite us here in Kampala.<sup>229</sup>

This example indicates how in diverse communities some of the old social divisions from the DRC were experienced in Kampala. These social and spatial divisions did not typically arise from conscious decisions but rather took place in everyday life. Most refugees spoke and acted against these kinds of constructions of ‘Otherness’. For instance, the initial idea of setting up the CRCU with an elected leadership was an attempt to provide a forum to represent all Congolese refugees in the city irrespective of ethnic, linguistic or other background. In practice, as will be explained in Chapter Eight, this proved to be extremely difficult. Some Congolese pastors also fought against conflicts within the Congolese refugee population while other church leaders were accused of reinforcing these divisions. Some refugees also intentionally avoided communities known to be characterised by division and rivalry.

---

<sup>228</sup> Community leader, 15.7.2011.

<sup>229</sup> Community leader, 15.7.2011.

#### **7.4. Concluding discussion**

As Turton (2005: 258) writes, “displacement is not just about the loss of place, but also about the struggle to make a place” and as can be seen from the above examination of Congolese refugees’ attempts to produce safe, social spaces within their city of exile, these processes can be difficult and characterised by struggle (Purcell 2003). In the contexts of diaspora and exile, “the everyday experiences of community are not straightforward” (Binaisa 2011), and this can be because building strong ‘exile communities’ is challenging due to a number of issues associated with the problem of social trust.

As discussed in this chapter, for the refugees, establishing and belonging to urban refugee communities was an “understandable dream” (Young 1990: 300). Nevertheless, in refugees’ everyday lives in their city of exile, struggles associated with forming protective community structures were the reality. The precarious relations among Congolese refugees challenged their abilities to rebuild and create protective community spaces. Yet it was realised that not only the social element of space but also the physical and the imagined conceptualisations of space (Lefebvre 1991) influenced refugees’ sense of protection and social trust.

The everyday geopolitics (Ramadan 2012) of the conflict in the DRC were prevalent in refugees’ lives in Kampala because the reasons for their flight were still prevalent in the city of exile. Many of the refugees were afraid that persecution from the DRC could spill over the border and into Uganda. Most of the refugees fled because they had experienced persecution and violence in the wider context of the conflict. Many had fled because of inter- and intra-community violence and, as a consequence, refugees had lost at least

temporarily their social trust in others – sometimes including the members of their own traditional communities. This, again, had transformed their ideas about what belonging to a ‘community’ meant (Lammers 2006b).

However, during the flight refugees had to trust the assistance of other Congolese in order to be able to reach Uganda. In the context of fleeing, refugees were compelled to take the risks associated with trusting others, especially strangers. Upon their arrival in Kampala most of the refugees did not know anyone in the city and yet, once again, they were obliged to trust and rely on other Congolese and Ugandans’ help, given the absence of institutional support. Exploring refugees’ discourses of their reasons for flight, travel and arrival revealed that their experience of social trust was closely tied to the situation they were in. Thus, ‘trust’ included a temporal element as it evolved over space and time. Massey (2005: 18) has suggested that “thinking time and space together means that the imagination of one will have repercussions ... for the imagination of the other”. This assertion seems to be applicable also to the other main concepts of my study, of ‘protection’ and ‘trust’.

Furthermore, it has been shown in previous studies that refugees’ sense of trust in others, be it in refugees, hosts or protection institutions, changes over time even if the physical context remains the same (Hynes 2003, Daniel and Knudsen 1995). In the case of the Congolese refugees informing this study, over the course of time they typically became more reluctant to trust other Congolese than they did on arrival. This was because over the course of their stay in Kampala, their urban imagination (Bridge and Watson 2002) became strongly affected by the fear of the Congolese ‘Other’: the other tribe, relative, acquaintance, state or rebel group that had caused them to flee. Consequently, the fear and

the imagination of the 'Other' (Sandercock 2000, Bauman 2001) which in this chapter has been referred to as other Congolese people, had a negative impact on refugees' ability to trust others and build strong communities.

The sense of place and the fear of the 'Other' were understood in this chapter as mutually reinforcing. This was because fear is situated in the wider surroundings and embedded in one's life experiences (McDowell and Sharp 1999). Subsequently, a sense of fear and feelings of insecurity are often associated with a breakdown of social fabric and traditional community structures (Hawkins and Maurer 2011, Padgett 2007). It is also understood that trust is socio-politically and culturally constituted (Muecke 1995) and, as shown in this analysis, the widespread mistrust among the Congolese refugees was to a large extent imported to Uganda due to the trauma and experiences of the conflict in the DRC.

As already established, there were many social and spatial divisions characterised by suspicion and distrust which manifested themselves in refugees' everyday lives. The historical, linguistic and ethnic divisions prevalent in the DRC were to some extent replicated among the Congolese refugees in Kampala. In addition, some of the divisions among the refugees were influenced by people's distinctive appearances. Thus, the human body (Knott 2005), or the "body map" (Lemarchand 2005), was acknowledged by the refugees as a micro-scale space of protection and insecurity. Spatially and historically determined settlement patterns and subsequent community attendance also created further spatial and social exclusions. Some of the refugees, therefore, tried to hide their Congolese identity, for instance by learning new languages, in order to protect themselves. Moreover, they avoided being associated with other Congolese. Thus, the physical, imagined and

lived spaces of the city (Lefebvre 1991) became increasingly intertwined in refugees' everyday lives and their narratives of social trust.

To conclude, social mistrust among the Congolese refugees undermined the creation of a singular, fixed, homogeneous 'exile community', which typically has been perceived as the 'protection ideal' by the protection institutions (UNHCR 2008, 2009a). Refugees were, however, able to establish various heterogeneous 'protective places' which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter (Chapter Eight) on the role of urban refugee communities in the informality of refugee protection.



## **Chapter Eight: INFORMAL PLACES OF PROTECTION: URBAN REFUGEES’ ‘COMMUNITIES OF TRUST’**

### **8.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, my aim is to investigate the extent to which ‘trust’ plays a part in the way refugees build community structures among themselves. I examine, in particular, the nature and significance of the informal protection that communities provide for their members. My analysis touches on particularised social trust among members of a particular community, generalised social trust between different refugee communities, and institutional trust between refugee communities and the protection institutions. Related to these themes, I investigate refugees’ communal struggles over their ‘right to the city’ from the viewpoint of their right to appropriate the formal and informal spaces of protection and their right to participate in the production of them (Lefebvre 1996, Butler 2012). I conclude that the importance of community life in refugees’ sense of protection varied depending on their individual situations and the nature of the community they had joined. Many of the individual refugees informing this study, however, did find a sense of protection and exercised trust in these communities. Often the particularised social trust was enhanced by community members’ shared sense of inter-community mistrust and institutional mistrust.

I apply Jabareen and Carmon’s (2010) analytical framework to study Congolese refugees’ ‘communities of trust’. According to them, the term ‘community of trust’ is defined as “a socio-spatial setting in which substantial relationships of trust among people exist, and in

which people feel sheltered and safe because they do not perceive other community members as posing them a risk” (Jabareen and Carmon 2010: 447–448). ‘Communities of trust’ are examined by analysing five mutually reinforcing elements: daily-life practices, basic beliefs and attitudes, perceptions of risk, interests, and shared space (Figure 29).

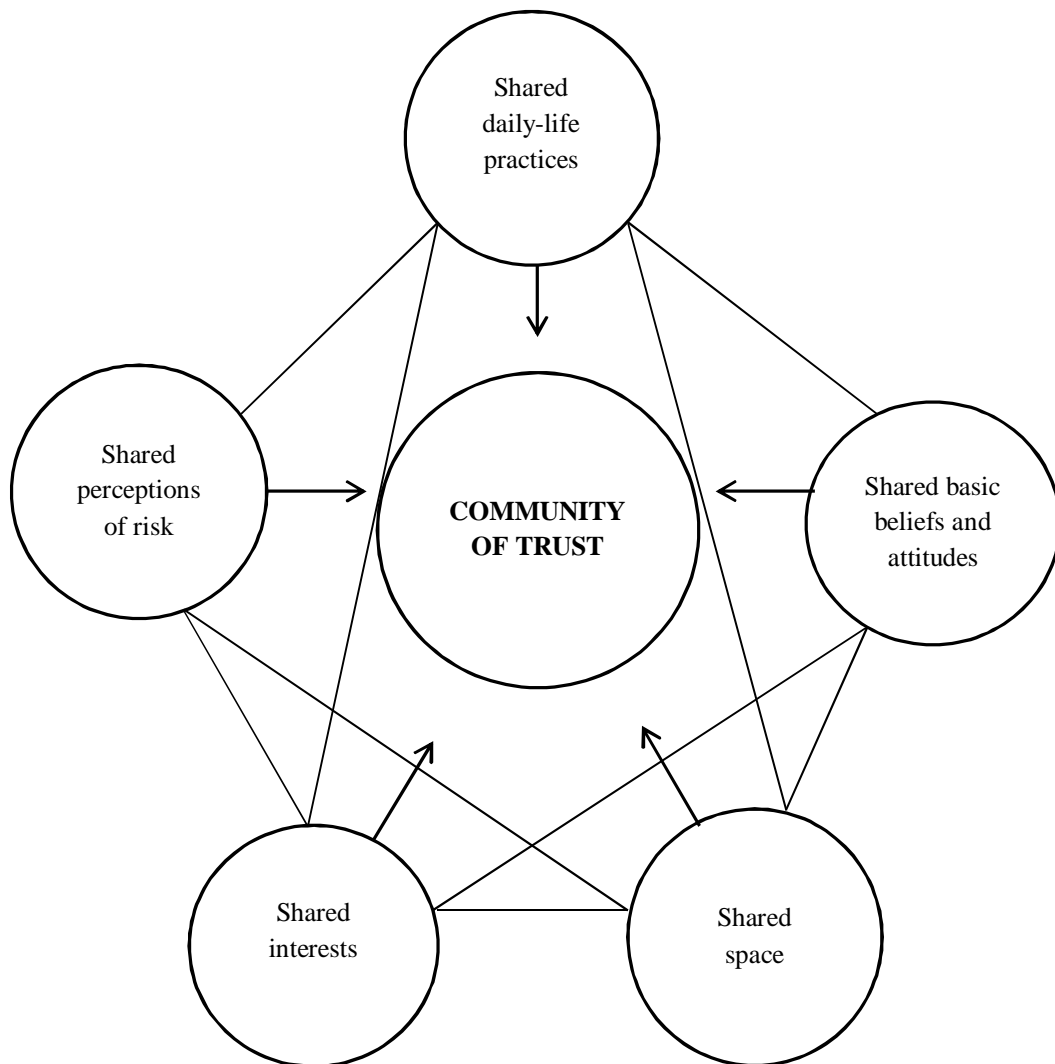


Figure 29. Conceptual scheme of ‘community of trust’ (modified from Jabareen and Carmon 2010).

Jabareen and Carmon (2010) have developed their framework of ‘community of trust’ in relation to their work on different residential neighbourhood ‘communities’ of Gaza – an enclosed city inhabited mostly by Palestinians who became refugees after the 1948 War following the establishment of Israel. The purpose of this framework, for them, was to

offer new theoretical thinking, on the one hand, on the role of the physical environment and urban planning in fostering community development and, on the other hand, on the dialectical relations between ‘trust’ and ‘risk’. What they found was that, “in spite of difficult housing conditions, poor services and the pressure of lasting internal risks” there were “liveable communities and strong trust relationships” among the people of Gaza’s communities. This led them to conclude that trust is an essential element of community-building.

Even though Jabareen and Carmon (2010) argue that their conceptual scheme can be used anywhere in the world, my use of it shows that it needs to be adapted to fit an alternative context. Given the distinct nature of the city of Kampala and the urban refugee communities living there, my use of this conceptual scheme differs from the original work of Jabareen and Carmon (2010) in Gaza. My contribution to the applied use of this framework lies, firstly, in the incorporation of a different understanding of the element of ‘shared space’ among the non-place-related refugee communities compared to Jabareen and Carmon’s (2010) original work on the residential areas of Gaza. Secondly, my explicit investigation of the issues of institutional trust and inter-community trust was an aspect I incorporated into the established framework that mostly dealt with the connection between social trust and risk/safety. Finally, I incorporated elements from the ‘right to the city’ approach, such as the investigation of refugees’ communal forms of struggle over appropriation of and participation in the production of their urban spaces of protection, thus providing more emphasis of the political agency of the refugees than was possible using Jabareen and Carmon’s (2010) analysis. Without these analytical adjustments, I suggest, the use of this framework would not have provided a meaningful understanding of the nature of urban refugees’ ‘communities of trust’ in Kampala.

My analysis is limited to the communities refugees identified during the individual interviews. There are five main types of communities which will be explored in more detail: the CRCU, the Banyamulenge community, RCOs (primarily YARID and Centre Bondeko), different Christian churches (primarily NLCC, Faith Family Church and JSS), and various support groups associated with the RLP, such as groups for refugees with disabilities (The Association of Refugees with Disabilities, PWDs), sexual minorities and sex workers (Angels Refugee Support Group Association), torture survivors (Association for Torture Victims, ATV), women (Women Refugees Association in Africa, ASSOFRA) and youth (Freedom club). The analysis focuses on these five categories of ‘communities of trust’ and draws examples from the 12 different communities when applicable. The characteristics of and relations between these communities, including their significance at the scale of Kampala, are discussed in more detail in the following sections, particularly in Section 8.3 and in Section 8.4.

In the following section, I consider the first of the five elements of the ‘communities of trust’, that of shared daily-life practices.

## **8.2. Daily-life practices**

Shared daily-life practices in Jabareen and Carmon’s (2010) framework refer to “the concrete everyday behaviour and interaction, such as shared leisure activities or the mutual provision of assistance to others in the same local space.” Since some of these aspects, such as community forms of assistance, are referred to in more detail in the later sections, my aim here is rather to examine what communities, in general, meant for refugees in their city of exile. In particular, I investigate why refugees chose to join or not to join

communities, and how much time they spend<sup>230</sup> in community settings during the course of their day-to-day life. I suggest that these factors are indicative of the importance of the informal protection received from the communities.

### *8.2.1. The significance of communities*

In studies of urban refugees, the term ‘community’ has been defined in multiple ways, and this analytical ambiguity has created conceptual and programmatic challenges in regard to implementing ‘community-based’ protection approaches (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013). Given this terminological ambiguity, I decided to apply an informant-centred approach in identifying the communities that the Congolese refugees belonged to. Based on the 74 individual interviews, refugees referred to a total of 121 communities that were important for them in Kampala. Refugees frequently expressed a sense of belonging to a church and another community.

Only a few informants referred to protection institutions as ‘communities’ which provided them with safety and support. The Banyamulenge community was mentioned also by a minority of the informants, but out of the Banyamulenge Tutsis interviewed more than half of them expressed a sense of belonging to this community. The CRCU was identified as an important community by 14 per cent of the informants. The support groups associated with the RLP were referred to by 16 per cent of the informants. Individuals or social networks,<sup>231</sup> such as families, relatives, housemates and neighbours, were identified as supportive ‘communities’ by 23 per cent of the refugees. English classes (at YARID, RLP

---

<sup>230</sup> This section relies on the primary data collected through the time-space diary exercise.

<sup>231</sup> This chapter does not have a focus on the informal protection provided by individuals or social networks. The focus is rather on the more established forms of communities identified by the refugees.

and JRS) were mentioned by 25 per cent of the informants, and RCOs in general were referred to by 29 per cent of the respondents.

The overwhelming majority of the informants – 73 per cent – relied on the support and sense of belonging found in a religious setting. More than 50 per cent were supported by a Pentecostal or denominational evangelical church. Only three refugees mentioned that they attended the Catholic Church, one a Presbyterian Church and another a Baptist Church. The rest did not specify what denomination their church was. These divisions between different congregations do not reflect the religious attendance in the DRC, where over half of the population are Roman Catholic and only 20 per cent Protestant (CIA 2013b).<sup>232</sup> As will be discussed, the assistance refugees were able to get from the Ugandan and Congolese denominational or Pentecostal church was greater and also more tangible than what the Ugandan Catholic church, for instance, provided, and this influenced their attendance. The nature of ‘protection’ thus explains to some extent the ‘denominational conversion’ which refugees sometimes morally struggled with. Switching religious affiliations for spiritual or practical reasons has, however, been observed to occur in various displacement situations (Mayers 2007: 9).

The importance of communities in refugees’ daily-life practices cannot be analysed solely in relation to the types of communities they identified during the interviews. In order to go beyond this, I conducted a time-space diary exercise with 23 of the language school students.<sup>233</sup> Based on the nine diarists’<sup>234</sup> weekly life, the amount of time that refugees spent in different spaces varied. On average they spent 71 per cent of their weekly time at

---

<sup>232</sup> Besides these numbers, Congolese are Kimbanguist, Muslim, and other syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs (each 10 per cent) (CIA 2013b).

<sup>233</sup> More detailed methodological discussion on this method is presented in Chapter Four.

<sup>234</sup> Out of 23 diarists, these nine were interviewed in detail.

home, but this time ranged between 57 and 83 per cent (Figure 30). The second most time was spent in ‘communities’: at churches, community schools, with friends, and so forth. The amount of time spent in community settings, however, varied significantly from four to 32 per cent of the weekly time, the average being 16 per cent. Refugees spent on average 11 per cent in public spaces (on the streets, market places, public transportation, public offices, football pitches, etc.). The amount of time spent in public varied between four to 20 per cent of their weekly time. The informants spent on average only two per cent of their time at the protection institutions. This time, however, varied between no interactions with the institutions to 16 per cent of the weekly time.

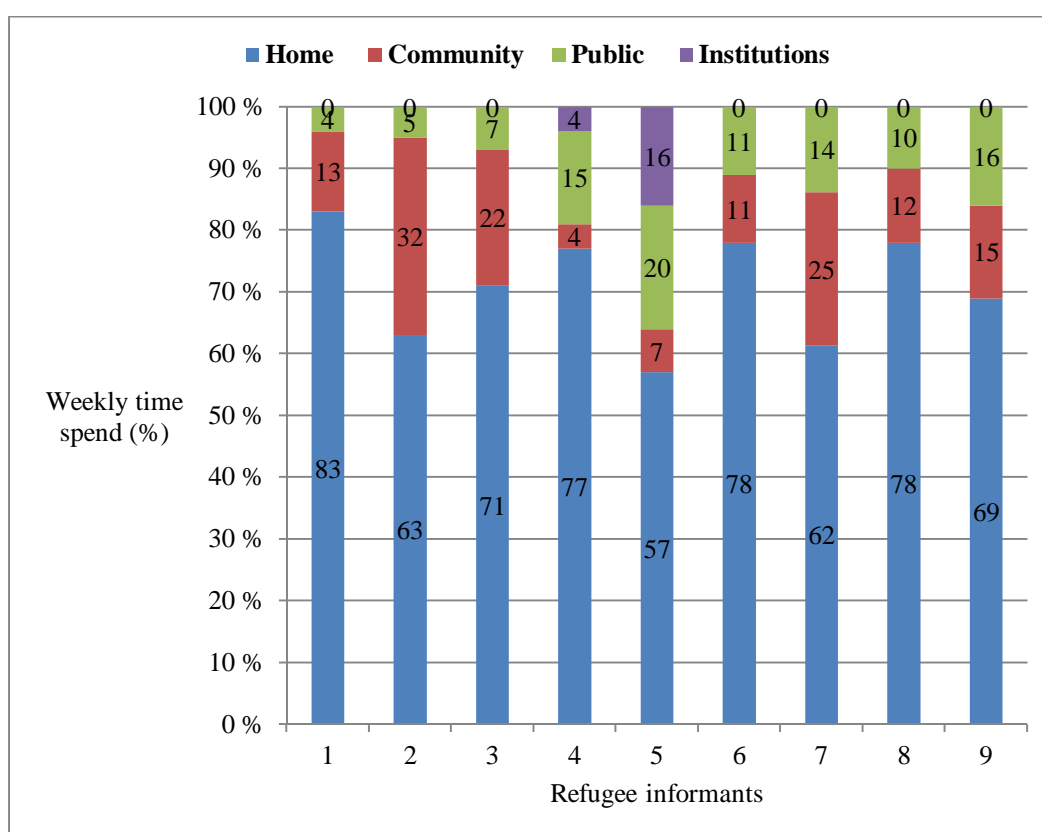


Figure 30. The weekly time spent at home, in public spaces, in communities and at the protection institutions (Source: Time-space diaries from the nine informants individually interviewed).

What these statistics indicate is that individual refugees spent different amounts of time, and thus put different emphases, on community life in their attempts to find protection in

Kampala. For many, communities provided meaningful places of protection. It cannot, however, be assumed that having a supportive community was achievable, or that refugees as members of various community structures would have a homogeneous experience of what 'belonging' to a community meant. Given these propositions, in the following section I will analyse a number of case studies in order to examine how and why refugees' community life took different forms in Kampala. Understanding these matters is important for the evaluation of informal community-based protection.

### **8.2.2. *Everyday life in communities***

Studies on urban refugees in sub-Saharan Africa have concluded that social ties and community structures are crucial elements of refugees' everyday lives, and they can contribute toward refugees' protection (Willems 2003, Amisi 2006, Landau and Duponchel 2011, WRC 2011c). This general consensus on the importance of communities is reiterated in this study among the Congolese refugees. However, I do not assume that communities were of similar significance for all refugees. Therefore, idealising the role of refugee communities in regard to their protection potential is dangerous. UNHCR has, however, emphasised the ideal role of communities, in particular when providing protection for urban refugees (UNHCR 2008, 2009a). In the following section, I analyse the time-space diaries that the refugee informants filled in over the course of a week, as well as the related interviews, in order to analyse the importance of the communities in refugees' everyday lives.

Most of the 23 diarists who took part in this study had a rather similar daily rhythm. Their daily-life practices and the significance of communities in Kampala, however, varied

depending on a number of factors, such as their living situation, marital status, employment, length of stay in Kampala, and the reasons for fleeing the DRC and the consequent sense of social trust. In the following section, four case studies are presented for a more detailed analysis. These cases are, however, indicative of the more general trends among the Congolese refugees informing this study when it came to their community affiliations.

A 29-year-old mother of two children, Kitsa,<sup>235</sup> lived in Najjanankumb parish. She was married but her husband had left her in Kampala. She had been in Kampala since 2007, and was from Katanga. Kitsa was a nurse in the DRC, but had to flee the country due to the political persecution her husband experienced during the general elections in 2006. At that time, two of her children were killed in the political unrest. During her everyday life in Kampala, Kitsa spent most of her time (77 per cent) at her house. Fifteen per cent of her weekly time was spent in public spaces. This can be explained by the location of her house in the outskirts of Kampala: she had to walk to various places visited throughout the week. Kitsa was sick after having been raped in the DRC and physically attacked in Kampala, and was too weak to spend significant time at the various communities she otherwise would have attended. She belonged to the English class and the women's handicraft classes at a RCO, but only spent four per cent of her time there. Due to her sickness she tried to get some medical help from the protection institutions, and thus spent also four per cent of her weekly time at the IAU.

Kitsa's case study shows how refugees' physical health, family situation and the place of residence in Kampala can affect their engagement with different communities. Thus, when

---

<sup>235</sup> F4.

unable to spend extensive time in community settings, the importance of belonging to a community may have been rather weak.

Samuel<sup>236</sup> was a 21-year-old young man, Rega by tribe, who escaped the violence in Kisangani to Uganda in 2010 with his four siblings. His father had died in the war and his mother was still living in the DRC. In Kampala, unlike Kitsa Samuel spent a significant amount of time in different community settings during his day-to-day life. Both the church and the language school ran by a RCO were important community spaces for him:

My friends, they are only the church. We are praying with them. Sometimes I say that I am sick and I do not have money to get the medicine, so they can assist you. It is a Congolese church. Apart from that, I can say [the RCO]. I like going to the school and I know the other students well.

During the course of the week Samuel spent 62 per cent of his time at home with his siblings and 13 per cent in public spaces. He did not visit any of the protection institutions. One-quarter of his weekly time (25 per cent) was spent in community settings. His everyday rhythm was characterised by moving from one community to another. He studied English at a RCO in the mornings. After that, Samuel typically went either to a local NGO to improve his computer skills or to his church. He visited the church four days a week, and spent the entire Sunday there. Additionally, on few occasions during the week he socialised with his friends.

Samuel's example indicates clearly the importance of communities, especially for the young, single refugees who were unable to attend formal educational institutions or to access a permanent job. Most of the young refugees informing this study emphasised that without the activities provided by different communities, they would have nothing to do in

---

<sup>236</sup> M18.

Kampala. Thus, age, marital status and the educational or occupational situations of the refugees had an impact on their community attendance.

Josephine,<sup>237</sup> a 38-year-old mother of four daughters and married to a disabled husband, was a teacher in Goma back in the DRC. Her daily-life practices in Kampala were characterised by the substantial time (20 per cent) spent in public spaces due to her livelihood strategy. Only 57 per cent of her time was spent at home, seven in communities and 16 per cent at the protection institutions. The significant amount of time spent at the protection institutions was due to the resettlement interviews she attended with her family and the attempts to get counselling from IAU. Almost every day she spent hours knitting hats either at home or together with the other women at a RCO. Because her livelihood strategy was tied to her community, she typically spent a lot of her time in the RCO. Josephine sold the hats inside and outside of Kampala to support her family. Her week was also characterised by family prayers at home, spending the entire Sunday at church and attending the funerals of other Congolese refugees. Thus, throughout the course of the week, she emphasised the importance of faith and the church community in her everyday life.

For the older generation of refugees, the occupational situation and the nature of their livelihood strategies may have affected their community attendance. Additionally, when being in a process of resettlement, refugees had to spend extensive time at the protection offices. This meant that they had less time to spare for community activities. Refugees with families also typically put less emphasis on communities given their family responsibilities, an exception to this being the church community.

---

<sup>237</sup> F2.

Despite the general consensus on the positive and supportive role of urban refugee communities, it has been recognised that “social networks may be based on hierarchical or exploitative relationships” (WRC 2011b: 7) and “not all community-driven and -determined action is positive or protective” (Ferris 2011: 199). Consequently, the reality was that refugees’ experiences of communities in their daily life varied in Kampala. Given the widespread mistrust among the Congolese refugees,<sup>238</sup> establishing new communities and joining the existing ones was sometimes difficult. Consequently, some of the refugees did not have any real ‘communities of trust’ in Kampala.

Asylum seekers and people who had not registered with the authorities sometimes felt like they were unable to join any community due to the insecurity associated with their precarious position in the city. This was explained by a 22-year-old undocumented male: “Me, I do not like to move, because I do not have the papers, so I do not belong to any community. I fear the police; they can also arrest me because I do not have the papers.”<sup>239</sup> Others may have felt unsafe when leaving their houses due to the insecurity spreading from the DRC. They preferred staying indoors and, therefore, ended up not joining communities. At times, refugees also found it difficult to find communities which matched their characteristics, needs and aspirations.

These challenges of belonging to communities featured, in particular, in the case study of James.<sup>240</sup> He was a 27-year-old unregistered male informant who had lived in Kampala since 2010. His mother was Rwandan and father Congolese, and thus he did not perceive it as being possible to join communities described as Rwandan or Congolese. Additionally,

---

<sup>238</sup> Social mistrust among the Congolese refugees was discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

<sup>239</sup> M17.

<sup>240</sup> M36.

even though he attended a language school run by a RCO, he feared talking to the other students due to his past traumatic experiences in the DRC and in Rwanda. Yet he longed for friends and the feeling of being part of a community:

No one is supporting me. To speak to someone who supports you is someone who can come to you and tell you how you feel; what do you want... But [there is] no one for me. Every day you fear people. For me, I can tell you the truth. My truth is that I dislike speaking so much. When I am in the class room [at the RCO], after that I pack my things and I go. I tell them “how are you?” but nothing much, nothing personal. Because me, I have many, many things in my head. I still need to think about it. That is why I do not get an opportunity to speak to someone. For me, I dislike someone who wants to add my life. I do not tell someone my problems. They tell other people about your life. It is why me, I do not speak. I have spent one year here at [the RCO], but no one noticed.<sup>241</sup>

Even the church which James occasionally attended did not provide him with a platform to build trust-based relationships; it provided him with a place to worship God but not to mingle with people. Even if James could not really associate with the communities he sometimes visited, he still wished to find someone to trust and share his thoughts with. At times, he attempted to find someone to talk to by walking around the city:

No friend I have for discussion. I look for someone who I can talk to. I want to release my heart. I want to be free in my heart. There are times when I feel my heart is angry and sad. At that time I wanted someone to speak to me... At that time I want to forget everything in my life. I travel somewhere and I walk around and I speak to someone... And go back home feeling better.<sup>242</sup>

Given this context, James spent 10 per cent of his weekly time in public spaces, most typically “walking around the city thinking”<sup>243</sup> and trying to find someone to talk to. From the example of James, who spent 12 per cent of his time in communities, we can see that the fact that refugees visited various communities did not automatically mean that they had a sense of belonging and trust in these social settings. Therefore, perceiving communities

---

<sup>241</sup> M36.

<sup>242</sup> M36.

<sup>243</sup> Diary exercise.

as automatic settings for a sense of protection can be misleading. Community approaches to protection can, consequently, mean that refugees outside or loosely connected to them are left out. This is an important question to consider in particular when UNHCR's 2009 urban refugee policy is being implemented, as it advocates a community-based protection approach (UNHCR 2009a).

To sum up, the majority of the refugees informing this study identified on average two communities to which they belonged. Most of them had a strong sense of belonging to these 'communities of trust' where they were supported by others. Consequently, their daily-life practices were characterised by spending time in community settings. Not everyone, however, had such a strong bond with the communities they attended and, therefore, the significance of communities varied between refugees, and should not be taken for granted.

### **8.3. Basic beliefs and attitudes**

The second element of 'communities of trust' includes shared beliefs and attitudes common to people, and they may be related to religion, community ethos and other fundamentals of life (Jabareen and Carmon 2010). In this section, the different shared beliefs grounded in the five types of 'communities of trust' are examined in detail. Shared beliefs and attitudes are understood as the fundamental reasons why refugees had established and joined particular communities and as factors which unified members of the community and encourage trust-based relationships to be built. This section also serves as an introduction to the particular types of refugees' 'communities of trust' examined in this chapter.

### 8.3.1. *'Congolese Refugee Community in Uganda' (CRCU)*

In the urban refugee literature it is commonly assumed that when 'belonging' to a certain nationality, individuals are automatically part of a national 'community' (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013). This assumption is, however, problematic as will be shown in this chapter. Nevertheless, refugees who identified the CRCU as a community structure to which they belonged explained their membership in terms of their shared nationality: "Because I am a Congolese then I am one of the Congolese community members in Uganda."<sup>244</sup>

The CRCU, like the other nationality-based refugee communities in Kampala, was initially established in 2008 after an election initiated by UNHCR. The community held its regular meetings every Saturday at the Department of Refugees/OPM in Old Kampala. The number of Congolese refugees attending the meetings during my fieldwork was around 50. However, according to the male leader, many more people used to come to the meetings, but after the community got into trouble with the protection institutions and other refugee communities some of its members decided to leave.<sup>245</sup> Originally, the community was led by a male and a female representative, and it also had a committee composed of a few of its core members.

The aim of the CRCU was to create a strong, united community for all of the Congolese refugees so that they would be more involved in providing protection and support within the Congolese refugee population. The view shared by the CRCU members was that they

---

<sup>244</sup> M11.

<sup>245</sup> Representative of CRCU.

should have been the ones representing all of the Congolese refugees in Kampala due to their original position as the umbrella organisation. Not all of the Congolese refugees in the city, however, subscribed to this view.

The members perceived the CRCU as a community opposing the isolation and marginalisation experienced in Ugandan society: “The Congolese community is like brothers and sisters. For me it means unity.”<sup>246</sup> The members of the CRCU, however, recognised that since the community was established by refugees it could not provide much material assistance. Their weekly meetings focused on discussing the situation in the DRC, critically reflecting on the refugee situation in Uganda, and “thinking together about the way we can live here in Uganda.”<sup>247</sup> Given its highly vocal criticism of the protection institutions, this community was also united by the shared belief that they needed to gain total independence from these institutions, none of which funded them.

### **8.3.2. *Banyamulenge Tutsis***

The Banyamulenge Tutsi ‘community’ was one of the ethnic communities of the Congolese refugee population in Kampala. Some of the Banyamulenge of Kampala, which totalled about 750 adults and 500 children, presented themselves as a particularly tight ethnic community. According to the self-declared leader of this main ‘Banyamulenge community’, which met at the Methodist church<sup>248</sup> in Nabulagala (Nakulabye parish), the leadership of this community knew all of the “true Banyamulenge” in the city because the

---

<sup>246</sup> M10.

<sup>247</sup> M11.

<sup>248</sup> Banyamulenge Tutsis are devoted Christians.

need for knowing each other and staying together was a shared belief that the members of this community held.

Not all Banyamulenge Tutsis living in Kampala, however, had joined this community. One reason for this was the image of this community not representing all of the Banyamulenge Tutsis of the South Kivu from Mwenga, Fizi and Uvira territories. One Banyamulenge refugee man explained why he did not want to be associated with this community that met at the Methodist church:

The Banyamulenge who have that community are those who are from Uvira but are not from [elsewhere in] South Kivu. They are those who come from near Burundi. I do not associate myself with them.<sup>249</sup>

This question of who were the “true Banyamulenge” was related to the history of the term ‘Banyamulenge Tutsi’. According to Lemarchand (2005: 32):

Their name derives from the locality (Mulenge) whence they are said to originate. The term has, however, been the source of much controversy because it became increasingly used in the late 1990s as an omnibus label to designate all Tutsi living in North and South Kivu.

Given this, even within the Banyamulenge Tutsi population of Kampala there were factions which adversely affected the unity of this ethnic group.

Nevertheless, what united the community that met at the Methodist church was their attitude of self-preservation. This was due to their shared experience of being discriminated against by other Congolese. The disunity between the Banyamulenge and the other ethnic groups of Congolese was one of the clearest divisions among the Kivutian refugees in Kampala. These two groups had different accounts of the history of the conflict

---

<sup>249</sup> M27.

in the DRC<sup>250</sup> (Prunier 2009: 53) and the current rivalries in Kampala. In short, according to the Banyamulenge, the “war of Congo was a war against the Banyamulenge”.<sup>251</sup> They were arguably experiencing the effects of that war in Kampala. Other Congolese refugees, however, saw the Banyamulenge Tutsis as the perpetrators; according to a popular Congolese belief all of the fighting in eastern Congo had its origins in the cross-border identity allegiances of the Banyarwanda (Lange 2010: 48), to whom they perceived the Banyamulenge as belonging.

Following this context in the DRC, the Banyamulenge refugees in Kampala argued that they were systematically discriminated against and socially excluded because of “face, race and language”<sup>252</sup>, both by the protection institutions and by other Congolese refugees.<sup>253</sup> These embodied forms of discrimination centred on the question of who was a ‘true’ Congolese. The Banyamulenge self-identified as Congolese, but they claimed that other Congolese saw them as Banyarwandan because of their background and subsequently excluded them from the Congolese refugee communities. This reflects the proposition by Turner (2007: 20) that Congolese tend to embrace an essentialist or primordial view on ethnicity: according to Congolese, particular cultural and even psychological orientations are inherent in a certain segment of the population. This had, for instance, led to the perception of the Banyamulenge as deviant (Stearn 2011). This discourse of the systematic ethnic discrimination against the Banyamulenge by other Congolese formed the shared belief which united their own, exclusionary ‘community of trust’.

---

<sup>250</sup> For more detail see Section 2.3 of Chapter Two.

<sup>251</sup> Banyamulenge representative.

<sup>252</sup> FGD4.

<sup>253</sup> For more detailed discussion see Section 8.4.2 of this chapter.

### **8.3.3. *Refugee-community organisations (RCOs)***

Congolese refugees in Kampala had set up a number of RCOs based on the shared belief that in exile refugees should acquire new skills in order to reinforce their well-being and prospects for future. Most of the RCOs were officially registered as NGOs with the Ugandan government. They also typically had a human rights component in their work, educating refugees about their rights and responsibilities in Uganda and about how to live in harmony with others. Additionally, the shared attitude of entrepreneurship and responsibility was important when refugees established these RCOs.

Many of the refugees attended RCOs first and foremost to learn English and to improve their livelihood options. Some had also joined the sports teams that the RCOs had set up, and a few of the RCOs provided counselling and spiritual support to their members. Since the English classes and other activities took place over a lengthy period of time, refugees became accustomed to the other classmates and team members and often began to befriend them. Thus, the RCOs had the potential for forming a sense of community among their members. Even though the main purpose of attending various activities was to improve refugees' livelihood options, self-esteem and integration, they also valued the sense of belonging and protection found from these communities.

A shared belief among the leaders of these RCOs was that they wanted to help the members of their community to prosper while living in exile. One of the RCO leaders explained his motivation for and expertise involved in the community work accordingly:

We are in the same situation as our brothers and sisters who we are trying to help. We know the ways that they have to be helped. Maybe others [i.e. organisations]

plan other things but they are not grounded. These people need help and the only people who really know how to help them are the ones who are facing the same problem. The problems that these refugees are facing are the same ones that I have faced. I know how to advocate for them because I faced the same problems.<sup>254</sup>

Accordingly, the shared belief of the RCOs was that refugees who had gone through similar experiences were in the best position to understand other refugees' real needs and to support them. This meant that many of the leaders of the RCOs believed that the protection institutions should have worked with and through them to reach the members of their communities.

#### **8.3.4. *Congolese and Ugandan churches***

Religious networks have been recognised as crucial for urban refugees' well-being in a number of previous studies (Jackson 1987; Sommers 2001a, 2001b; Willems 2003; Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano 2010). They were also important for the Congolese refugees in Kampala. The shared belief which united the church members was centred on their mutual faith in God and perception of being part of the 'body of Christ'. The church was also a space where refugees could build trust-based relationships among each other, as explained by a refugee man: "Church is where I get some help. Apart from the church there is no place where I can get help. Even here, if I trust them it is just because they are Christians, but the other ones [Congolese] I fear so much."<sup>255</sup> Previous studies on urban refugees in sub-Saharan Africa support this observation by showing that churches and other centres of worship are significant places to create social ties (Nzayabino 2010,

---

<sup>254</sup> Community leader, 19.1.2011.

<sup>255</sup> M2.

Willems 2003) and can, therefore, represent a place where refugees feel a sense of belonging and protection.

The sense of protection was, however, not created only among the members of the congregation but also between Congolese refugees and God. This spiritual conceptualisation of protection has been recognised in other studies (Russell 2011, Fiddian-Quasmiyeh and Ager 2013). A shared attitude also included the “fight against the spirit of tribalism in the church.”<sup>256</sup> Congolese churches often aimed to include people originating from all over the DRC in order to avoid tribe-based congregations, because “God is not dividing people by putting some here, others there.”<sup>257</sup> This was, however, often challenging given the spatial and consequent social segregations which took place in their city of exile.<sup>258</sup>

The nature of the support the various churches were able to provide determined, to some extent, refugees’ decision to join them. Temporary accommodation was the kind of support that many looked for.<sup>259</sup> The church was, however, primarily seen by the refugees as a space of spiritual protection. This understanding was grounded in what the Bible taught about refugees, as explained by one of the Congolese pastors:

The Bible shows this picture as Jesus being a refugee somewhere in Africa, and there are the people of Judah, who have been taken captive by the Syrian King, Nebuchadnezzar. And people like David. We have also Joseph that has been sold by a brother in the country and he has been there in a situation like a refugee. But all these pictures show that the fact of being a refugee is not the end of life. And God has a good plan for refugees, because seeing the story of all these people, God has been with them everywhere they have been and God himself manifested greatly in the life of these people because they put their hope into him.<sup>260</sup>

---

<sup>256</sup> FGD13.

<sup>257</sup> FGD13.

<sup>258</sup> See further discussion in Section 7.3.2 of Chapter Seven.

<sup>259</sup> See further discussion on the church as a physical space of protection in Section 6.2.1 of Chapter Six.

<sup>260</sup> FGD13.

Subsequently, some of the refugees understood that being a refugee was the plan of God<sup>261</sup> and, therefore, that asking for help from God during their time in exile was necessary. Mayer (2007: 8) has suggested that “religious beliefs may infuse tragedy with meaning [as] there are cases in which refugees make sense of their exile through their religion”. In relation to Congolese migrants more specifically, Wild-Wood (2008: 1–2) has proposed that “religious interaction provides migrants with a framework for stability and flexibility during migration. Thus migration alters religious identity.”

Having been provided with the opportunity to spread the gospel in their country of asylum, and potentially also in the country of resettlement, was also seen by some of my informants as a sign of God’s plan in their lives. Given these shared spiritual beliefs, the sermons in the refugee churches were often centred on the idea of God never abandoning refugees. This understanding of the omnipresence of God reinforced refugees’ individual and communal resilience and spiritual capital. Some of the refugees also prayed for the officers working for the protection institutions, and their future aspirations were largely shaped by their faith. For instance, in relation to ‘durable solutions’ a refugee man was willing to reject resettlement to countries whose foreign policies they deemed unchristian.<sup>262</sup> Overall, Mayer’s (2007) observation of many immigrants becoming more religious once they have arrived at their destination was also to some extent the case in terms of my informants, whose past, present and future were centred on their faith in God.

---

<sup>261</sup> FGD13.

<sup>262</sup> M22.

### 8.3.5. *Support groups*

The final type of ‘communities of trust’ identified by the Congolese refugees were the support groups, organised in association with the RLP, for the disabled, women, youth, torture victims, and sexual minorities and sex workers. As the term ‘community’ is often used to refer to people with similar characteristics, it is assumed that people in the same category form a united ‘community’. While this supposition is problematic (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013), similar characteristics do seem to play a role in forming and joining communities (Willems 2005, WRC 2012a).

The support groups at the RLP were open to all nationalities but the majority of the members were Congolese, and all of the five elected leaders were from the DRC. The majority of the members were RLP clients and most of the groups were registered as NGOs with the Ugandan authorities. Sometimes the initiative of forming a new group<sup>263</sup> came from the RLP officers working with clients who shared similar needs and experiences, but other times refugees initiated the communities on their own.

Refugees conceived of their membership of the support groups as something that increased their communal agency, which was built on the shared belief of having gone through similar experiences. Members of the different support groups explained how a shared background had brought them together:

For me this group [PWDs] is important as we are like marginalised people, so when we try to put ourselves together it brings again strength to us. It is also a platform for sharing experiences. When we talk to each other you get experiences from your fellow people living with disabilities. It gives you more strength.<sup>264</sup>

---

<sup>263</sup> At the time of the fieldwork RLP was in a process of forming support groups for elderly refugees and for men and boys who had experienced SGBV.

<sup>264</sup> FGD9.

You feel that you are alone and you start having that kind of a thought [trauma from torture]. But you forget about it once you are in a group [the ATV] with other people. ... In a group you feel OK, but outside there you are ready to die.<sup>265</sup>

Some of the refugees, however, did not see that the support group had any tangible benefits as “the association supports us with nothing. It is just there to give advice.”<sup>266</sup> However, for a number of the members the material side of the membership was not what made them feel part of a protective community. Rather, the most important shared belief these support groups had was the pursuit of unity and a commitment to spending time together to avoid solitude.<sup>267</sup>

In general, the members highlighted the inclusiveness of the groups; at times, support groups were the only communities where refugees had been accepted due to their distinct backgrounds. This was, in particular, the case with the Angels group which brought together the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans-sexual and inter-sexual (LGBT/I) refugees and refugees who conducted survival sex. Given the fact that both prostitution and homosexuality are illegal in Uganda (Cheney 2012), physical security was a priority for the Angels group, as explained by one of their members: “We wanted to join to generate the group for security purposes. In that process we became more secure.”<sup>268</sup>

To conclude, all of the five different types of refugees’ ‘communities of trust’ discussed above had specific shared beliefs and attitudes which united their members. Often these communities were established around perceived shared experiences, perceptions of discrimination, common faith and future aspirations – aspects which all reinforce

---

<sup>265</sup> FGD12.

<sup>266</sup> F21.

<sup>267</sup> FGD11.

<sup>268</sup> Angels leadership.

particularised social trust among the community members. In the following section, I analyse the shared perceptions of risk that the refugee communities had.

#### **8.4. Perceptions of risk**

Shared perceptions of risk are the third element of ‘communities of trust’. In community settings it is important that people can identify common risks, be they enemies or natural or man-made hazards (Jabareen and Carmon 2010). Given the distinct beliefs which unified the members of the particular refugee communities discussed above, their perceived risks also differed. This was seen, in particular, when identifying other refugee communities as a threat. Most of the ‘communities of trust’, however, identified protection institutions as their main shared risk. In the following section, I investigate these similar and different shared risks through the case study of the CRCU, which incorporates most of the other communities in the analysis.

##### ***8.4.1. The CRCU versus the protection institutions***

In general, Congolese refugees in Kampala were viewed as disunited by the key protection institutions. Nonetheless, as a consequence of the increasing number of Congolese, their networks and communities became tighter. These community networks were seen by the institutions as both enhancing information sharing but also as allowing rumours and gossip to flourish, as expressed by an OPM officer: “The network is so tight knit. It is crazy though, the way they get information. It is very, very, very crazy. The majority will sit in

their communities and get so many rumours...”<sup>269</sup> Some of the officers also claimed that fighting among the Congolese refugees created disunity within the refugee population; seldom did they recognise that their actions could, in fact, reinforce these factions and social mistrust.

The officers in Kampala typically observed that the larger the refugee community, the more prone it was to be characterised by confrontation,<sup>270</sup> and the subsequent establishment of smaller communities was seen as an outcome of these internal conflicts.<sup>271</sup> Based on the review of urban refugee literature, it seems that the size of the community does affect the functionality of the community both internally and externally (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 20130). With small communities, more intimate relationships among the members are possible than in large community settings and consequently particularised social trust may be stronger (Russell 2011, Amisi 2006). This is because, in general, small communities are formed out of disunity within the larger community, and they are assumed to provide a stronger sense of belonging for their members (Anderson 2012). Both large and small communities, however, have their distinct difficulties: larger ones often have internal challenges, whereas smaller ones face external difficulties (Willems 2003, 2005).

In Kampala, inter-community rivalries were also characterised by the question of the size: the largest umbrella organisation, CRCU, had a difficult relationship with most of the smaller Congolese refugee communities. According to the protection institutions, this prevalent competition between differently sized communities made their community work

---

<sup>269</sup> OPM officer, 7.1.2011.

<sup>270</sup> NGO legal officer, 16.8.2011.

<sup>271</sup> UNHCR officer, 20.9.2011.

difficult. A number of organisations and authorities preferred cooperating with various smaller communities because they perceived that they were more united and less riven by internal conflicts. Officially, UNHCR in Kampala recognised and worked with both the nationality-based CRCU and with various smaller refugee communities, because it was “important to respect the different identity and also the different needs.”<sup>272</sup>

The CRCU was initially set up by UNHCR, but its relationship with the protection institutions deteriorated over time. The community observed that the key institutions, consisting mostly of IAU, RLP, UNHCR and OPM, divided the Congolese refugee population and compromised their leadership because of their support for the smaller refugee communities. According to their members, the institutions could have used the community in order to “understand the problems of refugees”, but instead they chose to open “a fight against the community” as expressed by two members of the CRCU:<sup>273</sup>

They [the protection institutions] divide us according to tribes and languages. So, each tribe becomes a community. They do that to weaken the Congolese community, to make sure that it is not one. That is what they are doing currently. I hear that IAU is having a meeting with all the communities. So we are wondering how many communities we have; yet those people are Congolese and we should have just one community.<sup>274</sup>

All that we started to do in the community created serious problems among the organisations working with UNHCR. They saw that if the community can organise itself that will mean that the donors will no longer give funds to them but they will prefer to give them directly to the community. And that created a big problem and they started dividing the community. The IAU office calls them [the smaller communities] ‘communities’, but the truth is that they are just ‘groups’.<sup>275</sup>

This situation had deepened institutional mistrust among the members of the CRCU. This manifested itself as a conflict which escalated to the point that the CRCU’s male

---

<sup>272</sup> UNHCR officer, 18.1.2011.

<sup>273</sup> FGD6.

<sup>274</sup> FGD6.

<sup>275</sup> FGD5.

representative and the committee members claimed they were not being allowed physical access to the protection institutions. Their refugee statuses were also under review by the Ugandan authorities for “alleged kidnap of some refugees, threatening violence in form of death threats to the staff of the Refugee Department in the Office of the Prime Minister, UNHCR and the urban implementing partner (InterAid); and for gathering unlawful assemblies.”<sup>276</sup> The leadership of the CRCU denied these charges and repeatedly requested an independent investigation into these accusations.<sup>277</sup>

This rivalry between the CRCU and the protection institutions arguably influenced the discussion on when to hold the next refugee elections in the city. Elections were postponed according to the IAU because they would clash with the general elections in Uganda in February 2011, which might have put the refugee candidates in danger if accusations were raised of refugees’ involvement in politics. However, members of the CRCU believed the true reasons behind postponing the elections was different: “The real reason is that most of us were not willing to go through the elections, for one reason: IAU had paid people who are a bit closer to them, that if they get the representative out, they will get to control more.”<sup>278</sup>

#### ***8.4.2. CRCU’s internal and external power struggles***

Besides the conflict between the CRCU and the protection institutions, the community was undergoing internal strife and external power struggles with the smaller refugee communities. These struggles at different levels were entangled, and consequently

---

<sup>276</sup> Letter from the Commissioner for Refugees, OPM, “Review of your refugee status in Uganda”, 21.12.2010.

<sup>277</sup> Written report by a refugee, 7.12.2011.

<sup>278</sup> FGD5.

refugees' sense of intra- and inter-community social mistrust and institutional mistrust were closely related and mutually reinforcing.

The case of the previous female representative of the community demonstrated particularly well the external and internal rivalries which were not exclusive to Kampala. In Kampala, the female representative was elected together with the male representative in 2008. According to stories circulating in Kampala, she had close relationships with both the IAU and the RLP. As a result of cooperation with the RLP, she was seen by other urban refugees as supporting the Banyamulenge Tutsis and the LGBT/I refugees because, among the refugees, the RLP was commonly perceived to support these two minority groups. Again, the members of the CRCU argued that they were being accused by the protection institutions of discriminating against these groups: “You see that this community was [accused of] discriminating against homosexuals and today we are [accused of] discriminating against Banyamulenge. ... We should stop these rumours!”<sup>279</sup>

In regard to the Banyamulenge Tutsis, the shared perception of risk centred on their marginal chances of representation and participation – in other words, on the breach of their ‘right to the city’ (Lefebvre 1996, Purcell 2003, Butler 2012). For instance, regarding participating in meetings organised by the protection institutions, or the activities of the CRCU which were aimed at unifying the entire Congolese refugee population of the city, the Banyamulenge claimed they were not welcome:

There is still a problem of discrimination, because if they call up a meeting at OPM, once a Munyamulenge enters they will just chase him away. Of course we would like to go there. If UNHCR calls all Congolese, we are not even informed of it. We have no voice, no freedom to speak.<sup>280</sup>

---

<sup>279</sup> 7 CRCU observation.

<sup>280</sup> FGD3.

Officially, the CRCU, comprised mostly of Congolese of other ethnicities (e.g. Bashi, Barega and Nande) from South Kivu, did not perceive the relationship between them and the Banyamulenge as the Banyamulenge did. According to them, everyone was welcome at their meetings, and they “call them [the Banyamulenge] every time to join us but they never come.”<sup>281</sup> The Banyamulenge refugees, however, claimed they were not invited to these meetings because the others thought that they were not ‘true’ Congolese: “they can bring someone who looks like us to witness something, but real Banyamulenge cannot go there.”<sup>282</sup> During the meetings of the CRCU, the conflict between them and the Banyamulenge was often debated. Despite the official discourses of unity and inclusion, some members of this community claimed that Banyamulenge were not ‘true’ Congolese, and therefore should not join the CRCU:

They [the Banyamulenge] take our identity as Congolese and yet they are not Congolese. Since they are not Congolese and cannot care about the issues of the Congolese community, they want to accuse us.<sup>283</sup>

When spatially informed social exclusions occur, the excluded are often perceived by the majority as “deviant, imperfect or marginal” (Sibley 1995: xv) or, like in the case of the Banyamulenge Tutsis, as ‘deceptive’ or ‘false’. The question of purity (Malkki 1995) was also related to the difficulty of determining who was a ‘true’ Banyamulenge by ethnicity. Banyamulenge refugees stated that other Congolese pretended to be Banyamulenge in order to benefit from protection and resettlement options. This was confirmed by some Congolese of other ethnicities who told stories of how the IAU officers had advised them to pretend to be Banyamulenge if they wanted resettlement. Thus, what the Banyamulenge and the other Congolese refugees seemed to have agreed upon was that much of this opposition between them was reinforced by the actions and control mechanisms

---

<sup>281</sup> FGD6.

<sup>282</sup> Banyamulenge representative.

<sup>283</sup> 7 CRCU observation.

implemented by the protection institutions. These also included having a designated day for all of the Congolese refugees to access IAU and UNHCR, which the Banyamulenge saw as an unbearable situation.

In regard to the LGBT/I refugees, the members of the Angels support group argued that they were being discriminated against and socially excluded not only by the Ugandan state but also by the churches, Congolese refugees in general, and the CRCU in particular. Again, the CRCU argued, in return, that their community was welcoming and open to sexual minorities but that the RLP and IAU had provoked these smaller communities, including Angels, against them. Subsequently, as I will show, refugees' experiences of intra-community trust and institutional trust were mutually reinforcing. According to the members of the CRCU, this situation was created because the protection institutions wanted to attract more funding from the international community for these "sexy projects".<sup>284</sup> With this term the refugees referred to the fact that some LGBT/I activists receiving international support in Uganda were perceived as wealthy. Given this perception, homosexuals in Uganda might have faced "persecution not because of their sexuality but because they are seen to be gaining wealth in a highly unequal society" (Crook 2012: 3).

The CRCU was also critical of the organisation of homosexual refugees because they saw this as an opportunity for many to fake being homosexual in order to benefit from the perceived excessive assistance and, in particular, resettlement options. After having openly expressed this concern, the CRCU leadership felt unsafe as explained in a written report produced by a member of this community:

---

<sup>284</sup> Written report by a refugee, 7.12.2011.

The USA position for the rights of sexual minority has been brandished by some people in NGOs to intimidate any other who would like to raise criticism for better understanding the situation. ... On the ground here in Kampala, since 2011, different efforts were deployed by NGOs to silence refugee human rights defenders who believe that the truth is not said about the existence of refugee sexual minority.<sup>285</sup>

For the members of the Angels group the main shared perceived risks in Kampala had to do with the fact that various service providers and other refugees did not believe their true sexual orientation and thus cast doubts on the subsequent insecurity. An NGO officer also confirmed that, in various offices, in hospitals, police or other protection institutions, disbelief was common: “I have so many clients who were abused and you go with them and they ask “who told you to fake this?”<sup>286</sup> Yet even the fact that the Angels group held meetings was perceived by some of them as a risk:

It can be dangerous for us to meet... We have lost members. We really fear as we could not be sure what could be done to us. ... The Government of Uganda thinks that if you are LGBT/I, you are supposed to be killed. Even different religions, Muslims also, support the government. On our side we are really shocked because in TV, radio, international radio, all tell about the government view. We fear about it. ... We faced, yet again, problems here in Uganda.<sup>287</sup>

Moreover, as already indicated, for the majority of the Congolese refugees in Kampala the church was a significant place of protection, but the members of the Angels group felt that they were excluded from churches: “We used to go to churches to get help, but if they discover it, they do not accept you. Yet God had created us... Some churches or some pastors want to destroy our culture.”<sup>288</sup> However, according to some of the refugee pastors, refugees were persuaded to pretend to be homosexuals in order to qualify for certain forms of assistance. They also saw homosexuality as a sinful lifestyle, but rejected the proposition that they excluded the LGBT/I refugees from the church. Rather, they

---

<sup>285</sup> Written report by a refugee, 24.4.2012.

<sup>286</sup> NGO, officer, 8.9.2011.

<sup>287</sup> Angels leadership.

<sup>288</sup> Angels leadership.

suggested that the “church needs people like that. They need to come to church and there is a big class of sinners. The Congolese community has to be taught ethics and morals. It is a sin.”<sup>289</sup>

The CRCU also had difficult relationships with some of the Congolese pastors. A number of Congolese pastors attended the CRCU and, according to the members of the community, at times the pastors had been competing over the leadership of this umbrella community. This situation was explained by a female member of the CRCU:

We have divided ourselves. Our pastors do not like each other, and there are more than 20 pastors. All the leaders of religious communities want to be the leader of the Congolese community. When they are called to talk about the problems of the whole community they only talk about their own problems. Those pastors rely on donations. But for us who do not have the means, we rely on UNHCR.<sup>290</sup>

Besides the Banyamulenge Tutsis, the LGBT/I refugees and some of the pastors, the CRCU also struggled engaging with different RCOs. For the RCOs, the shared perception of risks included the competition between different refugee communities, lack of funds, and difficulties of working in cooperation with the protection institutions.<sup>291</sup> Thus, many of the RCOs did not trust the institutions.<sup>292</sup> Some of the RCOs also rejected the idea of having substantial interaction with the CRCU because they saw that this community as characterised by conflicts. One leader of a RCO explained how he had refused to cooperate with the CRCU:

Even me, sometimes they come and ask “why cannot you join us?” I say “me? I cannot join when there is always trouble.” If you go to their meeting, they do not talk about anything. Just contradictions, fighting. No, me, I do not like. We have many communities in Congo and many tribes. ... So, to know what the real ‘Congolese community’ is or is not, it is difficult... Me, I think it is best to

---

<sup>289</sup> FGD13.

<sup>290</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

<sup>291</sup> RCO leader, 17.1.2011.

<sup>292</sup> RCO leader, 17.1.2011.

consider all those communities and to reach all the communities. Because I know that having one Congolese community here in Kampala is impossible.<sup>293</sup>

To go back to the internal struggle within the CRCU, mistrust between the elected male and the female leaders of the community contributed to increasing disunity. The existing male-dominated leadership argued that the community became fragmented after 2009 because of the female leader:

The Congolese used to be the best organised refugee community in Kampala. Kampala was divided into four areas: North, South, West and East. They would all have chairmen who would report to the central chairman... But since we got two representatives and the female one was used [by the institutions], our community got destroyed.<sup>294</sup>

Repeated stories circulated within the Congolese refugee population regarding the female representative. Most suggested that she had been kidnapped and hospitalised in Kampala, and shortly after this incident resettled. Some members of the CRCU claimed that she had been advised by the protection institutions to accuse the male leader and “his group” of abusing her.<sup>295</sup> Subsequently, the leadership of the community was accused of this and their refugee statuses were under review by the OPM. The leadership of the CRCU denied the charges, and they suggested that they were in danger because of this situation:

Everything went wrong. Everything almost collapsed. And even the security situation for those who received those letters [from OPM informing them about the review of their refugee statuses] is not good. There are those that the police or the intelligence services are behind. And there are those who are being observed by the police in the civilian. They have been told that any time they can be killed.<sup>296</sup>

To conclude, the smaller refugee communities and the CRCU often perceived each other as a risk and this caused prevalent inter-community mistrust. This context reflected the major challenges of representation of and participation in urban refugee communities

---

<sup>293</sup> RCO leader, 15.7.2011.

<sup>294</sup> Leadership of the CRCU.

<sup>295</sup> Written report by a refugee, 7.12.2011.

<sup>296</sup> Leadership of the CRCU.

(Crisp, Obi and Umlas 2012). The use of elected or self-declared refugee representatives, as seen from the above empirical analysis and backed up by previous research (Cooper 1993; Campbell, Crisp and Kiragu 2011), can pose more challenges than advantages if implemented without a deep knowledge of the power dynamics within and between different refugee communities in a given city.

What most of the refugees' 'communities of trust' agreed on, however, was the shared idea of perceiving protection institutions as their main shared risk. This perception had, again, led to increased institutional mistrust by the different refugee communities. In this space of mistrust, implementing community-based protection programmes, which have been promoted by a number of UNHCR policies (2008, 2009a), was difficult. Thus, for UNHCR and other institutions, understanding and addressing these rivalries, and their role in them, should have been a key target. Because this was not the case, however, the refugee communities increasingly argued for total independence from these institutions. The various forms of resistance aimed at this target are explored in the following section on shared interests.

## **8.5. Interests**

The fourth element of 'communities of trust' is the shared interests which may evolve around social, cultural, political or economic issues, among others (Jabareen and Carmon 2010). Because the main goals and activities of these different types of communities have already been referred to, in this section I focus on the communities' shared interest in trying to improve their cooperation with the protection institutions and participation in the production of official spaces of protection. However, because this desire for meaningful

participation was often not fulfilled, the communities had developed different means of resistance to overcome the situation. Thus, the analysis presented reflects the issue of institutional trust at the community level (i.e. the meso-scale of trust) and community-based struggles to refugees' 'right to the city' understood as a right to appropriate and participate (Lefebvre 1996, Butler 2012, Purcell 2002) in the production of protection spaces. Again, the main case study through which I examine the means of resistance is the CRCU, but examples from other communities are drawn into the analysis when feasible. The CRCU was arguably the most vocal community advocating for the various forms of resistance, some of which had also been taken up by other communities.

#### ***8.5.1. The institutional approach to working with refugee communities***

In Kampala, given the heavy constraints in terms of finances and staffing, some of the UNHCR officers acknowledged that they were not working with the different refugee communities as much as they aimed to be in the future.<sup>297</sup> Yet they realised that the role of communities was crucial for achieving their protection targets. The increasing focus on urban communities was also seen as imperative, given the clear community-based approach in the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy (UNHCR 2009a). UNHCR's urban refugee policy from 2009 states that one of the nine key principles of the agency's work with refugees and asylum seekers in the towns and cities of the Global South is 'community orientation'. Even though a number of UNHCR policies establish 'community' as a protection ideal (UNHCR 2008, 2009a), at times UNHCR has recognised its lack of meaningful community engagement with urban refugees (Crisp et al. 2009; Crisp, Obi and Umlas 2012).

---

<sup>297</sup> UNHCR officer, 18.1.2011.

Given the changes in laws and policies governing refugee protection in Uganda, and the fact that an increasing number of refugees is based in Kampala, the IAU together with UNHCR and OPM renewed its urban refugee programme in 2009. The programme had been running since 1995, but the old, more limited, approach was no longer seen as appropriate given the situation. The new approach largely focused on facilitating refugee organisation and ‘empowering’ refugee communities to get more involved in the issues affecting their lives. Through this community-focused programme, the IAU aimed to “ensure continued adherence to the highest standards of protection of refugees and asylum seekers” (IAU 2009: 21).

Despite the apparent willingness of the protection institutions to work more in partnership with refugees, most Congolese refugees argued that they had no meaningful ways of cooperating with the institutions. Regarding this lack of participation in refugee protection at the official level, there seemed to be two conflicting discourses referred to by many of the refugee communities. First, these communities often presented themselves as dependent on the protection institutions. However, because these institutions provided such minimal protection, no financial support and few opportunities for participation, refugees felt that they were neglected and mistreated. Consequently, the second discourse formed around the quest for independence from these institutions. These two discourses were used by the communities fluidly in various situations depending on the desired outcome.

The perception that refugees were seen by the institutions as a “burden that needed to be

managed”<sup>298</sup> led some of the refugees to come to the conclusion that there were no real advantages to be gained by cooperating with the institutions. Some refugees even felt that the institutions were working against them because everything that the institutions did without meaningful refugee participation was seen as harmful for the refugees.<sup>299</sup> Trusting the institutions’ willingness to give refugees meaningful power was also jeopardised by the competition for the “refugee national cake”<sup>300</sup> between refugee communities and these institutions. Given this competition over resources and influence, refugees, in particular from the CRCU, called for a fair competition over the ‘slicing of the cake’:

Due to the fact that together we have to exist and live in harmony through sharing the refugee national cake (funds and other forms of aid) we call upon the refugee management ... to accept competition and look at it as the begging of salvation to refugees in Uganda as we believe that the main cause of the threats against them is their activism for social justice.<sup>301</sup>

Given this situation, refugee communities planned and utilised different forms of communal resistance, which are discussed in the following section, to break away from the influence of the protection institutions.

### ***8.5.2. Communal forms of resistance***

In order to understand the ‘communities of trust’ within the relational space of their city of exile, it is important to look into their struggles over their ‘right to the city’ (Lefebvre 1996, Butler 2012) and the forms of resistance which refugees used as a way of “mobilisation against exclusion” (Ramadan 2012). During one of the Saturday meetings, the members of the CRCU discussed how to be heard by the protection institutions. At that

---

<sup>298</sup> 4 CRCU observation.

<sup>299</sup> 4 CRCU observation.

<sup>300</sup> Written report by a refugee, 7.12.2011.

<sup>301</sup> Written report by a refugee, 24.4.2012.

meeting, and also in previous gatherings, seven different forms of resistance were suggested and vigorously debated. Some of these methods were also identified by other refugee communities as they had used or were willing to try them. In the following section I discuss each of the forms of resistance and analyse how refugees reflected on these methods in regard to the issue of ‘trust’.

First, the CRCU was in two minds in regard to prayer as a form of resistance. Some of the members wished to spend extensive time in prayer during the community meetings. Others, however, suggested that they were tired of relying on prayer after not seeing tangible results. A male member, for instance, argued that:

We should be concerned first with ourselves. If these people in Europe have had a high level of development it was because they took the initiative. It was not due to too many prayers. They do not even pray.<sup>302</sup>

The pastors of the community, however, argued for the power of prayer. They saw that since God had helped others, including Nelson Mandela, in their struggles against injustice, He would also help them if they kept on praying. The members, who supported prayer as a tool of resistance, however, suggested that it should not be passive prayer, but rather an active “platform where we meet other pastors and community members together. We will preach and talk about our own responsibility.”<sup>303</sup>

Overall, prayer was used in all of the different refugee communities: the Banyamulenge community was built around the Methodist congregation, in some of the RCO schools the instructors would pray before teaching, the church communities were naturally focused on prayer, and the support groups typically offered spiritual counselling. Given these spiritual

---

<sup>302</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

<sup>303</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

elements shared by all of the different communities, I suggest that the distinction between secular and religious refugee communities was not straightforward in Kampala. Rather, refugees' faith was part of each community. Also, these examples suggest that the question of prayer as a method of resistance did not revolve around whether refugees trusted each other, but rather whether they trusted God and His power to help them. Thus, a metaphysical or spiritual understanding of trust was important for the refugees.

Second, members of the CRCU proposed to write letters to the protection institutions explaining the real needs in their community and asking for permission to participate in the formal actions to tackle these challenges. They also asked that the management level of the protection institutions would come and visit the community to see how organised they were and to discuss issues affecting the lives of the Congolese refugees. Others who had been members of the community longer, however, reminded them that: "every six months we write letters but there is no change."<sup>304</sup> Therefore, writing letters was mostly seen as an ineffective method. This was also the experience of most of the refugees' 'communities of trust'. To conclude, refugees lacked trust in the effectiveness of this form of resistance, and this refers to abstract forms of trust in systems and techniques (Giddens 1990: 34).

Given this lack of trust in the effectiveness of many of the traditional methods, refugees argued for more noticeable and radical forms of communal action. Thus, organising a peaceful demonstration was debated as the third method. In this vein, the members of the CRCU meant having a small-scale protest taking place on the streets of Kampala to draw public attention to the plight of the refugees in the city.<sup>305</sup> In the context of Kampala,

---

<sup>304</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

<sup>305</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

organising demonstrations and protests by different social groups had become increasingly popular, especially since the 2006 elections. Urban dwellers, in general, perceived that “the government would respond to their marginalisation only when they rioted” (Goodfellow 2013: 8). Thus, it was no surprise that the refugees who had lived in Kampala for several years agreed on this idea of the potential power of demonstrations. Some of the members of the CRCU were, however, cautious about this method, given the recent experiences of demonstrations turning violent in Kampala.<sup>306</sup> One refugee man also expressed his concern that the protection institutions would send ‘spies’ (i.e. other refugees) to ruin the peaceful nature of the demonstration in order to lay the blame on the CRCU for breaking the law:

I oppose because of one reason: the way, look at this country; they do not want a demonstration. Even citizens want to do this but the government stops them from doing that. When we talk among us we have betrayers who will go to other Congolese communities and will explain it to others, the same organisations which are opposing this community. They will send some members to disrupt the demonstration.<sup>307</sup>

Consequently, this form of resistance was perceived as risky because of both inter-community and institutional mistrust.

Fourth, the CRCU strongly believed that to boycott the protection institutions, especially IAU, was necessary in order to increase their own agency. This view was shared by many of the refugee communities. Again, as the level of institutional mistrust in Kampala was reaching the point of ‘culture of disbelief’ (Griffiths 2012), boycotting seemed like a rational reaction to the breach of trust. As a response to the boycotting of the formal

---

<sup>306</sup> Throughout my fieldwork there were ‘walk-to-work’ demonstrations held in the city by the Ugandan opposition. Often these turned violent and some refugees had also been killed in these demonstrations. For a summary of the events, see Goodfellow (2013: 7–10).

<sup>307</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

protection architecture, communities tried to support their members both physically and psychosocially, so that they would be able to reject the minimal institutional assistance. This was seen as a way to both unite the communities and to avoid getting into further arguments with the institutions.<sup>308</sup>

The act of boycotting was manifested on a large scale during the WRD celebrations on 20 June 2011.<sup>309</sup> The CRCU members did not accept that the celebrations, organised by UNHCR, IAU and OPM, were useful for their cause, represented them in an appropriate manner, or were fitting when, at the same time, their real needs were not being addressed by these institutions: what they needed was protection, not celebrations. This arguably “semio-violent” way of representing (Hyndman 2000: xxii) the urban refugee population during the WRD left refugees feeling that their voices went unheard. Therefore, some of them were glad to hear that only a few refugees attended the celebration; this was taken as a sign of increasing independence. The CRCU decided to boycott the celebrations and instead spent the day in prayer, which they deemed more appropriate.

Fifth, the CRCU argued for an attitude change as a form of resistance. This included putting the community first, and only then thinking about personal needs and gain. This most invisible method was also intended to have an impact on the negative impression that the protection institutions had of Congolese refugees. Refugees generally claimed that institutions viewed them as egoistic,<sup>310</sup> selfish, and unable to unite, and thus refugees wanted to prove the officers wrong by changing their attitude from conflict to “tolerance

---

<sup>308</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

<sup>309</sup> Observation at the IAU and at the football pitch, 20.6.2011.

<sup>310</sup> For more discussion, see Section 5.2.2 of Chapter Five.

and love.”<sup>311</sup> Thus, using an attitude change as a form of resistance was first and foremost directed toward enhancing social trust within the refugee communities. It was, however, also meant to tackle the issue of institutional mistrust which was created by institutions’ misrepresentations of the Congolese refugees in general.

Sixth, some of the members of the CRCU argued in favour of using the media as a resistance and advocacy tool. This would be done, in particular, in relation to the community’s conflict with the Banyamulenge Tutsis. Some Banyamulenge had been on Ugandan radio and had detailed how they were persecuted and discriminated against by other Congolese, and therefore the CRCU wished to use the same method of resistance to present to the public their understanding of the situation: “Since they [the Banyamulenge] went to the media without telling us, we should write a letter which should be read in the media.”<sup>312</sup> This shows how the inter-community mistrust and attempts to be vocal shaped the methods of resistance used by the CRCU, and other communities.

Lastly, the CRCU felt that they should recruit impartial mediators to solve the external conflicts with other refugee communities and with the protection institutions, which had been caused by severe mistrust. They also wanted to develop a system of retribution to report on the misbehaviour of the institutions at the highest possible level. A female member of the CRCU articulated this suggestion accordingly:

Above these organisations that are dealing with refugees, there is no organisation where you can take your complaints. We went through a very difficult period... We tried to address our issues with different human rights organisations and the [Ugandan] parliament, and UNCHR in Geneva. We even tried to talk to the high court here, but still, for six months, we have never got any answer or response.<sup>313</sup>

---

<sup>311</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

<sup>312</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

<sup>313</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

The system that was in place at the time of fieldwork did not allow refugees to raise complaints further than the leaders of these institutions, who, in most cases, were the ones accused by the refugees of misrepresentation and mismanagement. This situation reflected what Holzer (2010) has called ‘compassionate authoritarianism’ – a term that characterises a protection system in which refugees have “little or no access to grievance procedures and authorities face little or no accountability for political failures” (Holzer 2010: 1–2). In Kampala, the CRCU called for the Ugandan police to act as a mediator between them and the protection institutions:

We need a police which is the voice for the voiceless by making sure that powers are fairly balanced and available resources are equally shared and refugees are involved in the decision making process.<sup>314</sup>

This indicates that the refugees hoped for an impartial body which they could trust to solve the conflicts between them and the protection institutions. Thus, they showed some degree of institutional trust in the police even though they lacked trust in the key protection institutions, such as IAU, RLP, UNHCR and OPM. Interestingly, at the individual level, the members of the CRCU, however, expressed a high sense of institutional mistrust toward the Ugandan police. Thus, refugees’ individual and communal experiences of institutional trust varied.

To conclude, refugees’ ‘communities of trust’ often shared the same initial interest in cooperating with the protection institutions. However, if this wish did not materialise or if the cooperation was perceived by the communities as difficult or harmful, they wished not to pursue it. Rather, they aimed to establish a position independent of the institutions through various means of resistance. Thus, acts of resistance became attempts to regain

---

<sup>314</sup> Written report by a refugee, 24.4.2012.

some of their trust in these institutions.

## **8.6. Shared space**

Shared space is important for the creation of ‘communities of trust’ because communities are often defined through their place-relatedness (Jabareen and Carmon 2010). Urban refugee communities, however, do not typically take a traditional territorial form (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013) as communities associated with particular neighbourhoods do. Rather, they occupy multiple, shifting and temporary micro-spaces (i.e. buildings) where people living in different neighbourhoods gather. Therefore, my analysis of the shared space differs from the one presented by Jabareen and Carmon (2010) in their study on different neighbourhood communities in Gaza. In this section, the community spaces of the CRCU, JSS church/YARID, and the Angels support group are examined due to their specific characteristics and challenges.

### ***8.6.1. “We have also displaced them”: how the OPM ‘displaced’ refugees from the António Guterres Community Centre***

During the time of the fieldwork, the Department of Refugees/OPM occupied the UNHCR-sponsored António Guterres Community Centre (Figure 31). The community centre was established in 2009 for the different nationality-based urban refugee communities. This shows how UNHCR in Kampala deployed the problematic

conceptualisation of a refugee ‘community’ defined by a shared nationality.<sup>315</sup> The original purpose of the community centre was described in a UNHCR publication as follows:

The Centre was established to enhance protection of urban refugees, provide space for them and Ugandan nationals to meet, interact and appreciate cultural diversity. It provides education opportunities such as language, literacy and life-skills classes. The Centre also plans to teach skills in business management, microfinance and microcredit, computer literacy and crafts making. A resource centre/library, an internet café, a kindergarten for pre-primary education and a carpentry workshop are planned projects of the Centre (UNHCR 2009b: 23).



Figure 31. The Department of Refugees of OPM located at the António Guterres Community Centre in Old Kampala (Source: Lyytinen 2011).

However, in reality, after a few months of using this space, the elected refugee leaders and the nationality-based ‘communities’, including the CRCU, were ‘displaced’ from the building in May 2010.<sup>316</sup> The reason for this was that while the permanent office space of the Department of Refugees was renovated, OPM had agreed with UNHCR, who

<sup>315</sup> For more critical discussion on the conceptualisation of ‘community’ see Section 3.4.3.2 of Chapter Three.

<sup>316</sup> Observation in May 2010.

supported them financially, to occupy the refugee community centre. According to OPM this decision was based on financial reasons:

We only moved here to save a lot, because if we would have moved to another place for rent, you know, there would have been a budget line for that. ... Then it would have entered into the budget line [of the UNHCR] meant to help refugees somewhere.<sup>317</sup>

After being ‘evicted’, the refugee communities had only partial access to this formal ‘protection space’ and the elected refugee leaders had to find their own small offices in order to be able to continue their community work. According to an OPM officer, refugees still had limited entrance to the community centre during the weekends:

Unfortunately, the refugees do not have space to come here anymore. Only on weekends maybe... The refugee leaders come here also but, you know, *we have also displaced them*. It is the negative side... *We have displaced them* because they should have a place where local people can access them.<sup>318</sup>

Even though the CRCU still held its meetings at the OPM/António Guterres Community Centre compound every Saturday morning, refugees were prohibited from accessing the actual office building. The community meetings took place under the shelter which was built next to the office from UNHCR plastic sheets (Figure 23). Moreover, the leadership of this community was accused by the OPM of having “unlawful assemblies” which according to them referred to these Saturday meetings – meetings that they had been granted permission for by UNHCR. Moreover, at the CRCU meetings members of the community reminded everyone about the presence of spies among them.<sup>319</sup> They believed that IAU sent refugees affiliated with it to report on the meeting in order to be able to monitor and control them. This shows how the ‘community space’ was perceived by the refugees in terms of mistrust and insecurity.

---

<sup>317</sup> OPM officer, 7.1.2011.

<sup>318</sup> OPM officer, 7.1.2011, emphasis added.

<sup>319</sup> 5 CRCU observation.

The CRCU had opened its own community space in Kibuli parish of Kampala (Figure 32). In this small office the CRCU was able to continue its community activities and the male representative had created the space specifically in order to “meet with refugees and listen to their concerns.”<sup>320</sup> The CRCU was also able provide refugees with temporary shelter behind the office (Figure 33). This was particularly important as new asylum seekers were not provided with any shelter or reception centre in Kampala despite refugees’ and NGOs’ efforts to convince the Government of Uganda to do so. Overall, the CRCU perceived their office in Kibuli as their own community centre which formed the shared space of their activities.



Figure 32. The office building of the CRCU (Source: Lyytinen 2011).

---

<sup>320</sup> Representative of CRCU.



Figure 33. The small house behind the CRCU office where the community provided short-term housing for the neediest asylum seekers and refugees (Source: Lyytinen 2011).

This community space was, however, not entirely safe: the CRCU was evicted from their office in 2011. According to them, IAU had paid their landlord to do this in order to cause disunity among them:

We rent an office so that we can manage to lead the refugees together. But an officer at IAU contacted the owner of that house and paid more than what we paid so that we were evicted from that house; all that just to destabilise us. It is the number one [the Head of the IAU], it is that person who destabilises the Congolese community.<sup>321</sup>

After losing this office space, the CRCU discussed their future plans. During the community meetings vivid discussions were held over how to look for another place and how to collect money for the rent. The situation, however, remained unresolved at the end of my fieldwork.

---

<sup>321</sup> FGD6.

To conclude, even though UNHCR has emphasised the value of community centres for refugee protection (UNHCR 2009a, UNHCR 2013) and these spaces have been characterised in other studies as physical ‘protection spaces’ (Crisp et al. 2009: 31), the example of the António Guterres Community Centre illustrated that institutional mistrust and a sense of insecurity were prevalent in this community space. Thus, refugees’ ‘sense of place’ in regard to this shared space illustrates how the distinction between protection and insecurity was not necessarily straightforward.

#### ***8.6.2. School on weekdays, church on Sundays: the multiple uses of community spaces***

Most of the RCOs had their own small offices but they also organised larger activities in buildings shared with others. In this section, I examine the multiple usage of a particular building which was used as a refugee community school, a church and a shelter. The land where this building (Figure 34) was set up in Kevina zone of Nsambya parish originally belonged to a Ugandan owner. A Congolese church, JSS, had rented the land out for their religious activities. JSS further allowed YARID (a RCO) to use the building for their language classes, first for free, but later on the church charged rent from YARID in order to be able to afford the property.



Figure 34. The YARID school/JSS church/shelter for homeless refugees (Source: Lyytinen 2011).

On weekdays YARID organised English language training and adult literacy training in this building (Figure 35). YARID typically had two English classes which took place at the same time: at one end of the building the advanced-level class practised English, and at the other side the beginners were learning the very basics of the language. Sometimes up to 100, mostly Congolese, students learned at the same time in this community building.



Figure 35. YARID language school on weekdays (Source: Sedrick, research assistant/interpreter 2011; photo modified to ensure anonymity).

The same building was transformed into a shelter every evening after the other activities had finished. Refugees who had nowhere else to stay occupied the building for the night, but were already gone by the time that the early morning classes started.

The building was also used as a Congolese church every Sunday and some of the weekday evenings (Figures 36 and 37). The space looked rather similar, but on Sundays the chairs would be pointing in a different direction to how they were when the space was used as a school. Also, the English language spoken on weekdays had changed on Sundays into loud worship and preaching in Kiswahili. On Sundays, the same space was filled with sounds of praise as refugees, dressed in their very best outfits, were singing and dancing together.



Figure 36. JSS church on a Sunday morning (Source: Lyytinen 2011).

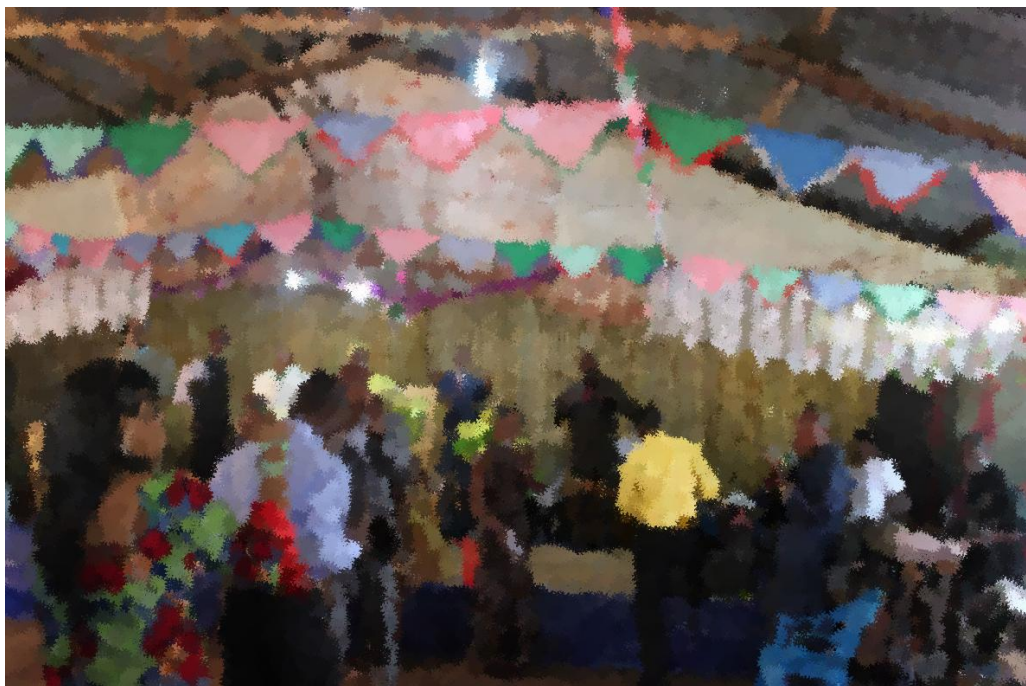


Figure 37. Worship time at the JSS church on a Sunday (Source: Sedrick, research assistant/interpreter 2011).

The case study of the JSS church and the YARID community school demonstrates how refugee communities lacked access to buildings which would have served as community centres for them. This was partly due to financial reasons but also, at times, due to discrimination against them by Ugandan property and land owners. To circumvent this situation, refugee communities had established creative arrangements for sharing community spaces. Thus, particular buildings may have been perceived as a physical manifestation of a 'community' by a number of refugees who belonged to different communities. These arrangements also demonstrated high levels of inter-community trust and cooperation.

### ***8.6.3. Angels' office: security or surveillance?***

Most of the support groups met monthly or weekly at the RLP office in Old Kampala parish. Thus, they all shared more or less the same community space. The Angels group, however, no longer met at the RLP office. In this section I examine the shared community space the Angels had created as an example of a refugee community which had to be particularly cautious about their meetings. The discussion touches on the question of how different community spaces can both enhance and negate generalised social trust and institutional trust.

During the early days the members of the Angels group met in their houses in different neighbourhoods of Kampala, but as they began to recruit more members, they rented out a school for their activities. They were also concerned for their security due to social mistrust, which affected relations between them and their neighbours. After a while they were compelled to ask for support from the protection institutions due to a lack of financial

means to rent out the school. The core members of the group first approached UNHCR, but after having been welcomed by the RLP leadership, they began to organise their activities at the RLP office. This showed that the Angels placed significant institutional trust in the RLP as an organisation. Given the illegality of prostitution and homosexuality in Uganda, it was clear that finding a secure meeting place for the Angels was essential. Later on, when meeting at RLP had become somewhat unsafe, and after receiving external funding, the group decided to open their own office in a neighbourhood where many refugees did not reside. Choosing a neighbourhood with few refugees indicated the social mistrust the members of the group had in regard to other refugees.

During the summer of 2012 both the RLP and the Angels support group, among 36 other NGOs, were under threat of being closed down by the Ugandan government because of their work on the LGBT/I issues (The Observer 2012). This incident was related to the increased restrictions on promoting LGBT/I issues in Uganda. Despite these events on the ground, the Ugandan President Museveni reiterated that, in Uganda, “there is no discrimination, no killings, no marginalization [of homosexuals], no luring of young people using money into homosexual acts” (New Vision 2013). The listed NGOs were finally able to prevent the closure but the Angels experienced several negative encounters with the Ugandan authorities during this highly sensitive time.<sup>322</sup>

For instance, in June 2012, an international seminar organised in Kampala to discuss LGBT/I rights was “dispersed by police in Uganda and many were detained for hours and [then] released after traumatised by intimidation.”<sup>323</sup> The Angels group had also been

---

<sup>322</sup> Written report by Angels, 11.7.2012.

<sup>323</sup> Written report, 11.7.2012.

part of this meeting. Afterwards, the group held several emergency meetings and they launched a system of security alerts for their members, as they had received death threats and some of them had been attacked and arrested.

This context of intimidation had an impact on the Angels' community space, which was no longer perceived by them as a protected space. Eventually the group had to move their office because of the police investigations and intimidation they experienced in the previous location over the course of the summer of 2012.<sup>324</sup> According to the Angels leadership, in July 2012 their office was raided by the Ugandan police:

A group of six police branch, chairman and CID [Criminal Investigation Department] came in offices of Angels to search, control and intimidate activists. They say that this organisation contributes to poor reputation of their country and commits social unrest in Uganda. We tried to be defended and they left after two hours. From that day...the organisation decided to move.<sup>325</sup>

Later in September 2012, the Angels' new office was again attacked by the Ugandan police force. On this occasion, the Old Kampala police forces accompanied by a "big delegation of administrative and security"<sup>326</sup> entered their office space. Given these repeated negative encounters with the police, the community had developed a deep sense of institutional mistrust, in particular toward the police.

To conclude, refugee communities faced several challenges in regard to their community spaces. The CRCU had been evicted both from the UNHCR-built urban refugee centre and the office building they had rented. On both occasions they blamed the protection institutions for this, which widened their experience of institutional mistrust. The RCOs and refugee churches struggled to afford to rent community spaces, and therefore had

---

<sup>324</sup> Written report, 15.10.2012.

<sup>325</sup> Written report, 15.10.2012.

<sup>326</sup> Written report, 15.10.2012.

come to sharing arrangements. Refugees also used church buildings as shelter when they had no other place to stay. The community spaces therefore often had multiple functions at different times. The case study of sharing space also indicated that there were stable levels of inter-community trust which made this kind of spatial cooperation possible. Having been able to open an autonomous office, however, did not always guarantee a refugee community's safety, as can be seen from the case study of the Angels. This support group constantly struggled to find a secure space to meet, and given the harassment by the Ugandan authorities in the form of the police this particular community developed a complete lack of institutional trust in some of the organisations and authorities due to the traumatic experiences which took place in their community spaces.

## **8.7. Concluding discussion**

Jabareen and Carmon's (2010) conceptual scheme to examine 'communities of trust' was adapted in this chapter to analyse the five distinct types of refugees' urban communities identified by informants. As this framework explicitly included the concepts of 'space', 'trust' and 'safety' (i.e. 'protection'), all of the key concepts of this study were analysed in this chapter in relation to refugee communities. Refugees' communal struggles over their 'right to the city' (Lefebvre 1996, Butler 2012) and its protective spaces was also examined in this chapter in regard to their right to access and appropriate various official and unofficial spaces of protection.

What the examination of the 'communities of trust' among the Congolese refugees in Kampala showed is that refugees had created and joined a range of different communities which served as unofficial 'places of protection' for them. The CRCU, Banyamulenge

Tutsis, RCOs, churches and support groups had some common elements, but the discourses of daily-life practices, beliefs, perceptions of risk, interests, and shared space also varied between the communities. Thus, investigating both the shared and distinct elements of the different communities was an essential addition to the use of Jabareen and Carmon's (2010) framework.

In general, for their members, the different communities presented physical, imagined and lived 'spaces of protection' (Lefebvre 1991) where they were able to trust others and increase their communal resilience. This trust in others was grounded in shared beliefs about similar experiences, needs, risks and aspirations which varied from community to community. Thus, among the members of a particular community there was a stable sense of particularised social trust. Internal conflicts, however, also took place, in particular in relation to the largest community, that of the CRCU. Interestingly, these internal power struggles were closely related to the inter-community and institutional forms of mistrust. Consequently, members of a particular community built trust-based, protective relationships among each other through their acts of resistance and exclusion. Thus, I suggested that shared experiences of inter-community mistrust and institutional mistrust reinforced refugees' experiences of particularised social trust within the communities.

Furthermore, institutional mistrust, together with the UNHCR understanding of an ideal 'community' on the basis of nationality (a conceptualisation which failed to reflect the reality on the ground), contributed toward the institutional challenges of working in cooperation with the various Congolese refugee communities. Thus, understanding the internal and external, shared and distinct challenges that refugee 'communities of trust' face in Kampala is essential for enhanced protection.

## **Chapter Nine: CONCLUSIONS**

### **9.1. Introduction**

In this chapter I first discuss and reflect on the overall conclusions drawn from this study and, second, present the reconfigured refugee-centric understanding of ‘protection space’ – the concept which this entire study emerged from. Third, following from this revised conceptualisation of ‘protection space’, I suggest some areas for future research on urban refugees. Fourth, I reflect on the diverse research methods used, and finally outline the contributions that this study made to the human geography and (urban) refugee studies literatures.

### **9.2. Overall conclusions: answering the research questions**

My overall aim in this thesis was to examine Congolese refugees’ experiences of urban protection in Kampala, Uganda. My study had two specific research objectives: First, to examine how the notion of ‘protection space’ was understood by refugees in their everyday lives in their city of exile and, second, to investigate the conceptual links between ‘protection’, ‘space’ and ‘trust’. I aimed to achieve these two objectives by answering five intertwined research questions. I now turn to answering and reflecting on each of these questions.

First, I asked how the physical, imagined, lived and relational elements of space condition refugees’ experiences of living in their city of exile. This research question was reflected on in each of the four empirical chapters from various perspectives. The analysis of

refugees' understandings of the spatiality of their protection in the city of Kampala clearly showed that all these different elements of space were intertwined (Lefebvre 1991, Massey 2005).

The physical spaces of protection manifested themselves at the micro-scale in terms of shelter and different buildings, and also at the larger geographical level as the physical structures of the city and Kampala's distinct position within the East Africa region. There was, however, overlap and interplay between these different scales, and overall, they were used in this study as a device of analysis rather than refugee-driven categories. The physicality of the city provided refugees with protection but also made them feel at times more insecure than safe. The imagined space of protection was a key element in discussing refugees' 'sense of place' (Tuan 1977; Phillips, Davis and Radcliffe 2007). Refugees' urban imaginations were characterised by a sense of safety and insecurity. This was caused by their fear of persecution spilling over from the DRC and their widespread mistrust of the other inhabitant of the city. The lived spaces of protection were characterised by refugees' distinct 'representational spaces'. Refugees' heterogeneous experiences of the lived, everyday spaces of protection and the associated acts of resistance were crucial for their understandings of urban protection and insecurity.

Lastly, perhaps the most significant element of 'protection space' was the relational space of protection (Massey 2005, Ramadan 2012). These spaces were produced in refugees' relationships among themselves, between different refugee communities and between refugees and their Ugandan hosts, on the one hand, and the protection institutions, on the other. In order to enhance our understanding of these crucial relational spaces, I introduced the concept of 'trust', which formed a central theme of my investigation of refugees'

conceptualisations of the notion of ‘protection space’. Refugees’ individual and communal protection discourses were focused on the issues of social and institutional mistrust.

In sum, in order to be able to examine the ‘spatial practices’ (Lefebvre 1991) of producing formal and informal protective spaces in the city, my analysis had to engage both with refugees’ ‘representational spaces’ of the everyday and with protection institutions’ ‘representations of space’, i.e. the abstract space of professionals and technocrats. Based on these distinct sets of spatial discourses, it became clear that refugees’ ‘spatial practices’ differ significantly from institutions’ understandings of the urban space and its protective qualities. Given these dissimilar and competing discourses of space, refugees’ practices of producing ‘protective spaces’ through acts of resistance and community-building were directed towards challenging the institutions’ ‘representations of space’. These struggles over space manifested themselves as institutional mistrust and, subsequently, refugees’ and institutions’ discourses confirmed the analytical protection/space/trust nexus.

I conclude that adopting the multiple conceptualisations of space was necessary for the understanding of protection in urban space. Overall, these four elements of space featured refugees’ discourses of protection in a generally equal manner, and therefore one or a few of the elements cannot be said to have dominated.

Secondly, I examined how refugees used and appropriated urban space (i.e. how they exercised their ‘right to the city’?). All of the four empirical chapters contributed to answering this question from various interrelated perspectives. Different chapters investigated refugees’ interpretations of their ‘right to the city’ in relation to the institutions and their office spaces (Chapter Five), the hosts and the urban environment

(Chapter Six), the fear of the 'Other Congolese' (Chapter Seven), and the various refugee communities (Chapter Eight).

First, analysing refugees' 'right to the city' as their physical access to and right to inhabit the city (Lefebvre 1996, Mitchell 2003) required an understanding of refugees' experiences of protection from multiple geographical levels. Their right to the city as a whole was influenced by Ugandan Government policy and legal environments, and therefore their access to space has to be also seen as a question of legal rights (Harvey 2008, Attoh 2011). Even though these official agreements ensured refugees' right to inhabit the city in the first place, refugees argued that in practice their right to the city and its micro-scale spaces of protection was restricted by the protection institutions. Also, their sense of urban fear – associated with the causes of their flight and precarious relations with their Ugandan hosts – restricted their ability to enjoy some of their rights, such as freedom of movement. Thus, the "cry and the demand" (Lefebvre 1996) to find protection in the city had become a central element of refugees' everyday life in their city of exile. The right to the official institutions and public spaces of the city did not present the only aspect of this struggle; refugees' commonly faced challenges in gaining their right to various community spaces. This was due to communal difficulties in terms of being able to find buildings within which to conduct community activities and also due to inter- and intra-community mistrust, which sometimes led to spatial and social exclusions.

The investigation of refugees' 'right to the city' was, however, more than about gaining legal rights and access to the city and its multiple spaces. It was necessary to also analyse the "twin elements" (Butler 2012: 142) of the right to appropriate space, on the one hand, and participate in spatial production, on the other hand. For Lefebvre (1996) appropriation

referred to the collective attempts to produce the city as a work of art – *oeuvre* – whereas participation in spatial production only fulfilled its ultimate goal if it was not imposed from above on the inhabitants; rather, it required inhabitants' self-management.

The conceptualisation of the 'right to the city' as appropriation and participation was discussed, for instance, in Chapters Seven and Eight. In Chapter Seven, I investigated refugees' physical right to the city in terms of the micro, meso, and macro scales. Refugees' accounts of each of these scales featured elements of the appropriation of space. For instance, their detailed descriptions of how to choose a neighbourhood to live in, where the safe and unsafe areas of the city were located at, and how they perceived their living in a city characterised by 'noise' (Goodfellow 2013) and political turmoil all referred to their appropriation of the urban.

Again, in Chapter Eight in which I investigated the communal spaces of protection, I discussed refugees' communal attempts to participate in the production of both formal and informal spaces of protection. I concluded that given the fact that refugees perceived other communities and institutions as restricting their right to protective community places, they argued for independence from these bodies and applied varied methods of resistance. These communal struggles over their participation, moreover, featured the element of trust at social, inter-communal and institutional levels. Thus, I conclude, not only were the different elements of space and various spatial scales needed for the investigation of refugees' 'right to the city', but so was the idea of trust. This, again, confirms the analytical protection/space/trust nexus.

My third research question was: how were refugees' experiences of protection/space/trust influenced by the evolving contexts and by the intersections of their individual characteristics? I came to ask this question largely based on my critical review of the trust literature, which suggested that both context and individual characteristics were of importance when 'trust' was under scrutiny. As I suggested that refugees' conceptualisations of 'protection' were based on their experiences of both 'space' and 'trust', I came to propose that the context and the characteristics would have an impact on refugees' entire understandings of the notion of 'protection space'.

In summary, the contexts in which the refugees were in seem to have had more influence on their experiences of protection/space/trust than did their individual characteristics. This is not to say that refugees should not be seen as individuals with specific needs, but rather that it was important to examine refugees' discourses of protection/space/trust from contextual and communal viewpoints. Thus, in order to analyse their sense of protection in Kampala, refugees' experiences of the flight, travel and arrival had to be discussed. My analysis showed how refugees' 'sense of place', ability to trust and experiences of protection in Kampala were affected by the persecution that had taken place in the DRC. Also, refugees went through multiple phases of trust during their travel to the relative safety of Kampala; their social trust and institutional trust changed over time and space.

Even though my findings suggest that refugees' overall experiences of their urban trust-based protection were largely shared across gender, age and ethnicity, among other factors, it was important to acknowledge that their protection discourses were characterised by refugees' individual features. However, seldom did one single individual characteristic explain their experiences of protection/space/trust. Rather, their protection discourses were

multidimensional and included refugees' tangled ideas about their gender, bodily appearance, age, ethnicity and spirituality, and so forth. In order to reflect on all these aspects which had an impact on their sense of protection, applying the idea of intersectionality was useful. Thus, it cannot be concluded that gender, for instance, was any more or less decisive characteristic in refugees' protection/space/trust discourses than were other characteristics. Rather, refugees argued that their ethnicity, associated with their "body map" (Lemarchand 2005), spirituality, legal status, age and gender all had an impact on their sense of urban protection and insecurity.

Fourth, I asked in what ways 'trust' affected refugees' relationships with their Ugandan hosts and with the protection institutions, and how it affected refugees' use of city space. My investigation of 'protection space' became focused on 'trust' because refugees' discourses in regard to their protection were heavily influenced by elements of social and institutional trust. Given this, I conclude that refugees' own conceptualisations of 'protection' were often centred on the elements of 'trust'. However, as I only observed the importance of trust during the initial data analysis, 'trust' was incorporated into my conceptual framework at a rather late stage of the research.

In Chapter Five, I examined refugees' experiences of institutional trust and concluded that their understanding of the official protection was largely characterised by institutional mistrust and a consequent sense of insecurity. Moreover, in Chapter Six I established that the relational spaces of protection between the refugees and the familiar and unacquainted Ugandan residents of Kampala were to some extent characterised by experiences of particularised and generalised social mistrust. As I adopted a particular refugee-focused approach, I did not aim to make any analytical comparisons between refugees' and

Ugandan's understandings of protection/space/trust. Subsequently, no conclusions can be drawn about the nature of protection space for other inhabitants of the city besides the Congolese refugees who took part in this study.

Given the prevalence of both social and institutional mistrust, refugees' use of the city space, its different neighbourhoods, and its official micro-level spaces of protection (i.e. the offices of the protection institutions) was limited due to a composite of attitudes, particularly their sense of urban fear of the 'Other' (Sandercock 2000, Bauman 2001). Therefore, I argue that refugees' 'sense of place' and their exercise of 'right to the city' were influenced by their ability to trust both their Ugandan hosts and the protection institutions. This finding, again, clearly shows how the notions of 'protection', 'space' and 'trust' were intertwined in refugees' discourse of their everyday life in their city of exile.

Lastly, I enquired into the extent to which 'trust' played a part in the way refugees' build relationships and community structures among themselves in Kampala. In Chapter Seven, I examined mostly generalised social trust among the Congolese refugee population at large, whereas in Chapter Eight I investigated particularised social trust among the members of different urban refugee communities. This analysis of refugees' 'communities of trust' further highlighted the need to understand 'trust' and the related concepts of 'protection' and 'space' from the communal viewpoint, as well as to particularly examine inter-community trust. This meso-scale of trust analysis (Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012) was crucial for an understanding of refugees' conceptualisation of 'protection space', and I suggest that, without the adoption of a communal approach in this study, refugees' individual accounts of 'protection space' would have provided only a partial and somewhat biased description of it.

When it came to refugees' generalised social trust within the large Congolese population in Kampala, it was clear that many of my refugee informants struggled to trust other Congolese refugees unless they knew them well. The prevalence of this generalised social mistrust was mainly due to their experiences of persecution in the DRC and the consequent flight. Some of the refugees who had already settled in Kampala were still concerned about the persecution spilling over from the DRC to their city of exile, and this caused them to be suspicious of other Congolese. Yet during their flight and arrival in Kampala they had to place their trust in other Congolese, and this analysis of the temporality and spatiality of trust showed how trust decisions were influenced not only by individual characteristics but also the evolving contexts.

However, as concluded in Chapter Eight, perhaps because of the widespread institutional and generalised social mistrust, refugees had created communities in which they were able to exercise trust decisions with the other community members. Thus, what the analysis showed was that in community settings refugees' experiences of protection/space/trust were extensively influenced by their shared inter-communal and institutional mistrust. Consequently, I conclude that the refugees' 'communities of trust' (Jabareen and Carmon 2010) were to some extent established and sustained because of the power struggles with other communities and with the protection institutions. Thus, I suggest that in order to fully understand refugees' communal sense of 'protection space', the investigation had to include both intra- and inter-community social trust and institutional trust. It was, therefore, clear that the meso-scale of trust was as important analytical element as were the micro and macro levels of trust. The communal forms of resistance and institutional mistrust also provided new insights into refugees' shared struggles over their 'right to the

city' (Lefebvre 1996, Purcell 2003, Butler 2012) and in relation to their participation in the production of various spaces of protection.

### **9.3. The notion of 'protection space' reconsidered**

My overall conclusion is that the UNHCR definition of 'protection space' –the starting point of this study– as “the extent to which there is a conducive environment for the internationally recognised rights of refugees to be respected and upheld” (Crisp et al. 2009) is deemed to be analytically insufficient. Also, the dualistic understanding of this term as divided into physical space and action space (Evans Barnes 2009) was questioned in the study because it was shown not to provide a fully meaningful representation of refugees' understandings of the link between protection and space in the urban context.

As this study has shown, 'protection space' is more than just the traditional understandings of the terms 'protection' and 'space'. It also does not have to be just an empty metaphor aimed at enriching the otherwise legal literature of urban refugee protection. Refugees' conceptualisations of the idea of 'protection space' call for further questioning of the concepts of 'protection' and 'space', and suggest the necessity of introducing a complementary concept of 'trust'. Accordingly, I argue for a broad conceptualisation of the term which is based on refugees' own experiences and ideas about 'protection', 'space' and 'trust' as already discussed above.

First, I argue that since the Congolese refugees in this study conceptualised the notion of 'protection' not only legally and physically but also relationally (i.e. their trust-based sense of protection) and spiritually, this challenges the orthodox definitions of 'protection' by the

institutions that have dominated protection programming. This also has implications for further urban refugee research, which will be discussed in the next section. Additionally, as I found out that refugees' discourses of protection and insecurity were sometimes intertwined, the assumed clear-cut distinction between them also has to be questioned. Most notably at the communal level, refugees argued that the actions and inactions of the protection institutions made them feel more insecure than safe. Yet these engagements were often framed as 'protection' by the institutions. In addition, it became clear that refugees' sense of protection and insecurity were affected by their everyday use and negotiation of urban space. Given these empirical findings, I argue that refugees' urban protection cannot be fully understood without also investigating their discourses of space and trust.

Second, with regard to 'space', my empirical analysis confirmed the importance of analysing refugees' physical, imagined, lived (Lefebvre 1991) and relational (Massey 2005) spatial discourses. All these different elements of space were referred to by the refugees in a rather equal manner, and thus they all need to be incorporated in the conceptual framework of the 'protection space'. Importantly, refugees' discourses of space were reflected from various spatial scales, from the body and individual buildings (i.e. the micro-scale) to the different areas of the city (i.e. the meso-scale), and then to the entire city and its regional position (i.e. the macro-scale). Moreover, in order to analyse the essentially urban character of protection, the theoretical ideas of the 'sense of place' and 'right to the city' must be considered. In particular, analysing refugees' individual and communal right to the city (Lefebvre 1996) from the physical access to it (Mitchell 2003), appropriation of it, and participation in its production (Purcell 2002, Butler 2012) can be developed into a central idea in the examination of 'protection space'. To conclude, when

‘protection space’ is examined in an urban setting, attention needs to be paid to the different elements of space, spatial scales and the essentially urban character of space.

Third, ‘trust’ emerged as a central concept in the examination of refugee protection in an urban environment. Both generalised and particularised social trust and institutional trust had to be investigated not only from individual but also communal viewpoints in order to understand how trust shaped refugees’ sense of protection and experiences of space. The notion of intersectionality became an important aspect of the analysis as refugees used their various ‘identity elements’, such as gender, age, ethnicity, bodily appearance, legal status and spirituality, in their protection/space/trust discourses. Yet none of these characteristics ended up being more dominant than others, and thus it is important to pay attention to all of them when ‘protection space’ is under scrutiny. To conclude, as I defined relational space in essence as trust-based relations that in turn had an impact on refugees’ sense of protection, it became clear that all of the three key concepts of this study were, indeed, highly intertwined and inseparable.

In summary, in order to use this reconsidered understanding of ‘protection space’ it has to be acknowledged that all three elements of it (i.e. protection, space and trust) emerge at different spatial scales and are highly intertwined concepts. In order to apply this novel conceptualisation of ‘protection space’ it is not only important to examine it from the viewpoint of individual refugees but also to incorporate refugees’ communities’, urban hosts’ and protection institutions’ discourses of the protection/space/trust nexus, which fundamentally forms the reconsidered notion of ‘protection space’ – a concept which deserves to be used in refugee policies, practices and research as more than just a metaphor.

In the following section, I propose some directions for further research emerging from this reconfigured notion of ‘protection space’.

#### **9.4. Directions for further research**

Based on the main findings of this study, I suggest some directions for future research on urban refugees.

Firstly, there is a need to conduct more research on the spatiality of protection, particularly in urban settings. Given the increasing use of spatial metaphors in refugee policies and practices, a better understanding of the relationship between ‘space’ and ‘protection’ is essential in order to enhance refugee protection. In terms of the physical elements of space, conducting more research in small-scale cities and towns would be interesting given the reality that the majority of the research has been conducted in a rather limited number of capital cities (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013). Investigating the relational spaces of protection between refugees and the official protection architecture, on the one hand, and between different urban refugee communities, on the other hand, is crucial for the heightening of protection.

Secondly, still related to the spatial character of protection, studies focused on refugees’ struggles to extent their ‘right to the city’ would be welcomed from both empirical and theoretical viewpoints. It is surprising how few refugee scholars have so far applied Lefebvre’s (1996) critical thinking on the relationship between ‘rights’ and the ‘urban’. In particular, more theoretical writings on what the alternative models of citizenship based on urban inhabitance might look like with regard to refugees and migrants would be valuable.

Third, I argue that future studies on urban refugees should focus on the communities that refugees have established and joined. This again requires more theoretical research on the notion of ‘community’ and the associated issue of intra- and inter-community trust. I have also emphasised the need for more studies on urban refugees’ social networks and communities in my earlier work on community-based protection in the cities and towns of Global South (Lyytinen and Kullenberg 2013).

Fourth, as concluded, refugees’ conceptualisations of their urban protection differed from the policy- and programming-oriented orthodox definitions of ‘protection’. I suggest that the spiritual element of protection, in particular, requires more research. Yet human geography and refugee studies as disciplines have often overlooked the themes of religion, spirituality and faith. In future, this shortage of knowledge and academic literature should be overcome. Even though in refugee studies this line of research has been increasing over the course of the past few years, there are particular target areas that more faith-based studies should be directed at. We need to increase and deepen our understanding of the church as a sanctuary, in particular in the Global South. More studies on the emotional geographies of faith and spirituality in relation to refugee protection should also be conducted. Additionally, more applied studies on the role of FBOs and different places of worship as service providers for refugees would increase our knowledge of the informal protection work these faith-based institutions conduct in different parts of the world.

### **9.5. Reflecting on the methodological approach**

In this study I applied a flexibly designed qualitative case study approach. Assuring the flexibility of the research design was important because, without this openness, I could

have potentially missed some of the crucial aspects of my analysis, such as the essential aspect of 'trust' in refugee protection. Also, this flexible approach was needed when different data-collection methods were tested. Given the analysis of 'space' it became clear during the research process that other methods were needed to support the traditional qualitative data-collection methods of interviewing, FGDs and observation. Thus, a combination of visual methods was introduced during the data-collection phase. To conclude, due to the fluidity of my research design, this study was able to formulate the essential research questions and to apply a combination of methods to efficiently answer these questions.

Adopting a case study approach to my research was important due to the understanding that the Congolese refugees in Kampala presented a unique case study. Limiting my study to one refugee nationality was essential also because the particular context of the flight and the political environment were important for the overall analysis. Conducting my study in Kampala, however, raised some questions in retrospect. Firstly, even though prior to my fieldwork I identified and confirmed a need to conduct more recent research on urban refugees in this city, during the course of my four-year research project it became clear to me that there was an overwhelming amount of research being conducted in Kampala that focused or touched on urban refugees. This naturally resulted in some considerations which had to be made in regard to data collection. Towards the end of my project I also received emails from some of the communities I worked with raising both excitement and concerns about this growth in the number of researchers conducting projects among the refugees in Kampala.

Given this situation, the ethics of conducting research became extremely important and reflecting on them was necessary throughout the different stages of my research. I struggled with my writing on the issue of institutional and inter-community mistrust, in particular. I attempted to avoid some of the ethical questions by writing as much as possible from the viewpoint of different communities and institutions. Employing as wide-ranging a representation of diverse discourses as possible hopefully ensured that I found the most accurate way of presenting my data from different informants. Also, acknowledging from the outset of my research that my data set included not only testimonies but also rumours, perceptions and metaphors, among other subjective aspects, was important. Yet because I applied aspects of discourse analysis as my data analysis method, I realised that my task was not to try to present an agreed 'truth' of a matter, but rather to present and critically discuss the various, sometimes contradictory 'truths' presented to me by my interlocutors.

Given the fact that I applied a case study approach to my study, it was necessary for me to utilise various qualitative data-collection methods to ensure the rigour of my analysis. These included a combination of semi-structured interviews, observation and FGDs, supported by visual methods (time-space diaries and participatory photographing). I conclude that without using all of these different methods, I would not have been able to conduct as rich an analysis as I did. The use of FGDs and observation was essential given my work with different communities. Also, answering my research questions on 'space' required the supplementary use of visual methods. Thus, all of the data-collection methods contributed towards achieving the main aim and objectives of this study.

However, given the use of a number of different methods, I ended up with a large amount of very rich data. Also, a limitation in terms of data collection was the fact that initially I did not plan to focus on the issue of 'trust'. Therefore, had I discovered the central role of trust discourses prior to my fieldwork, I may have designed my data collection slightly differently and would have included direct questions on 'trust' into my interview and FGD scripts. Yet as has been confirmed in the trust literature, data collection with an implicit interest in 'trust' is quite common and can still make a relevant contribution towards the scholarly works on 'trust' (Möllering 2006; Lyon, Möllering and Saunders 2012).

#### **9.6. Contribution to the literatures**

This study applied and contributed to the scholarly literatures of human geography and refugees studies. In presenting a current case study of urban refugees in the city of Kampala, it also contributes to the body of previous work on refugees in the capital city of Uganda.

The main contribution that this study made with regards to human geography was the applied use of the concept of 'space', in particular the original interpretation of 'relational space' which connected the examination of 'space' and 'trust'. Previous studies on the relational conceptualisation of space have not explicitly focused on the issue of social and institutional trust, and therefore my analysis of urban refugees' relational spaces of trust made a timely contribution to the theoretical thinking about 'space'.

My refugee-initiated definition and analysis of urban communities also contributed to the wider field of geographical study of marginalised communities living in the capital cities

of the Global South. Understanding the non-place-relatedness of the various urban refugee communities supports broadening the geographical research on urban communities. With regard to my examination of refugee communities, I also used Jabareen and Carmon's (2010) framework of the 'community of trust' in an innovative manner in this study. In particular, my applied understanding of space and trust in relation to their framework provided new insights into refugees' communal struggles.

In addition, this study gave some new empirical insights into the geographical studies on spatial and social exclusions (Sibley 1995) that can take place in urban environments. Consequently, this research also contributed to the increasing number of studies that aim at enhancing our knowledge of the various forms of urban resistance (Amin and Thrift 2002, Mitchell 2003). My analysis of refugees' 'right to the city' (Lefebvre 1996), in particular, provided empirically rich investigation of refugees' communal struggles over their right to access protective spaces, appropriate them and participate in their production. Theoretically, my examination of refugees' 'right to the city' was, moreover, not limited to the traditional Lefebvrian understanding of the notion but also incorporated more recent applications of it (Purcell 2002, Harvey 2008, Attoh 2011 and Butler 2012).

In terms of the refugee studies literature, this thesis is timely and important for a number of reasons. Firstly, despite the increasing academic and policy interest in urban refugees in recent years, the follow-up since the so-called 'theme year' of urban refugees in 2009 has been rather limited (Crisp, Morris and Refstie 2012). This study provided new insights on a number of important issues in urban refugee research which have largely risen from the policy discussions held after the launch of the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy. These included a rigorous interrogation of the notion of 'protection space', revisiting the concept

of 'refugee protection' in urban environments, and critical analysis of community-based protection approaches.

Secondly, the main themes explored in this study – namely 'protection', 'space' and 'trust' – have not previously been in the forefront of urban refugee studies, which have traditionally focused on the various legal frameworks and service provisions. These three themes have also not been theorised sufficiently in previous studies on refugees and this research particularly focused on contributing to filling this gap. Thus, by bringing in various geographical and social science theories, my study shows how refugee studies can benefit from borrowing and applying theories from other academic fields.

Thirdly, this study presented some novel ways to conduct urban refugee research from both the individual and communal viewpoints. The communal side of analysis has been largely missing from previous studies on urban refugees, despite the policy importance placed on the community-based approaches to protection. Therefore, this study provides valuable, timely insights on the communal forms of protection and insecurity.

To conclude, this study provided a number of theoretically and empirically important contributions to the literatures of human geography and urban refugee studies, and beyond.



## References cited

- ABILD, E. (2009) Creating humanitarian space: a case study of Somalia. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 184. UNHCR, Geneva.
- ADDISON, S. (2009) *Protecting People in Conflict and Crisis: Responding to the Challenges of a Changing World*. Reflections on an international conference. Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford.
- ALASZEWSKI, A. (2006) *Using Diaries for Social Research*. Sage Publication, London.
- ALESINA, A. and FERRARA, E.L. (2002) Who trusts others? *Journal of Public Economics*, 85: 207–234.
- AMIN, A. and THRIFT, N. (2002) *Cities. Reimagining the Urban*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- AMISI B.B. (2006) An Exploration of the Livelihood Strategies of Durban Congolese Refugees. *New Issues in Refugee Research*. Research Paper No. 123. UNHCR, Geneva.
- ANDERSON, J. (2012) Urban displacement and peacebuilding: an analysis of South African social cohesion interventions. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 243. UNHCR, Geneva.
- ATTOH, K. A. (2011) What kind of right is the right to the city? *Progress in Human Geography*, 35 (5): 669–685.
- AUTESSERRE, S. (2010) *The Trouble with the Congo. Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- AUTESSERRE, S. (2012) Dangerous tales: Dominant narratives on the Congo and their unintended consequences. *African Affairs*, 111 (443): 202–222.
- BAKER, C. and MILES-WATSON, J. (2010) Faith and Traditional Capitals: Defining the Public Scope of Spiritual and Religious Capital—A Literature Review. *Implicit Religion*, 13 (1): 17–69.
- BAKEWELL, O. (2003) Community services in refugee aid programmes: a critical analysis. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 82. UNHCR, Geneva.
- BAKEWELL, O. and JONSSON, G. (2011) *Migration, mobility and the African City*. IMI Working paper 50. International Migration Institute, Oxford.
- BAKEWELL, O. and BONFIGLIO, A. (2013) *Moving Beyond Conflict: Re-framing mobility in the African Great Lakes region*. Working paper for the African Great Lakes Mobility Project. IMI Working paper 71. International Migration Institute, Oxford.
- BAUMAN, Z. (2001) *Community. Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- BAXTER, P. and JACK, S. (2008) Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13 (4): 544–559.
- BAZELEY, P. 2007 *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*. SAGE Publications, London.
- BBC (2010) 'Somali link' as 74 World Cup fans die in Uganda blasts. 12 July 2010. Online at: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10593771>> (Accessed 18 April 2013).
- BEHNIA, B. (2004) Trust Building from the Perspective of Survivors of War and Torture. *Social Service Review*, 78 (1): 26–40.
- BEKKER, S. and THERBORN, G. (2012) Introduction. 1–6 in Bekker, S. and Therborn, G. (eds.) *Capital Cities in Africa*. HSRC Press, Cape Town.
- BERNSTEIN, J. and OKELLO, M.C. (2007) To Be or Not to Be: Urban Refugees in Kampala. *Refugee*: 24 (1): 46–56.
- BERSTEIN, J. (2005) *A Drop in the Ocean: Assistance and Protection for Forced Migrants in Kampala*. Working Paper 16. Refugee Law Project, Kampala.
- BEYTRISON, F. and KALIS, O. (2013) Repeated displacement in eastern DRC. *Forced Migration Review*, 43: 22–23.
- BINAISA, N. (2011) *African migrants negotiate 'home' and 'belonging'*. International Migration Institute. Queen Elizabeth House, Department of International Development, Oxford. Online at: [http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/publications/working\\_papers](http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/publications/working_papers) (Accessed 11 December 2011).
- BLAUT, J. (1961) Space and Process. *Professional Geographer*, XIII (4): 1–7.
- BLUMBERG, B. F., PERIÓ, J. M. and ROE, R.A. (2012) Trust and social capital: challenges for studying their dynamic relationship. 61–71 in Lyon, F., Möllering, G. and Saunders, M.N.K. (eds.) *Handbook of Research Methods on Trust*. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham.
- BOANO, C. (2009) "Violent spaces": production and reproduction of security and vulnerabilities. Conference presentation. Protecting People in Conflict & Crisis, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, 22–24 September 2009.
- BOANO, C. (2011) Violent spaces: production and reproduction of security and vulnerabilities. *The Journal of Architecture*, 16 (1): 37–55.
- BONFIGLIO, A. (2010) Learning outside the classroom: non-formal refugee education in Uganda. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 193. UNHCR, Geneva.

- BRADSHAW, M. and STRATFORD, E. (2005) Qualitative Research Design and Rigour. 67–76 in Hay, I. (eds.) *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- BRAITHWAITE, V. (1998) Communal and Exchange Trust Norms: Their Value Base and Relevance to Institutional Trust. 46–74 in Braithwaite, V. and Levi, M. (eds.) *Trust and Governance*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York.
- BRIDGE, G. and WATSON, S. (2002) City Imaginaries, in Bridge, G. and Watson, S. (eds.) *Companion to the City*. Blackwell Reference Online, Oxford. Online at: <[http://www.blackwellreference.com/subscriber/uid=959/book?id=g9780631235781\\_978063123581](http://www.blackwellreference.com/subscriber/uid=959/book?id=g9780631235781_978063123581)> (Accessed 29 May 2012).
- BRUN, C. (2001) Reterritorializing the relationship between people and place in refugee studies. *Geografiska Annaler*, 83, 15–24.
- BUTLER, C. (2012) *Henri Lefebvre: Spatial politics, everyday life and the right to the city*. Nomikoi: Critical Legal Thinkers. Routledge, Abington.
- CACHARI, J. and CLICHÉ-RIVARD, G. (2013) UNHCR African bureau announces only three states to implement cessation clause to Rwandan refugees. *Fahamu Refugee Legal Aid Newsletter*. 1 July 2013. Online at: <<http://frian.tumblr.com/post/54334445025/unhcr-africa-bureau-announces-only-three-states-to>> (Accessed 2 August 2013).
- CALHOUN, N. (2010a) UNHCR and community development: a weak link in the chain of refugee protection? *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 191. UNHCR, Geneva.
- CALHOUN, N. (2010b) With a little help from our friends: a participatory assessment of social capital among refugees in Jordan. *New Issues in Refugee Research*. Research Paper No. 189. UNHCR, Geneva.
- CAMERON, J. (2005) Focusing on the Focus Group. 116–132 in Hay, I. (eds.) *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- CAMPBELL, E. (2006) *Refugee protection challenges in the era of globalization: The case of Nairobi*. Doctoral dissertation. State University of New York, New York.
- CAMPBELL, E., CRISP, J. and KIRAGU, E. (2011) *Navigating Nairobi. A review of the implementation of UNHCR's urban refugee policy in Kenya's capital city*. UNHCR, Geneva.
- CANDLIN, C.N. and CRICHTON, J. (2012) From ontology to methodology: exploring the discursive landscape of trust. 1–18 in Candlin, C. and Crichton, J. (eds.) *Discourses of Trust*. Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- CASTLES, S. (2012) Methodology and Methods: Conceptual Issues. 15–36 in Berriane, M. and de Haas, H. (eds.) *African Migrations Research. Innovative Methods and Methodologies*. Africa World Press, London.
- CHENEY, K. (2012) Locating Neocolonialism, “Tradition”, and Human Rights in Uganda’s “Gay Death Penalty”. *African Studies Review*, 55 (2): 77–95.
- CIA (2013a) *Uganda*. The World Fact Book. Online at: <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html>> (Accessed 29 March 2012).
- CIA (2013b) *The Democratic Republic of Congo*. The World Fact Book. Online at: <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html>> (Accessed 29 March 2012).
- CITIES ALLIANCE (2009) *Development of the National Urban Policy and Strategic Urban Development Plan for Uganda*. Proposal. Cities Without Slums, Cities Alliance.
- CLARK, P. (2008) Ethnicity, Leadership and Conflict Resolution in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: The Case of the Barza Inter-Communaire. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 2 (1): 1–17.
- CLARK-KAZAK, C. (2006) *Beyond borders: political marginalisation of Congolese young people in Uganda*. D.Phil. Thesis, QEH, Department of International Development, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- CLARK-KAZAK, C. (2012) Challenging some assumptions about ‘refugee youth’. *Forced Migration Review* 40, 13–14.
- COKER, E.M. (2004) Dislocated Identity and the Fragmented Body: Discourses of Resistance among Southern Sudanese Refugees in Cairo. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 17 (4): 401–419.
- COLEMAN, J.S. (1988) Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94: S95–S120.
- COLLISION, S. and ELHAWARY, S. (2012) *Humanitarian space: A review of trends and issues*. Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, London.
- COOPER, D. (1993) *A needs assessment of the Ethiopian and Eritrean refugee populations in Cairo*. Report to the Ford Foundation, Cairo. American University of Cairo, Cairo.

- COPE, M. (2005) Coding Qualitative Data. 223–233 in Hay, I. (eds.) *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- COULTER, C. (2009) *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers. Women's Lives through War and Peace in Sierra Leone*. Cornell University Press, London.
- CRAWFORD, K., SUVATNE, M., KENNEDY, J. and CORSELLIS, T. (2010) Urban shelter and the limits of humanitarian action. *Forced Migration Review*, 34: 27–28.
- CRISP, J., JANZ, J., RIERA, J. and SAMY, S. (2009) *Surviving in the city. A review of UNHCR's operation for Iraqi refugees in urban areas of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria*. UNHCR, Geneva.
- CRISP, J., MORRIS, T. and REFSTIE, H. (2012) Displacement in urban areas: New challenges, new partnerships. *Disasters*, 36: s23–s42.
- CRISP, J., OBI, N. and UMLAS, L. (2012) *But when will our turn come? A review of the implementation of UNHCR's urban refugee policy in Malaysia*. UNHCR, Geneva.
- CROOK, R. (2012) 'Gays, Gods and Governments': homophobia in Uganda. *Open Democracy*, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2012. Online at: <<http://www.opendemocracy.net>> (Accessed 21 February 2012).
- DALEY, P. (2008) *Gender and Genocide in Burundi. The Search for Spaces of Peace in the Great Lakes Region*. African Issues James Currey, Oxford.
- DANIEL, E. and KNUDSEN, J.C. (1995, eds.) *Mistrusting refugees*. University California Press, Berkeley, London.
- DANIELSON, N. (2012) Urban Refugee Protection in Cairo: the role of communication, information and technology. *New Issues in Refugee Research*. Research Paper No. 236. UNHCR, Geneva.
- DE SOUZA, M. L. (2010) Which right to which city? In defence of political-strategic clarity. *Interface*, 2 (1): 315–333.
- DOLAN, C. (2010) *War is not yet over. Community Perceptions of Sexual Violence and its Underpinnings in Eastern DRC*. International Alert. Online at: <<http://www.internationalalert.org/sites/default/files/publications/1011WarIsNotYetOverEng.pdf>> (Accessed 24 June 2012)
- DOYLE, M. (2012) US blocking UN report on DR Congo rebels, watchdog says. BBC, London. Online at: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-18538997>> (Accessed 25 June 2012).
- DRYDEN-PETERSON, S. (2006). 'I Find Myself as Someone Who is in the Forest': Urban Refugees as Agents of Social Change in Kampala, Uganda. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 19 (3): 381-395.
- DUNN, J.R. and SCHWEITZER, M. E. (2005) Feeling and Believing: The Influence on Emotion on Trust. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88 (5): 736–748.
- DUNN, K. (2003) *Imagining the Congo. The international relations of identity*. Palgrave MacMillan, New York.
- DUNN, K. (2005) Interviewing. 79–105 in Hay, I. (eds.) *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- DURIEUX, J-F. (2009) *When 'protection' meets 'humanitarian'...* Keynote Paper for the International Conference on "Protecting People in Conflict and Crisis: Responding to the Challenges of a Changing World", Refugee Studies Centre, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- EDWARDS, A. (2010) "Legitimate" protection spaces: UNHCR's 2009 policy. *Forced Migration Review*, 34: 48–49.
- ELDEN, S. (2009). *Space I*. Encyclopaedia of Human Geography. Elsevier, London.
- EVANS BARNES, A. (2009) Realizing protection space for Iraqi refugees: UNHCR in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 167. UNHCR, Geneva.
- FERRIS, E.G. (2011) *The Politics of Protection. The limits of humanitarian action*. Bookings Institution Press, Washington DC.
- FIDDIAN-QUASMIYEH, E. and AGER, A. (2013) *Local faith communities and the promotion of resilience in humanitarian situations*. Working Paper Series No. 90, Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford.
- FINLAYSON, C.C. (2012) *Spaces of Faith: An Affective Geographical Exploration of Houses of Worship*. Doctoral Dissertation. The Florida State University, College of Social Sciences, Florida.
- FLINT, J. (2009) *Neighbourhoods and Community*. Encyclopaedia of Human Geography. Elsevier, London.
- FLYVBJERG, B. (2006) Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry* 12 (2): 218–245.
- FLYVBJERG, B. (2011) Case Study. 301–316 in Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, Sage, California.
- FUJII, A. L. (2009) Interpreting truth and lies in stories of conflict and violence. 147–162 in Sriram, C. L., King, J. C., Mertus, J. A., Martin-Ortega, O. and Herman, J. (eds.) *Surviving Field Research. Working in violent and difficult situations*. Routledge, London.
- GAMBETTA, D. (1988) Foreword, in Gambetta, D. (ed.) *Trust. Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations*. Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

- GETTLEMAN, J. and KRON, J. (2010) *Suspicion of Arson at Royal Tombs Fuels Deadly Clashes in Uganda*, New York Times. 17 March 2010. Online at: <[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/18/world/africa/18uganda.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/18/world/africa/18uganda.html?_r=0)> (Accessed 18 April 2013).
- GIDDENS, A. (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- GIDDENS, A. (1991) *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- GILBERT, J. (2013, forthcoming) *Constitutionalism, Ethnicity and Minority Rights in Africa: A Legal Appraisal from the Great Lakes Region*. A forthcoming journal paper. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- GIRITLI-NYGRÉN, K. and SCHMAUCH, U. (2012) Picturing inclusive places in segregated spaces: a participatory photo project conducted by migrant women in Sweden. *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 19 (5): 600–614.
- GOODFELLOW, T. (2013) The Institutionalisation of “Noise” and “Silence” in Urban Politics: Ritos and Compliance in Uganda and Rwanda. *Oxford Development Studies*, 1–19.
- GOODWIN-GILL, G.S. and McADAM, J. (2007) *The refugee in international law*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- GORE, C.D. and MUWANGA, N.K. (2013) Decentralization is Dead, Long Live Decentralization! Capital City Reform and Political Rights in Kampala, Uganda. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 1–16.
- GRBAC, P. (2013) *Civitas, polis, and urbs. Reimagining the refugee camp as the city*. Working Paper Series No. 96, Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford.
- GRIFFITHS, M. (2012) ‘Vile liars and truth distorters’. Truth, trust, and the asylum system. *Anthropology Today*, 28 (5): 8–12.
- GUILLEMIN, M. and GILLIAM, L. (2004) Ethics, Reflexivity, and “Ethically Important Moments” in Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10: 261–280.
- HALL, C. and SYMON, G. (2012) Reasons to believe: Participants’ explanations of trust in an outsourcing relationship. *Journal of Trust Research*, 2 (2): 137–170.
- HAMMOND, L. and VAUGHAN-LEE, H. (2012) *Humanitarian space in Somalia: a scarce commodity*. Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, London.
- HANSEN, K.T. and VAA, M. (2004) Introduction. 7–24 in Hansen, K.T. and Vaa, M. (eds.) *Reconsidering Informality. Perspectives from Urban Africa*. The Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala.
- HARDIN, R. (2004) Distrust: Manifestations and Management, 3–33 in Hardin, R. (ed.) *Distrust*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York.
- HARVEY, D. (2003) The Right to the City. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27 (4): 939–941.
- HARVEY, D. (2004) *Space as a Key Word*. Paper for Marx and Philosophy Conference, 29 May 2004, Institute of Education, London.
- HARVEY, D. (2008) The Right to the City. *New Left Review*, 53: 23–40.
- HAWKINS, R.L. and MAURER, K. (2011) ‘You fix my community, you have fixed my life’: the disruption and rebuilding of ontological security in New Orleans. *Disasters*, 35 (1): 143–159.
- HOLGATE, J., KELES, J. and KUMARAPPAN, L. (2012) Visualizing ‘community’: an experiment in participatory photography among Kurdish diasporic workers in London. *The Sociological Review*, 60 (2): 312–332.
- HOLZER, E. (2010) *I am only looking up to God: Protest, repressions and homecoming in a West African refugee camp*. Doctoral Dissertation in Sociology. University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- HOLZER, V. (2012) *The 1951 Refugee Convention and the Protection of People Fleeing Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence*. Division of International Protection, Legal and Protection Policy Research Series, UNHCR, Geneva.
- HOVIL, L. and OKELLO, M. C. (2008) The Right to Freedom of Movement for Refugees in Uganda. 77–90 in Hollenbach, D. (ed.) *Refugee Rights. Ethics, Advocacy, and Africa*. Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C.
- HUFF, K. and KALYANGO, R. (2002) *Refugees in the city: Status Determination, Resettlement, and the Changing Nature of Forced Migration in Uganda*. Working Paper 6. Refugee Law Project, Kampala.
- HRW (2002) *Hidden in Plain View. Refugees Living Without Protection in Nairobi and Kampala*. HRW, New York.
- HRW (2007) *Renewed crisis in North Kivu*. HRW, London.
- HRW (2009) *“You will be punished”. Attacks on civilians in Eastern Congo*. HRW, London.

- HRW (2010) *Always on the Run. The vicious cycle of displacement in Eastern Congo*. HRW, London.
- HUYSMANS, J., DOBSON, A. and PROKHOVNIK, R. (2006, eds.) Preface. *The politics of protection. Sites of insecurity and political agency*. Routledge, London.
- HYNDMAN, J. (2000) *Managing Displacement. Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism*. Borderlines Vol. 16, University of Minnesota Press, London.
- HYNDMAN, J. (2003) Preventive, Palliative, or Punitive? Safe spaces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia, and Sri Lanka. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 16 (2): 167–185.
- HYNDMAN, J. and MOUNTZ, A. (2004) Refuge or Refusal? 77–92 in Gregory, D. and Pred, A. (eds.) *Violent Geographies. Fear, Terror, and Political Violence*. Routledge, London.
- HYNES, P. (2009) Contemporary Compulsory Dispersal and the Absence of Space for the Restoration of Trust. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 22 (1): 97–121.
- HYNES, T. (2003) The Issue of ‘trust’ or ‘mistrust’ in research with refugees: choices, caveats and considerations for researchers. *New Issues in Refugee Research*. Research paper 98. UNHCR, Geneva.
- IAU (2009) *Annual Review 2009. Working with the Disadvantaged Persons*. InterAid Uganda, Kampala.
- ICG (2003) *The Kivus: The Forgotten Crucible of the Congo Conflict*. Africa Report, 56. ICG
- JABAREEN, Y. and CARMON, N. (2010) Community of trust: A socio-cultural approach for community planning and the case of Gaza. *Habitat International*, 34: 446–453.
- JACKSON, B. (1987) *The Role of Associations in the Adaptation of Refugees in an Urban Environment. The Case of Ethiopians in Khartoum*. BA dissertation, School of Geography, University of Oxford.
- JACOBSEN, K. (2006) Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Urban Areas: A Livelihood Perspective. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19 (3): 273–286.
- JASINSKI, M.P. (2010) *Social trust, anarchy, and international conflict*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- JIMENEZ, A.C. (2011) Trust in anthropology. *Anthropology Today*, 11 (2): 177–196.
- JOANOU, J.P. (2009) The bad and the ugly: the ethical concerns in participatory photographic methods with children living and working on the streets of Lima, Peru. *Visual Studies*, 24 (3): 214–223.
- JOHNSTON, L. (2009) *Body, The*. Encyclopaedia of Human Geography. Elsevier, London.
- JONSSON, G. (2009) *Comparative report: African migration trends*. African Perspectives on Human Mobility. International Migration Institute, Oxford.
- JUNG, H. (2012) Let Their Voices Be Seen: Exploring Mental Mapping as Feminist Visual Methodology for the Study of Migrant Women. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 1–18.
- KAGAN, M. (2007) Legal Refugee Recognition in the Urban South: Formal v. *de facto* Refugee Status. *Refugee*, 24 (1): 11–26.
- KAISER, T. (2005) ‘Participating in Development? Refugee Protection, Politics and Developmental Approaches to Refugee Management in Uganda.’ *Third World Quarterly*, 26 (2): 351–367.
- KCC (2010) *Administrative Boundary of Kampala*. A map. Kampala City Council, GIS Unit. Kampala.
- KCCA (2010) *The City of Kampala*. KCCA, Kampala.
- KCCA (2013a) *Kampala administrative boundaries*. Maps. Kampala Capital City Authority, GIS Department, Kampala.
- KCCA (2013b) *Statement on the issues of Kampala Capital City Authority*. Office of the Executive Director. 6th February, 2013.
- KEARNS, R.A. (2005) Knowing Seeing? Undertaking Observational Research. 192–206 in Hay, I. (eds.) *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- KEEN, D. (2009) *Security and protection*. Keynote Paper for the International Conference on “Protecting People in Conflict and Crisis: Responding to the Challenges of a Changing World”, Refugee Studies Centre, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- KIBREAB, G. (1996) Eritrean and Ethiopian Urban Refugees in Khartoum: What the Eye Refuses to See. *African Studies Review*, 39 (3): 131–178.
- KIBREAB, G. (1999a) Revisiting the Debate on People, Place, Identity and Displacement. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 12 (4): 385–410.
- KIBREAB, G. (1999b) Rejoinder to the Replies by Daniel Warner, Finn Stepputat and David Turton. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 12 (4): 422–428.
- KIBREAB, G. (2004) Pulling the Wool over the Eyes of the Strangers: Refugee Deceit and Trickery in Institutionalized Settings. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 17 (1): 1–26.
- KIGGUNDU, E. (2009) *Two dead as chaos erupts in Kampala over Kabaka’s visit to Bugerere*. The Observer. 10 September 2009. Online at: <[http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=5072:to-dead-as-chaos-erupts-in-kampala-over-kabakas-visit-to-bugerere](http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5072:to-dead-as-chaos-erupts-in-kampala-over-kabakas-visit-to-bugerere)> (Accessed 18 April 2013).
- KITCHIN, P. (2009). *Space II*. Encyclopaedia of Human Geography. Elsevier, London.

- KNOTT, K. (2005) Spatial Theory and Method for the Study of Religion. The Finnish Society for the Study of Religion. *Temenos*, 41 (2): 153–184.
- KOBIA, K. and GRANFIELD, L. (2009) Literature Review: Urban Refugees. Refugees Branch, Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Online at: <<http://www.unhcr.org/4b0a528c9.pdf>> (Accessed 28.11.2012).
- KUNZ, E.F. (1973) The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement. *International Migration Review*, 7 (2): 125–146.
- LAMMERS, E. (2006a) *War, Refuge and Self. Soldiers, Students and Artists in Kampala, Uganda*. PhD thesis. Thela Thesis, Amsterdam.
- LAMMERS, E. (2006b). Community and Individual in the Aftermath of War: Perspectives from African Philosophy. *Social Identities*, 11 (6): 607–629.
- LANDAU, L.B. (2004) *Urban Refugees. Study Guide*. Forced Migration Online, Oxford.
- LANDAU, L.B. and DUPONCHEL, M. (2011) Laws, Policies, or Social Position? Capabilities and the Determinants of Effective Protection in Four African Cities. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 24 (1): 1–22.
- LANGE, M. (2010) Refugee return and root causes of conflict. *Forced Migration Review*, 36: 48–49.
- LATHAM, A. (2003) Research, performance, and doing human geography: some reflections on the diary photograph, diary-interview method. *Environment and Planning A*, 35: 1993–2017.
- LATHAM, A., McCORMACK, D., McNAMARA, K. and McNEILL, D. (2009) *Key concepts in urban geography*. Sage, London.
- LEFEBVRE, H (1991) *The Production of Space*. Blackwell Publisher, Oxford.
- LEFEBVRE, H. (1996) *Writings of cities*. Translated and edited by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.
- LEMARCHAND, R. (2005) The Geopolitics of the Great Lakes Crisis. *L’Afrique des Grand Lacs-Dix ans de Transitions Conflictuelles: Annuaire*, 25–26.
- LEVI, M. (1998). A State of Trust. 77–101 in Braithwaite, V. and Levi, M. (eds.) *Trust and Governance*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York.
- LI, P.P. (2007) Towards an Interdisciplinary Conceptualization of Trust: A Typological Approach. *Management and Organization Review*, 3 (3): 421–445.
- LI, P.P. (2012) When trust matters the most: The imperatives for contextualising trust research. *Journal of Trust Research*, 2 (2): 101–106.
- LOESCHER, G., BETTS, A. and MILNER, J. (2008) *The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The politics and practice of refugee protection into the twenty-first century*. Routledge, London.
- LOMBARD, M. (2012) Using auto-photography to understand place: reflections from research in urban informal settlements in Mexico. *Area*, 45 (1): 23–32.
- LOMO, Z., NAGGAGA, A. and HOVIL, L. (2001) *The phenomenon of forced migration in Uganda: An overview of policy and practice in an historical context*. Working Paper No. 1. Refugee Law Project, Kampala.
- LONG, K. (2010) *Forced Migration Research and Policy. Overview of current trends and future directions*. Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford.
- LOW, S. M. and LAWRENCE-ZÚNIGA, D. (2003) Locating Culture. 1–47 in Low, S. M. and Lawrence Zúniga, D. (eds.) *The Anthropology of Space and Place. Locating Culture*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.
- LUHMANN, N. (1979) *Trust and Power*. John Wiley & Sons, Chichester.
- LYKES, B.M. (2010) Silence(ing), voice(s) and gross violations of human rights: constituting and performing subjectivities through PhotoPAR. *Visual Studies*, 25 (3): 238–254.
- LYON, F., MÖLLERING, G. and SAUNDERS, M.N.K. (2012) Introduction: the variety of methods for the multi-faceted phenomenon of trust. 1–18 in Lyon, F., Möllering, G. and Saunders, M.N.K. (eds.) *Handbook of Research Methods on Trust*. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham.
- LYYTINEN, E. and KULLENBERG, J. (2013) *Urban Refugee Research and Social Capital. A Roundtable Report and Literature Review*. International Rescue Committee/Women’s Refugee Commission. Online at: <<http://wrc.ms/15vKApT>> (Accessed 1 March 2013).
- MACCHIAVELLO, M. (2003) *Urban Forced Migrants in Kampala: Methodologies and Ethical and Psychological issues*. Paper presented at the Workshop ‘Research on Refugees in Urban Settings: Methods and Ethics’, American University of Cairo, Egypt
- MACKENZIE, C., McDOWELL, C. and PITTAWAY, E. (2007) Beyond ‘Do No Harm’: The Challenge of Constructing Ethical Relationships in Refugee Research. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20 (2): 299–319.

- MACLEAN, K. and WOODWARD, E. (2010) Photovoice Evaluated: An Appropriate Visual Methodology for Aboriginal Water Resource Research. *Geographical Research*, 1–12.
- MADHAVAN, S. and LANDAU, L. (2011) Bridges to Nowhere: Hosts, Migrants, and the Chimera of Social Capital in Three African Cities. *Population and Development Review*, 37 (3): 473–497.
- MALKKI, L.H. (1992) National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees. *Cultural Anthropology* 7 (1): 24–44.
- MALKKI, L.H. (1995) *Purity and Exile. Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu refugees in Tanzania*. The University of Chicago Press, London.
- MARFLEET, P. (2007) “Forgotten”, “Hidden”: Predicaments of the Urban Refugee. *Refuge*, 36–45.
- MARFLEET, P. (2011) Understanding ‘Sanctuary’: Faith and Traditions of Asylum. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 24 (3): 440–455.
- MARTIN, S. and TAYLOR, A. (2012) *Urban Refugees in Amman: Mainstreaming of healthcare*. Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University.
- MASSEY, D. (1999) Spaces of Politics. 279–294 in Massey, D., Allen, J. and P. Sarre (eds.) *Human Geography Today*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- MASSEY, D. (2005) *For Space*. Sage Publications, London.
- MAYER, J-F. (2007) “In God have I put my trust”: Refugees and Religion. Introduction. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 26 (2): 6–10.
- MBEMBE, A. and NUTTALL, S. (2004) Writing the World from an African Metropolis. *Public Culture*, 16 (3): 347–372.
- MCDOWELL, L. (1999) *Gender, Identity and place. Understanding feminist geographies*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- MCDOWELL, L. (2001) ‘It’s that Linda again’: Ethical, Practical and Political Issues Involved in Longitudinal Research with Young Men. *Ethics, Place & Environment*, 4 (2): 87–100.
- MCDOWELL, L. and SHARP, J.P. (1999) *A feminist glossary of human geography*. Arnold, New York.
- MCNAMARA, D. (2009) *The politics of protection*. Keynote Paper for the International Conference on “Protecting People in Conflict and Crisis: Responding to the Challenges of a Changing World”, Refugee Studies Centre, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- MEAGHER, K. (2010) *Identity Economics. Social Networks and the Informal Economy in Nigeria*. African Issues James Curry, New York.
- MERRIFIELD, A. (2000) Henri Lefebvre. A socialist in space. 167–182 in Grang, M. and Thrift, N. (2000) *Thinking space*. Routledge, New York, London.
- MISZTAL, B.A. (1996) *Trust in modern societies*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- MITCHELL, D. (2003) *The Right to the City. Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*. The Guilford Press, London.
- MONTEMAGGI, F. (2011) The Enchanting Dream of “Spiritual Capital.” *Implicit Religion*, 14 (1): 67–86.
- MORAND, MB, and MAHONEY, K. (2013) *The Implementation of UNHCR’s Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas. Global Survey -2012*. PDES, UNHCR, Geneva.
- MUECKE, M. (1995) Trust, Abuse of trust, and Mistrust among Cambodian Refugee Women: A Cultural Representation. 36–55 in Daniel, E. and Knudsen, J.C. (eds.) *Mistrusting refugees*. University California Press, London.
- MYERS, G. (2011) *African Cities. Alternative Vision of Urban Theory and Practice*. Zed Books, London.
- MÖLLERING, G. (2006) *Trust: Reason, Routine, Reflexivity*. Elsevier, Oxford.
- NAH, A. M. (2010) Refugees and space in urban areas in Malaysia. *Forced Migration Review*, 34: 29–31.
- NALUGO, M. (2011) Ex-street vendors petition Parliament over relocation. 9 December 2011. *Daily Monitor*. Online at: <<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/-/688334/1286504/-/bg5ulnz/index.html>> (Accessed 25 April 2013).
- NASH, J.C. (2008) re-thinking intersectionality. *Feminist Review*, 89: 1–15.
- NATURINDA, S. (2011) Ten households face eviction. *Daily Monitor*. 14 December 2011. Online at: <<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/-/688334/1289044/-/bg3vgvz/-/index.html>> (Accessed 25 April 2011).
- NEW VISION (2013) *Museveni Speaks Out on Homosexuality*. Online at: <<http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/640814-museveni-speaks-out-on-homosexuality.html>> (Accessed 19 March 2013).
- NEWELL, S. (2012) *The Modernity Bluff. Crime, Consumption, and Citizenship in Cote d’Ivoire*. The University of Chicago Press, London.
- NEWHOUSE, L. (2012) Urban attractions: returnee youth, mobility, and the search for a future in South Sudan’s regional towns. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 22. UNHCR, Geneva.

- NEWMAN, J. (2004) *Protection through Participation*. Background Paper to the Conference on “Voices Out of Conflict: Young People Affected by Forced Migration and Political Crisis”, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- NORMAN, J. M. (2009) Got trust? The challenge of gaining access in conflict zones. 71–90 in Sriram, C. L., King, J. C., Mertus, J. A., Martin-Ortega, O. and Herman, J. (eds.) *Surviving Field Research. Working in violent and difficult situations*. Routledge, London.
- NOVAK, P. (2007) Place and Afghan Refugees: A Contribution to Turton. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20 (4): 551–577.
- NZAYABINO, V. (2010) The role of refugee-established churches in integrating forced migrants: a case study of World Life Assembly in Yeoville, Johannesburg. *HTS Theological Studies*, 66 (1): 1–9.
- OBI, N. and CRISP, J. (2002) *UNHCR Policy on Refugees in Urban Areas*. Report of a UNHCR/NGO Workshop, UNHCR, Geneva.
- O’GALLAGHAN, S. and PANTULIANO, S. (2007) *Protection action: incorporating civilian protection into humanitarian response*. Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, London.
- O’NEILL, M. (2010) *Asylum, Migration and Community*. Polity Press, Bristol.
- OMATA, N. (2012) *Refugee Livelihoods and the Private Sector: Ugandan case study*. Working Paper, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- OOLA, S. (2011) Overhauling migration governance to promote human rights and justice. *Pambazuka News* 541: Forced migration: Rethinking 'governance' and justice.
- PACITTO, J. (2012) *South-South humanitarianism in contexts of forced displacement*. 6th October 2012, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- PADDON, E. and LACAÏLLE, G. (2011) *Stabilising the Congo*. Forced Migration Policy Briefing 8. Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- PADGETT, D.K. (2007) There’s no place like (a) home: Ontological security among persons with serious mental illness in the United States. *Social Science and Medicine*, 64: 1925–1936.
- PALLOT, J. and PIACENTIN, L. (2012) *Gender, geography, and punishment: the experience of women carceral Russia*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- PANTULIANO, S., METCALFE, V., HAYSOM, S. and DAVEY, E. (2012) Urban vulnerability and displacement: a review of current issues. *Disasters*, 36: s1–s22.
- PAVANELLO, S., ELHAWARY, S. and PANTULIANO, S. (2010) *Hidden and exposed: Urban refugees in Nairobi, Kenya*. Working Paper, March 2010. HGP Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, London.
- PCWG (2007) *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*. Global Protection Cluster Working Group, Geneva.
- PETEET, J. M. (1995) Transforming Trust: Dispossession and Empowering among Palestinian Refugees. 168–186 in Daniel, E. and Knudsen, J.C. (eds.) *Mistrusting refugees*. University California Press, Berkeley, London.
- PHILLIPS, D., DAVIS, C. and RADCLIFFE, P. (2007) British Asian narratives of urban space. *Transactions of the Institution of the British Geographers*, 32 (2): 217–234.
- PILE, S. (1997) Introduction. Opposition, political identities and spaces of resistance. 1–32 in Pile, S. and Keith, M. (eds.) *Geographies of resistance*. Routledge, London.
- PINK, S. (2007) *Doing visual ethnography: images, media and representation in research*. SAGE Publications, London.
- PITTAWAY, E. (2009) *Making Mainstreaming a Reality: Gender and the UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas*. Centre for Refugee Studies, The University of New South Wales.
- PRINS, E. (2010) Participatory photography: A tool for empowerment of surveillance? *Action Research*, 8 (4): 426–443.
- PRUNIER, G. (2008) *The eastern DR Congo: dynamics of conflict*. Open Democracy. Online at: <<http://www.opendemocracy.net>> (Accessed 22 February 2012).
- PRUNIER, G. (2009) *Africa’s World War. Congo, The Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- PURCELL, M. (2002) Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant. *GeoJournal*, 58: 99–108.
- PURCELL, M. (2003) Citizenship and the Right to the Global City: Reimagining the Capitalist World Order. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27 (3): 564–590.
- PUTNAM, R.D. (1993) The Prosperous Community. *The American Prospect*, 13 (4): 1–11.

- RAEYMAKERS, T. and VLASSENROOT, K. (2010) Reshaping Congolese statehood in the midst of crisis and transition. 139–167 in, Engel, U. and Nugent P. (eds.) *Respacing Africa*. Brill, Leiden, Boston.
- RAMADAN, A. (2012) Spatialising the refugee camp. *Transactions of the Institutions of British Geographers*, April 2012, 1–13.
- RLP (2005) *A Drop in the Ocean. Assistance and Protection for Forced Migrants in Kampala*. Working paper, 16. Refugee Law Project, Kampala.
- RLP. *Critique of the Refugee Act 2006*. Refugee Law Project, Kampala, undated.
- REYNTJENS, F. (2009) *The Great African War. Congo and regional geopolitics, 1996–2006*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- ROBSON, C. (2002) *Real World Research*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.
- ROSE, G. (1999) Performing Space. 247–259 in Massey, D., Allen, J. and P. Sarre (eds.) *Human Geography Today*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- ROSE, G. (2007) *Visual Methodologies. An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*. SAGE, London.
- RUBBERS, B. (2009) 'We, the Congolese, we cannot trust each other'. Trust, norms and relations among traders in Katanga, Democratic Republic of Congo. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 60 (3): 623–642.
- RUSSELL, A. (2011) Home, music and memory for the Congolese in Kampala. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 5 (2): 294–312.
- SANDERCOCK, L. (2000) When Strangers Become Neighbours: Managing Cities of Difference. *Planning Theory and Practice*, 1 (1): 13–30.
- SANDVIK, K.B. (2012) Negotiating the Humanitarian Past: History, Memory, and Unstable Cityscapes in Kampala, Uganda. *Refugee Studies Quarterly*, 31 (1): 108–122.
- SCHMIDT, A. (2007) 'I know what you're doing', reflexivity and methods in refugee studies. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 26 (3): 82–98.
- SCHNOEBELEN, J. (2009) Witchcraft allegations, refugee protection and human rights: a review of the evidence. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 169. UNHCR, Geneva.
- SHARPE, M. and NAMUSOBYA, S. (2010) *Refugee Status Determination and the Rights of Recognised Refugees under Uganda's New Refugees Act*. Paper Prepared for Refugee Studies Centre Workshop: Refugee Status Determination and Rights in sub-Saharan Africa. Kampala, 16–17 November 2010.
- SHELTER CENTRE (2010) *Urban shelter guidelines. Assistance in urban areas to populations affected by humanitarian crisis*. Shelter Centre and Norwegian Refugee Council, Geneva.
- SIBLEY, D. (1995) *Geographies of Exclusions. Society and Difference in the West*. Routledge, London.
- SIMONE, A. (1999) Thinking About African Urban Management in an Era of Globalisation. *African Sociological Review*, 3 (2): 69–98.
- SIMONE, A. (2004) *For the City Yet to Come. Changing African Life in Four Cities*. Duke University Press, London.
- SINGH, T.B. (2012) A social interactions perspective on trust and its determinants. *Journal of Trust Research*, 2 (2): 107–135.
- SLIM, H. and BONWICK, A. (2005) *Protection*. An ALNAP guide for humanitarian agencies. Overseas Development Institute, London.
- SMITH, D. (2011) Uganda riots reach capital as anger against President Museveni grows. *The Guardian*. 29 April 2011. Online at: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/29/uganda-riots-kampala-museveni>> (Accessed 18 April 2013).
- SOMMERS, M. (2001a) *Fear in Bongoland. Burundi Refugees in Urban Tanzania*. Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, Vol. 8, Berghahn Books, Oxford.
- SOMMERS, M. (2001b) Young, Male and Pentecostal: Urban Refugees in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 14 (4): 347–370.
- SPENCER, S. (2011) *Visual Research Methods in the Social Science. Awakening visions*. Routledge, London.
- STEARNS, J.K. (2011) *Dancing in the glory of monsters. The collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa*. Public Affairs, New York.
- STEPPUTAT, F. (1994) Repatriation and the Politics of Space: the Case of the Mayan Diaspora and Return Movement. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 7 (2/3): 175–185.
- STEPPUTAT, F. (1999) Dead Horses? *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 12 (4): 416–419.
- STORR, W. (2011). The Rape of Men. *The Observer*, 17 July 2011. Online: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/jul/17/the-rape-of-men>> (Accessed 13 June 2013).

- SULLIVAN, B.A., SNYDER, M. And SULLIVAN, J.L. (2008) The Centrality of Cooperation in the Functioning of Individuals and Groups. 1-16 in Snyder, M. and Sullivan, J.L. (eds.) *Cooperation. The Political Psychology of Effective Human Interaction*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.
- TAMM, H. and LAUTERBACH, C. (2010) *Dynamics of conflict and forced migration in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. Expert workshop: report, 30 November – 1 December 2010, Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford.
- TENNANT, V., DOYLE, B. and MAZOY, R. (2010) *Safeguarding humanitarian space: a review of key challenges for UNHCR*. UNHCR, Geneva.
- THE OBSERVER (2012) *NGOs Gay Plans Leak, Govt Furious*. Online at: <[http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=19508:ngos-gay-plans-leak-govt-furious&catid=78:topstories&Itemid=116](http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19508:ngos-gay-plans-leak-govt-furious&catid=78:topstories&Itemid=116)> (Accessed 28 June 2012).
- THORNTON, P.R., WILLAMS, A.M. and SHAW, G. (1997) Revisiting time-space diaries: an exploratory case study of tourist behaviour in Cornwall, England. *Environment and Planning A*, 29: 1847–1867.
- TILLY, C. (2004) Trust and rule. *Theory and Society*, 33 (1): 1–30.
- TONKISS, F. (2005) *Space, the City and Social Theory. Social Relations and Urban Forms*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- TUAN, Y-F. (1977) *Space and Place. The perspective of experience*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- TURNER, S. (2010) *Politics of Innocence. Hutu Identity, Conflict and Camp Life*. Studies in Forced Migration, Vol. 30. Berghahn Books, Oxford.
- TURNER, T. (2007) *The Congo Wars. Conflict, myth and reality*. Zen Books, London.
- TURTON, D. (2005) The Meaning of Place in a World of Movement: Lessons Learned from Long-term Field Research in Southern Ethiopia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 18 (3): 258–280.
- UBS (2002) *Ugandan Population of Housing Census 2002*. UBS, Kampala.
- UBS (2012) *Statistical Abstract 2012*. UBS, Kampala.
- UN-HABITAT (2007) *Cities without Slums. Situation analysis of Informal Settlements in Kampala*. Sub-regional Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa. UN-HABITAT, Nairobi.
- UN-HABITAT (2008) *Uganda. Country Programme Document 2008–2009*. UNHABITAT, Nairobi.
- UNHCR (1996) *Urban Refugees. A Community-based Approach*. Community Service Guidelines. UNHCR, Geneva.
- UNHCR (2008) *A Community-Based Approach in UNHCR Operations*. UNHCR, Geneva.
- UNHCR (2009a) *UNHCR policy on refugee protection and solutions in urban areas*. UNHCR, Geneva.
- UNHCR (2009b) *Refugee Education in Urban Settings: Case Studies from Nairobi – Kampala – Amman Damascus*. December 2009. Operational Solutions and Transition Section (OSTS), Division for Programme Support and Management (DPSM), UNHCR, Geneva.
- UNHCR (2010) *UNHCR D.R. Congo*. Fact Sheet 31 Oct 2010. Online at: <[http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/0AECA59EC12C257FC12577D80031F805-Full\\_Report.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/0AECA59EC12C257FC12577D80031F805-Full_Report.pdf)> (Accessed 28 July 2013).
- UNHCR (2011) *Uganda Statistics as of July 01, 2011*. UNHCR, Kampala.
- UNHCR (2012a) *Faith and Protection. High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges*. 12–13 December 2012. Online at: <<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/501a39ce6.html>> (Accessed 6 April 2013).
- UNHCR (2012b) *Uganda. 2012 UNHCR country operations profile – Uganda*. Online at: <<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483c06.html>> (Accessed 21 September 2012).
- UNHCR (2013) *Community-based protection*. Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme. Standing Committee 57<sup>th</sup> meeting. EC/64/SC/CRP.14, UNHCR, Geneva.
- VALENTINE, G. (2007) Theorizing and Researching Intersectionality: A Challenge from Feminist Geography. *The Professional Geographer*, 59 (1): 10–21.
- VERDIRAME, G. and HARRELL-BOND, B. (2005) *Rights in Exile. Janus-faced Humanitarianism*. Studies in Forced Migration, Vol. 17. Berghahn Books, Oxford.
- VLASSENROOT, K and BUSCHER, K. (2009) *The city as frontier: Urban development and identity processes in Goma*. Crisis Studies Working Paper, No. 61. LSE, London.
- VLASSENROOT, K. (2012) Magic as Identity Maker. Conflict and Militia Formation in Eastern Congo. 112–135 in Smith, J.H. and Hackett, R.I.J. (eds.) *Displacing the State. Religion and Conflict in Neoliberal Africa*. University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame.
- WAITT, G. (2005) Doing Discourse Analysis. 163–191 in Hay, I. (eds.) *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- WALAGA, W. M. (2005) Urban Segregation in Uganda. 193–212, in Conzalez, S-A. (ed.) *Cities Divided. Spatial Segregation in Urban Africa*. ACOPHE, Barcelona.
- WALKLATE, S. (1998) Crime and Community: Fear or Trust? *The British Journal of Sociology*, 49 (4): 550–569.
- WARIN, J. (2011) Ethical Mindfulness and Reflexivity: Managing a Research Relationship With Children and Young People in a 14-Year Qualitative Longitudinal Research (QLR) Study. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17 (9): 805–814.
- WARNER, D. (1999) Deterritorialization and the Meaning of Space: A Reply to Gaim Kibreab. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 12 (4): 411–416.
- WELTER, F. and NADEZHDA, A. (2012) Researching trust in different cultures. 50–60 in Lyon, F., Möllering, G. and Saunders, M.N.K. (eds.) *Handbook of Research Methods on Trust*. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham.
- WHITE, L. (2000) *Speaking with vampires: rumor and history in colonial Africa*. University of California Press, California.
- WILD-WOOD, E. (2008) *Migration and Christian Identity in Congo (DRC)*. Brill, Leiden.
- WILLEMS, R. (2003) *Embedding the refugee experience: Forced migration and Social networks in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*. Doctoral dissertation. University of Florida, Florida.
- WILLEMS, R. (2005) Coping with Displacement: Social Networking among Urban Refugees in an East African Context. 53–77 in Ohta, I. and Gebre, Y. D. (eds.) *Displacement Risk in Africa. Refugees, Resettlers and Their Host Population*. Kyoto University Press, Kyoto.
- WRC (2011a) *The Living Ain't Easy. Urban Refugees in Kampala*. Women's Refugee Commission, New York.
- WRC (2011b) *Dawn in the City. Guidance for Achieving Urban Refugee Self-reliance*. WRC, New York.
- WRC (2011c) *No Place to Go But Up. Urban Refugees in Johannesburg, South Africa*. WRC, New York.
- WRC (2012a) *Arrested Development: Colombian Youth in Panama*. WRC, New York.
- WRC (2012b) *Shifting Sands. Risk and Resilience among Refugee Youth in Cairo*. WRC, New York.
- YOUNG, I.M. (1990) *The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference*. 300–323 in Nicholson, L.J. (ed.) *Feminism/Postmodernism*. Routledge, New York, London.
- ZETTER, R. and DEIKUN, G. (2010) Meeting humanitarian challenges in urban areas. *Forced Migration Review*, 34: 5–8.

## Appendices

### *Appendix 1. Biographical data for the refugees individually interviewed for this study*

<i>Interviewee No. (M=male, F=female), and date</i>	<i>Age/Marital Status (S=single, M=married, W=widowed, UA=unaccompa- nied minor)</i>	<i>Legal status (R=refugee, AS=asylum seeker, UD=undo- cumented)</i>	<i>Place from at the DRC (SK=South Kivu, NK=North Kivu)</i>	<i>Year moved to Uganda/last move to Kampala</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>
M1 (27.10.2010)	31/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2001/2010	-
M2 (2.12.2010)	32/M	R	Goma, NK	2000/2002	-
M3 (23.11.2010)	31/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2009/2010	-
M4 (23.11.2010)	21/S	AS	Goma, NK	2010/2010	-
M5 (23.11.2010)	31/M	AS	Goma, NK	2010/2010	-
M6 (20.6.2011)	32/S	UD	Goma, NK	2011/2011	-
M7 (24.6.2011)	39/M	UD	Butembo, NK	2010/2010	Nande
M8 (24.6.2011)	51/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2010/2010	Mushi
M9 (24.6.2011)	27/S	R	Bukavu, SK	2009/2009	Mushi
M10 (27.6.2011)	30/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2009/2009	Bunigali
M11 (28.6.2011)	45/M	UD	Bukavu, SK	2009/2009	Bembe
M12 (28.6.2011)	39/M	R	Uvira, SK	2010/2010	Bembe
M13 (28.6.2011)	33/S	AS	Bukavu, SK	2010/2010	Mushi
M14 (15.7.2011)	18/S	AS	Goma, NK	2009/2010	Hunde
M15 (15.7.2011)	19/S	R	Vitshumbi, NK	2009/2009	Nande
M16 (18.7.2011)	25/M	R	Rutshuru, NK	2009/2009	Rwandan / Mushi
M17 (18.7.2011)	22/S	UD	Bukavu, SK	2010/2010	-
M18 (18.7.2011)	21/S	R	-	2009/2010	Murega
M19 (18.7.2011)	27/S	AS	Bukavu, SK	2011/2011	Mushi
M20 (19.7.2011)	28/S	AS	Rutshuru, NK	2010/2010	Bakongo
M21 (20.7. 2011)	20/S	AS	Masisi, NK	2010/2010	Mushi
M22 (20.7.2011)	43/M	R	Goma, NK	2005/2007	Nande
M23 (25.7.2011)	23/S	R	Goma, NK	2008/2008	Munya- mulenge
M24 (25.7.2011)	21/S	AS	Uvira, SK	2011/2011	-
M25 (25.7.2011)	17/UA	R	Rutshuru, NK	2010/2010	Bembe
M26	32/S	R	Uvira, SK	2009/2009	Munya-

(25.7.2011)					mulenge
M27 (27.7.2011)	43/M	R	Rutshuru, NK	2008/2008	Munya- mulenge
M28 (28.7.2011)	18/S	AS	Goma, NK	2009/2011	-
M29 (28.7.2011)	18/S	AS	-	2010/2010	Munya- busha
M30 (28.7.2011)	23/S	R	Bukavu, SK	2010/2010	Mushi
M31 (1.8.2011)	18/M	AS	Uvira, SK	2009/2009	Munya- mulenge
M32 (1.8.2011)	36/S	R	Rutchuru, NK	2009/2009	Munya- busha
M33 (4.8.2011)	15/S	AS	Fizi, SK	2010/2010	Munya- mulenge
M34 (4.8.2011)	18/S	AS	Fizi, SK	2010/2010	Munya- mulenge
M35 (4.8.2011)	15/S	AS	Fizi, SK	2010/2010	Munya- mulenge
M36 (10.8.2011)	27/S	UD	Goma, NK	2010/2010	Rwandan Tutsi/Mu- shi
M37 (12.8.2011)	17/UA	R	Kayola, SK	2006/2011	Mushi
M38 (16.8.2011)	-/M	R	Maniema	2009/2009	Bangu- bangu
M39 (24.8.2011)	35/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2010/2010	Mushi
M40 (25.8.2011)	55/M	R	Kasongo, Maniema	2008/2008	Bangu- bangu
M41 (25.8.2011)	50/M	R	Bunia, Orientale	2002/2002	Lokele
M42 (25.8.2011)	45/M	R	Goma, NK	2005/2005	Bangu- bangu
M43 (29.8.2011)	29/S	R	Goma, NK	2010/2010	-
M44(29.8.2011)	64/M	R	Goma, NK	2003/2003	Nande
M45 (31.8.2011)	34/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2007/2007	Murega
M46 (30.8.2011)	30/S	R	Bukavu, SK	2006/2006	Mushi
M47 (2.9.2011)	51/M	R	Uvira, SK	2000/2000	-
M48 (7.9.2011)	37/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2004/2007	Murega
M49 (20.9.2011)	33/S	AS	Goma, NK	2011/2011	
M50 (20.9.2011)	50/M	R	Rutshuru, NK	2006/2010	Hutu
F1 (24.11.2010)	45/W	R	SK	2007/2007	-
F2 (24.11.2010)	38/M	R	Goma, NK	2006/2006	-
F3 (24.11.2010)	49/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2004/2007	-
F4 (24.11.2010)	29/M	R	Moba, Katanga	2007/2007	-
F5 (1.12.2010)	16/UA	R	Goma, NK	2008/2010	-
F6 (1.12.2010)	31/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2007/2007	-
F7 (20.1.2010)	30/W	AS	-	2008/2009	-
F8 (20.1.2011)	22/S	AS	Goma, NK	2011/2011	-
F9 (2.12.2010)	22/S	AS	Bukavu, SK	2010/2010	-
F10 (20.1.2011)	39/W	AS	Goma, NK	2003/2003	-

F11 (20.6.2011)	41/M	AS	Kananda, SK	2010/2010	-
F12 (20.6.2011)	52/W	UD	Goma, NK	2005/2005	-
F13 (24.6.2011)	18/S	UD	Uvira, SK	2009/2009	Bembe
F14 (15.7.2011)	19/S	R	Bukavu, SK	2011/2011	Mushi
F15 (15.7.2011)	20/S	AS	Bukavu, SK	2010/2010	-
F16 (15.7.2011)	18/S	R	-	2007/2011	-
F17 (25.7.2011)	17/UA	R	Rutshuru, NK	2010/2010	Bembe
F18 (1.8.2011)	41/M	R	Bukavu, SK	2008/2008	Murega
F19 (4.8.2011)	38/M	R	SK	2007/2007	Murega
F20 (4.8.2011)	44/W	R	Goma, NK	2009/2009	Mushi
F21 (5.8.2011)	51/M	R	Kanyabayonga, NK	2004/2004	Hunde
F22 (5.8.2011)	40/W	R	Rutshuru, NK	2010/2010	Munya- mulenge
F23 (5.8.2011)	22/M	R	Goma, NK	2010/2010	Nande
F24 (16.9.2011)	44/-	R	SK	2006/2006	-

**Appendix 2. Interviews, FGDs, observation and visual methods with other key informants**

<p><i>Official, recorded observation at the CRCU (N=7)</i></p>	<p>1 CRCU observation, 18.6.2011  2 CRCU observation, 25.6.2011  3 CRCU observation, 2.7.2011  4 CRCU observation, 9.7.2011  5 CRCU observation, 23.7.2011  6 CRCU observation, 20.8.2011  7 CRCU observation 27.8.2011</p>
<p><i>Official and unofficial FGDs with refugees (N=13)</i></p>	<p>FGD 1. Unofficial group discussion with the ASSOFRA members about refugee women's particular challenges in Kampala (14 women; 27.10.2010, not recorded)</p> <p>FGD 2. Unofficial group discussion with the YARID students about the mental mapping exercise (6 men and 4 women; 4.11.2010, not recorded)</p> <p>FGD 3. Official FGD with Banyamulenge men about the 'Banyamulenge community' in Kampala (13 men; 21.6.2011; not recorded)</p> <p>FGD 4. Official FGD with Banyamulenge women about the 'Banyamulenge community' in Kampala (7 women; 21.6.2011; not recorded)</p> <p>FGD 5. Official FGD with the male members of the CRCU about their community and the lives of refugee men in general (8 men; 25.6.2011; not recorded)</p> <p>FGD 6. Official FGD with the male members of the CRCU about their community and the lives of refugee men in general (9 men; 2.7.2011; recorded)</p> <p>FGD 7. Official FGD with the female members of the CRCU about their community and the lives of refugee women in general (8 women; 9.7.2011; recorded)</p> <p>FGD 8. Official FGD with the female members of the CRCU about their community and the lives of refugee women in general (8 women; 23.7.2011; recorded)</p> <p>FGD 9. Official FGD with the PWD members about their support group (5 women; 27.7.2011; recorded)</p> <p>FGD 10. Unofficial group discussion with the leadership of the CRCU (5 men; 20.8.2011; not recorded)</p> <p>FGD 11. Official FGD with the Freedom club members about their support group (4 boys and 2 girls; 1.9.2011; recorded)</p> <p>FGD 12. Official FGD with the ATV members about their support group (3 men, 3 women; 9.9.2011; recorded)</p> <p>FGD 13. Official FGDs with Congolese pastors about the role of faith and church in refugee protection (6 male pastors; 15.9.2011; recorded)</p>

<p><i>Semi-structured interviews with refugee community leaders and other individuals in leadership positions in communities that refugees were part of (N=18)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Representative, CRCU</li> <li>2. Leader, Banyamulenge community</li> <li>3. Pastor, Banyamulenge community</li> <li>4. Leader, Centre Bondeko</li> <li>5. Leader, Intervention for Humans in Danger (IHD)</li> <li>6. Leader, Young African Refugees for Integral Development (YARID)</li> <li>7. Leader, YARID</li> <li>8. President, Freedom youth club</li> <li>9. President, Association for Torture Victims (ATV)</li> <li>10. President, Women Refugees' Francophone Association (ASSOFRA)</li> <li>11. Vice-president, Women Refugees' Francophone Association (ASSOFRA)</li> <li>12. President, Angels support group</li> <li>13. Secretary, Angels support group</li> <li>14. Receptionist, Angels support group</li> <li>15. President, People with Disabilities support group (PWD)</li> <li>16. Congolese doctor</li> <li>17. Uganda pastor, Faith Family Church</li> <li>18. Ugandan pastor, New Life Centre Church</li> </ol>
<p><i>Supplementary visual methods with refugees</i></p>	<p><u>Time-space diaries (covering two-hour periods over a course of a week):</u>  With YARID language students: 13+10= 23  <u>Participatory photographing (each more or less 36 photographs):</u>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Female refugee, 38-year-old, in Uganda since 2006</li> <li>2. Female refugee, 19-year-old, in Uganda since 2010</li> <li>3. Male refugee, 17-year-old, in Uganda since 2008</li> <li>4. Male asylum seeker, 20-year-old, in Uganda since 2010</li> <li>5. Male refugee, 23-year-old, in Uganda since 2006</li> <li>6. Male refugee, 21-year-old, in Uganda since 2008</li> <li>7. Male asylum seeker, 19-year-old, in Uganda since 2009</li> <li>8. Male refugee, 23-year-old, in Uganda since 2008</li> <li>9. Male unregistered forced migrant, 27-year-old, in Uganda since 2010</li> <li>10. Male refugee, 19-year-old, in Uganda since 2009</li> </ol> </p>
<p><i>Semi-structured interviews with Ugandan authorities (N=16)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protection Officer, the Department of Refugees/OPM</li> <li>2. Community Services Officer, the Department of Refugees/OPM</li> <li>3. Protection Officer, the Department of Refugees/OPM</li> <li>4. Gender and Community Development Officer, Kampala Capital City Authorities (KCCA), Central division</li> <li>5. Community Development Officer, KCCA, Makindye division</li> <li>6. Community Service Officer, KCCA), Central division</li> <li>7. The Commissioner for Urban Development, Ministry of Local Government</li> <li>8. LC 3, Makindye division</li> <li>9. LC 2, Central Nsambya parish</li> <li>10. LC 2, Katwe I</li> <li>11. LC 1, Kevina zone</li> <li>12. LC 1, Zone C, Nsambya Railways</li> <li>13. LC 1, Muwonge zone, Katwe I</li> <li>14. Female representative, Katwe I</li> <li>15. Head of the Refugee Desk, Old Kampala Police Station</li> <li>16. Officer in Charge, Katwe police station</li> </ol>
<p><i>Semi-structured interviews with organisations (N=22)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Legal Officer, African Centre for Victims of Torture (ACTV)</li> <li>2. Legal Officer, Amnesty International/Uganda (AI)</li> <li>3. Co-Director, International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI)</li> <li>4. Resident Representative, Finnish Refugee Council (FRC)</li> <li>5. Community Services Officer, Urban Refugee Project, FRC</li> <li>6. Senior Community Development Officer, Urban Refugee Project, FRC</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Programme Coordinator, Urban Programme, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)</li> <li>8. Community Service Officer, InterAid Uganda (IAU)</li> <li>9. Senior Community Service Officer, UNHCR</li> <li>10. Community Service Officer, UNHCR</li> <li>11. Protection Officer, UNHCR</li> <li>12. Acting Head of the Legal Department, Refugee Law Project (RLP)</li> <li>13. Acting Head of the Legal Department, RLP</li> <li>14. Legal Officer, RLP</li> <li>15. Grants Manager and Senior Protection Officer, RLP</li> <li>16. Legal Officer, RLP</li> <li>17. Child Rights Officer, RLP</li> <li>18. Legal Officer, RLP</li> <li>19. Legal Officer, RLP</li> <li>20. Gender Officer, RLP</li> <li>21. Gender Psychosocial Worker, RLP</li> <li>22. PWD Officer, RLP</li> </ol>
<p><i>Other formal and informal expert interviews in Kampala and Geneva (N=9)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Makerere University</li> <li>2. Lecture at the Gender and Women Studies, Makerere University</li> <li>3. Consultant who produced a mapping study on refugee communities for the FRC, Kois Consultants Kampala</li> <li>4. Consultant who produced a mapping study on refugee communities for the FRC, Kois Consultants Kampala</li> <li>5. Executive Director, Shelter Centre, Geneva</li> <li>6. Policy Officer, International Council for Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), Geneva</li> <li>7. Head of the Policy Development and Evaluation Services, UNHCR HQs, Geneva</li> <li>8. Independent Consultant working on UNHCR-Cities Alliance scoping study on urban displacement, Geneva and Oxford</li> <li>9. Humanitarian Affairs Officer, UN-HABITAT, Geneva</li> </ol>