Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Kenya

Volume C: Urban Refugees

Results from the 2020–21 Urban Socioeconomic Survey

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Acknowledgments

This report is part of the socioeconomic survey series on the living conditions of refugees and host communities in Kenya. The Kalobeyei Socioeconomic Survey and the Kakuma Socioeconomic Survey precede the present Urban Socioeconomic Survey.[1] A comparative policy brief considering the three populations (refugees in Kalobeyei settlement, Kakuma camp, and urban areas) will be jointly prepared and released by the World Bank and UNHCR. This report focuses on the living conditions of hosts and refugees in urban areas and does not provide comparative analyses.

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[1] UNHCR and World Bank, "Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Kenya. Volume A: Kalobeyei Settlement"; UNHCR and World Bank, "Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Kenya. Volume B: Kakuma Camp."

Abbreviations

CATI   Computer-assisted telephone interview

COVID-19   Coronavirus disease 2019

DRA   Department of Refugee Affairs

FDP   Forcibly displaced person

KCHS   Kenya Continuous Household Survey

KIHBS   Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey

LCSI   Livelihoods-Based Coping Strategies Index

proGres   Profile Global Registration System

RAS   Refugee Affairs Secretariat

rCSI   reduced Coping Strategy Index

SES   Socioeconomic Survey

UNHCR   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

VRX   proGres Registration Verification Exercise

Executive summary

Forcibly displaced people (FDP) are increasingly inhabiting urban areas, where, together with urban hosts, they face an array of risks and heightened vulnerabilities that need to be addressed through evidence-based policies and programs. More than half of the world's population including FDPs live in urban areas. Urban refugees often face the same problems confronting urban poor, such as inadequate housing and marginalization, combined with unique challenges related to their refugee situation.[2] Such challenges, not restricted to only urban refugees, include the threat of arrest and detention, refoulement, harassment, extortion, vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence, human smuggling, and trafficking. While socioeconomic data on urban non-displaced populations tend to be more easily accessible than those on rural communities, data on urban refugees are extremely scarce compared with those on their camp-based counterparts. Addressing the risks and vulnerabilities faced by urban refugees and their hosts requires narrowing existing data gaps to inform advocacy, policy options, programs, and durable solutions.

As refugees in Kenya are not systematically included in national household surveys (NHSs), their inclusion in NHSs, complemented by specific refugee and host community surveys, is needed to provide evidence for policy planning and programming. Refugees in Kenya are not included in NHSs, resulting in a lack of comparable socioeconomic data on FDPs and their hosts.[3] This limits efforts to design policies and programs that inclusively address the needs of vulnerable populations, especially when facing socioeconomic shocks such as those resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Developing and strengthening national and international policy frameworks that promote the inclusion of refugees in NHSs is crucial to produce evidence needed to inform a targeted response. Comparable refugee and host community surveys can help complement NHS data. Subsequently, making data and survey findings publicly available (after anonymization) is critical to ensure that key stakeholders have access to evidence to inform their action.

The Urban Socioeconomic Survey (SES) helps close data gaps by providing comparable socioeconomic profiles for refugees and host community members. Initiated jointly by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Bank, the Urban SES helps inform evidence-based programming and policy development by addressing socioeconomic data gaps—especially instructive in the economic downturn associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though preceding surveys provide useful information on the living conditions of urban refugees and hosts, there is no analysis that uses national socioeconomic measurements to understand both communities' living conditions.[4] Implemented during the COVID-19 lockdown, the Urban SES provides comparable socioeconomic profiles for urban refugees and hosts by using an instrument that is comparable to the Kenya Continuous Household Survey (KCHS) 2019.[5] The Urban SES, ensuing analysis, and the recommendations provide

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[2] The use of the term "refugees" includes asylum-seekers.
[3] FDPs are refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced persons. UNHCR, "Key Indicators."
[4] The Guardian, "UN Outlines Plan to Close Camps Housing 430,000 Refugees in Kenya."
[5] The Urban SES's modules on education and employment are designed to be comparable with the KCHS. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on education and labor force participation, and since the KCHS data were collected before the COVID-19 outbreak, such modules are not compared across refugee and host communities.

a comprehensive snapshot of refugees' and hosts' demographics, housing characteristics, and access to services while covering refugee-specific details of livelihoods, education, food security, social cohesion, trajectories of displacement, and intentions to move.

The comparability between urban refugees and their host communities can be limited by the mode and timing of the data collection. While the Urban SES data were collected through computer-assisted telephone interviews, the KCHS used computer-assisted personal interviews. Differences between these two modes of data collection could affect the comparability between refugees and hosts. Moreover, the urban SES data were collected after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, while the KCHS data were collected before. Therefore, it is not feasible to include comparative insights for education or employment.

Short-term policy and programming priorities should focus on enhancing food security, improving access to water, sanitation, and housing, and protecting highly vulnerable groups

Reducing food insecurity through livelihoods and targeted food security programs is critical to protect and maintain human capital. Around 60 percent of urban refugee households are highly food insecure and use consumption-based strategies to cope with the lack of food. Food insecurity is more common among households with fewer employed members. Livelihoods-based interventions can help refugees secure adequate and sustainable income while contributing to reducing food insecurity. Targeting food security programs to refugee households hosting children can help reduce food insecurity, prevent malnutrition, and thus help protect human capital.[6] Mobile cash transfers can be a cost-effective instrument in urban settings to mitigate food insecurity in the short-term.[7]

Improving and providing adequate water and sanitation services is key to improve health outcomes. Access to improved drinking water is higher among refugee households (91 percent) than among host community households (71 percent). However, about 72 percent of refugee households reported insufficient water supply in the last month. Even though most refugees and hosts have access to improved sanitation (84 percent of refugees and 99 percent of hosts), only 32 percent of refugee households do not share toilets with other households. Ensuring 20 liters of water per person per day and enhancing the quality of sanitation services can result in improved health outcomes for refugees and hosts.[8] Increased investment through partnerships between humanitarian and development actors, governments, and the private sector to support integrated water, sanitation, and hygiene service delivery can help boost access to improved water and sanitation. This can also support efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6.2, which targets universal access to improved sanitation.

Expanding access to adequate housing and non-biomass fuels can contribute to raising urban refugees' and hosts' living standards. Refugee households, mostly those headed by women, are more likely to live in overcrowded conditions than host households. Reducing overcrowding is key to prevent stress, domestic violence, and the spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19.[9] Increasing funding for national housing programs to help address hosts' needs while including refugee communities

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[6] Gundersen and Ziliak, "Food Insecurity And Health Outcomes."
[7] HPN, "Mobile Phone-Based Cash Transfers: Lessons from the Kenya Emergency Response"; Ulrichs, Hagen-Zanker, and Holmes, "Cash Transfers for Refugees. An Opportunity to Bridge the Gap between Humanitarian Assistance and Social Protection."
[8] WHO. 2020. "What Is the Minimum Quantity of Water Needed?"
[9] WHO, "Preventing Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence. Taking Action and Generating Evidence."

can help reduce overcrowding.[10] A quarter of refugee households and 10 percent of host households, mainly those headed by women, use biomass (charcoal) for cooking. As pricing of non-biomass fuels is a binding constraint, subsidizing improved biomass and non-biomass fuels while making them more easily accessible can help prevent negative health impacts for women and children under age 5.[11,12]

Nakuru-based and women refugees face extremely vulnerable conditions. The Nakuru-based refugee population is the youngest (55 percent of them are 18 years old or below), they are mostly South Sudanese, and their households are mostly headed by women and have the highest dependency ratios. Food insecurity levels are the highest among Nakuru-based refugees (82 percent), and they have the lowest employment rates (12 percent: 6 percent of women and 21 percent of men). Supporting women's empowerment in Nakuru and also in other areas, through programs that consider domestic and caretaking responsibilities and intra-household and intercommunity dynamics, could result in improved children's health and education, reduced poverty, and smaller household sizes, while contributing to the economy and tax revenues through increased labor participation.[13] Expanding subsidized access to childcare will be key to ensure women's participation in the paid labor market. Engaging men through awareness-raising programs can be crucial to support women's economic participation and girls' education, and to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and discrimination. Further research could provide a deeper understanding of socioeconomic barriers and how to overcome them through gender-responsive solutions. Supporting the most vulnerable communities by making additional investments to reduce socioeconomic impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic will be critical to accelerate poverty reduction efforts, and to rebuild self-reliance and resilience to shocks.

Medium-term priorities should focus on expanding livelihoods opportunities, easing access to education, fostering social cohesion, and ensuring access to information on movement options

Given that labor force participation is limited, strengthening refugees' job and entrepreneurial skills, broadening job markets and access to financial services, and easing documentation procedures for wage employment could support livelihoods opportunities. Only 42 percent of working-age refugees are employed, mainly as wage workers (73 percent) and self-employed workers (59 percent).[14,15] Small business management and professional skills are perceived to be the most needed skills to secure employment. The main self-perceived support needed among those outside the labor force and interested in self-employment is access to credit, while among those interested in wage work, it is access to documentation and training. Identifying refugees' existing skills while addressing their needs and interest through business and job-skills training can help increase employment rates. Expanding access to financial services through collaborations with the private sector and by simplifying requirements

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[10] UN Habitat, "The Right to Adequate Housing."
[11] Malonza and Fedha, "An Assessment Of Gender And Energy In Kenya: The Underlying Issues."
[12] Smith, Mehta, and Feuz. 2004. "Indoor Air Pollution from Household Use of Solid Fuels"; Kurmi et al. 2012. "Lung Cancer Risk and Solid Fuel Smoke Exposure: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis"; Dasgupta et al. 2004. "Who Suffers from Indoor Air Pollution? Evidence from Bangladesh." Children under age 5 normally remain in the proximity of the cooking area when food is prepared and thus breathe airborne pollutants affecting their respiratory system.
[13] ILO. 2017. "Gender in Employment and Labour Market Policies and Programmes: What Works for Women?"
[14] Percentages do not sum up to 100, since refugees may have engaged in more than one activity.
[15] Self-employment includes those employed in both the formal and informal sectors.

for SIM card registration is necessary to enhance access to finance.[16,17] Financial literacy programs can help refugees make informed financial decisions.[18] Easing documentation procedures to facilitate wage employment can contribute to expanding opportunities. Collaborations between the private sector, governments, and humanitarian and development partners will be essential to enable the creation of job markets. Further research on the employment activities of urban refugees is needed to understand important barriers and help overcome them.

Primary and secondary school net enrollment rates (NERs) are low, thus increasing NERs and supporting transition to secondary school can help develop transferable skills and expand access to tertiary education and socioeconomic opportunities.[19] Around 69 percent of urban refugee children are enrolled in primary school (68 percent of boys and 70 percent of girls) while 28 percent are enrolled in secondary school (31 percent of boys and 24 percent of girls). The Government of Kenya recognizes education as a human right while acknowledging its crucial role in developing human capital. As such, the government is committed to ensure inclusive and equitable access to education with measures to reach the most disadvantaged.[20] Improving enrollment in primary and secondary school can help develop transferable skills which can be used in current and future hosting countries. Identifying schools in areas with high densities of refugees while providing support for rehabilitation, equipment, and building their capacity in terms of management and teachers' skills can be key in increasing attendance. Scholarship programs and financial incentives conditioned on attending secondary school can facilitate transition. Intervening issues such as documentation, indirect costs, language of instruction, and recognition of qualifications need to be better understood to ensure refugee learners have equitable access. As the lack of birth certificates is a constraint for some, inclusion of refugees in the National Education Management Information System using alternative documentation to birth certificates will be key. Campaigns to provide information about the availability of formal schools for refugees and requirements to join can help increase attendance, as can continuing and expanding the programs that encourage girls' education.[21] Girls' education can be promoted by introducing behavioral programs that identify cultural barriers and sensitize communities, teachers, parents, and students about the importance of boys' and girls' education.[22,23] Second chance education programs which allow for flexible timetables and provide childcare and early childhood education can also help increase attendance.

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[16] In only 10 percent of household do refugees own a bank account, while in 78 percent of households, refugees own a mobile banking account. In 20 percent of households where refugees own a mobile banking account, the account is shared (compared with 2 percent of shared bank accounts). Only 4 in 10 households have access to loans, with family and relatives being the most common source, while formal financing and community savings are barely used.

[17] National Council for Law Reporting. 2015. "The Kenya Information and Communications Act." Buying a SIM card in Kenya requires registration and proof of identity (accepted documents: identity or service card, passport, or alien card), which many refugees do not have.

[18] ILO, "Financial Education for Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities: New Addition to the ILO's Financial Education Programme." Financial education workshops such as the ones delivered by ILO under their Financial Education Programme can help increase access to finance.

[19] Comparisons between refugees and hosts for employment and education are limited due to the COVID-19 outbreak; thus, comparisons for such sections are not presented. Comparable data for hosts about food insecurity, access to financial services, and social cohesion are not available.

[20] Government of Kenya, "Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 on A Policy Framework for Reforming Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Kenya."

[21] UK DFID, "Girls' Education Challenge. Project Profiles." Programs such as the Kenya Equity in Education Project (KEEP), Wasichana Wote Wasome (WWW; "Let All Girls Read"), Empowering Pioneering Inclusive Education Strategies for Disabled Girls in Kenya (Innovation), Improved School Attendance and Learning for Vulnerable Kenyan Girls through an Integrated Intervention (Innovation), and the iMlango Project (Strategic Partnership) can help increase school attendance among girls.

[22] Jesuit Refugee Service. 2019. "Her Future. Challenges & Recommendations to Increase Education for Refugee Girls"; Freeman et al. 2020. "Improving Attendance and Reducing Chronic Absenteeism."

[23] Behavior campaigns do not refer to indiscipline but to overcoming constraints resulting from sociocultural norms.

Fostering interactions between refugees and hosts and raising the voice of refugees through community leadership structures can be key to improve perceptions of social cohesion.[24] Refugees who recently interacted with a host community member tend to have more positive perceptions of social cohesion than those who did not. Social cohesion can be enhanced by designing programs that foster interaction and promote collaborations by enabling spaces where refugees and hosts can work together towards shared goals. Refugees' perceptions of social cohesion are generally positive, although negative regarding perceived consideration of their opinions in decision-making. As local institutions play an important role in fostering social cohesion, strengthening communication mechanisms between refugees, organizations, and the government could be instrumental to raise concerns of refugees and improve perceptions of participation.

With most refugees planning to leave Kenya, continuing existing efforts to inform them about resettlement, repatriation, and integration options will remain important. About 93 percent of refugee households wish to leave Kenya, of which fewer than 1 percent want to return to their countries of origin. The large majority (86 percent) have all the information they need to guide this decision. UNHCR and partners facilitate access to information on resettlement, repatriation, and integration options through refugee leaders, social media, and an online help desk. Such efforts should be continued to help form realistic expectations of requirements, security conditions, repatriation options, and employment opportunities.[25]

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[24] Information to help refugees know their rights, obligations, and services in Kenya are provided by UNHCR at https://help.unhcr.org/kenya/
[25] Programs such as Migrant Care can be explored and adapted to the refugee context. UN Women. 2019. "Gaining Protection for Indonesia's Migrant Workers and Their Families."

▶ **TABLE 1:** Summary of findings and policy recommendations

Finding	Policy recommendation
Short-term priorities	
Food insecurity is high, with 60 percent of households being highly food insecure. Households headed by unemployed refugees are more likely than those headed by employed refugees to cope with the lack of food by using severe livelihoods-based strategies which deplete assets and risk human capital.	Livelihoods-based interventions can help refugees secure adequate and sustainable income while contributing to reducing food insecurity. Targeting food security programs to households with children can help protect human capital. Mobile cash transfers can be a cost-effective instrument in urban settings to mitigate food insecurity.
Access to improved drinking water is greater among urban refugee households (91 percent) than among hosts (71 percent), with 72 percent of refugee households reporting insufficient drinking water in the last month. Both refugees and hosts have a high level of access to improved sanitation (84 percent of refugees and 99 percent of hosts), with shared toilets being common among refugees (68 percent).	Improving and providing adequate water and sanitation services is key to improve health outcomes. Ensuring 20 liters of water per person per day and enhancing the quality of sanitation services can result in improved health outcomes for refugees and hosts. Increased investment through partnerships between humanitarian and development actors, governments, and the private sector to support integrated water, sanitation, and hygiene service delivery can help boost access to these services.
Over one-third (37 percent) of refugee households are overcrowded, compared with 19 percent of host community households. Further, 26 percent of refugee households, compared with 10 percent of host community households, mainly those headed by women, use biomass (charcoal or firewood) for cooking.	Expanding access to adequate housing and non-biomass fuels can help raise urban refugees' and hosts' living standards. Increasing funding for national housing programs to ensure hosts' housing needs are adequately addressed while including refugee communities can be key to help reduce overcrowding. Subsidizing improved biomass and non-biomass fuels while easing access to them can help prevent negative health impacts on women and children.
Nakuru-based refugees face particularly vulnerable conditions. They are the youngest overall (55 percent of them are 18 years old or below), they are mostly South Sudanese, and their households are mostly headed by women and have the highest dependency ratios. Food insecurity levels are also the highest among Nakuru-based refugees (82 percent). Nakuru refugees also have the lowest employment rates (12 percent: 6 percent of women and 21 percent of men).	Supporting Nakuru refugees' and hosts' participation in the paid labor market and enhancing their food security can help maintain human capital. Such efforts can also help lessen the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through strengthened self-reliance and resilience to shocks. Further research can provide a deeper understanding of socioeconomic barriers and how to overcome them through gender-responsive solutions.

Finding	Policy recommendation
Medium-term priorities	
Only 42 percent of working-age refugees are employed, mainly as wage workers (73 percent) and self-employed workers (59 percent). The skills perceived to be needed to secure employment are mainly small business management skills. The main support needed among those outside the labor force and interested in self-employment is access to loans and business training, while among those interested in wage work it is access to documentation and training.	Strengthening refugees' job and entrepreneurial skills, broadening access to financial services, and easing documentation procedures for wage employment can support sustainable livelihoods. Multi-stakeholder collaborations can be essential to enable the creation of markets and job opportunities.
Refugees' primary and secondary school net enrollment rates are low (primary: 69 percent; 68 percent of boys and 70 percent of girls; secondary: 28 percent; 31 percent of boys and 24 percent of girls). Refugees' main barriers to accessing education are the cost of transport, books, uniforms, and other indirect costs, and the lack of birth certificates.	Increasing primary school attendance and supporting transition to secondary school can help develop transferable skills and expand socioeconomic opportunities. Inclusion of refugees in the national education system would be critical to expanding access to equitable and sustainable educational opportunities. Identifying schools in areas with high densities of refugees while providing support for rehabilitation, equipment, and building their capacity in terms of management and teachers' skills can be key to increase attendance. A deeper understanding of the bottlenecks that hinder enrollment is needed. Strengthening systems of recognition of prior learning can ease access to education. Financial incentives, information campaigns, and girls' and women's education programs can also help increase attendance.
Refugees who recently interacted with a host community member tend to have more positive perceptions of social cohesion than those who did not. Refugees' perceptions of social cohesion are generally positive, although negative regarding consideration of their opinions in decision-making.	Fostering interactions between refugees and hosts could be key to improve perceptions of social cohesion. Raising the voice and concerns of refugees through community leadership structures can also help improve social cohesion.
About 93 percent of refugee households wish to leave Kenya, with fewer than 1 percent wishing to return to their country of origin, while the rest wish to stay. In 14 percent of households, refugees reported needing information to guide their movement choices.	Continuing existing efforts to inform refugees about resettlement, repatriation, and integration options will remain important.

▶ TABLE 2: Summary findings for refugees and hosts

	Urban Kenya		Nairobi		Nakuru		Mombasa	
	Refugees	Hosts	Refugees	Hosts	Refugees	Hosts	Refugees	Hosts
Refugee and host trends								
Dependency ratio	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.4
Improved housing	82%	78%	82%	73%	93%	88%	83%	89%
Access to improved drinking water	91%	92%	92%	87%	93%	61%	76%	17%
Biomass fuels for cooking	26%	10%	25%	1%	57%	34%	54%	22%
Refugee-only trends								
Countries of origin	44% Congo, Dem. Rep. 22% Somalia 13% Ethiopia 11% South Sudan 5% Burundi		48% Congo, Dem. Rep. 18% Somalia 14% Ethiopia 9% South Sudan 6% Burundi		73% South Sudan 12% Somalia 8% Congo, Dem. Rep. 6% Ethiopia		84% Somalia 7% Congo, Dem. Rep. 1% Ethiopia 0.7% Burundi 0.2% South Sudan	
Primary net enrollment rate	69%		70%		79%		53%	
Secondary net enrollment rate	28%		29%		30%		12%	
Employment rate	42%		43%		12%		35%	
High food insecurity	60%		61%		68%		54%	

Background

1. Urbanization of displacement and data needs

1. As the world undergoes a process of rapid urbanization, forcibly displaced people (FDP) are increasingly inhabiting urban areas, seeking safety and self-reliance opportunities.[26] More than half of the world's population including FDPs live in urban areas—progressively in highly dense cities.[27,28] While many refugees move to urban areas in the hope of finding safety and economic independence, others do so out of necessity—to access specialized health services, or to avoid being targets of violence in refugee camps. Many refugees are unable to return to their country of origin, mainly due to conflict, violence, or insecurity, and must build new lives in their adopted city.[29]

2. Refugees in urban settings are often faced with an array of risks and heightened vulnerabilities, some of which are shared with those of host communities. While the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) considers urban areas to be legitimate places for refugees to enjoy their rights, it recognizes the difficulties resulting from significant numbers of refugees settling in urban areas. Such movements can put pressure on existing services that are unable to meet the needs of the urban poor. Urban refugees often face the problems confronting urban poor, such as inadequate housing and marginalization, combined with unique challenges related to their refugee situation.[30] Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the difficult circumstances in which refugees live.[31] UNHCR highlights that protection must be provided to refugees irrespective of their location, calling for host governments and the international community to continue their refugee protection efforts. Equally important is the protection of host communities, who often face struggles similar to those of refugees.

3. Addressing the risks and vulnerabilities faced by urban refugees and their hosts requires narrowing existing data gaps to inform policy options and programs. While data on urban non-displaced populations tend to be more easily accessible than those on rural communities, data on urban refugees are extremely scarce and less often available than data on their camp-based counterparts. Data on urban refugees are mainly accessible through registration records. Registration and data collection of urban refugees are complex endeavors, as refugees are often dispersed throughout highly densely populated areas and irregular settlements, unlike those who reside in highly visible camps.[32]

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[26] UNHCR, "UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas." Urban area is considered to be a built-up area that accommodates large numbers of people living in close proximity to each other, and where the majority of people sustain themselves by means of formal and informal employment and the provision of goods and services.

[27] Ritchie and Roser, "Urbanization."

[28] UNHCR, "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016."

[29] IRC, "International Rescue Committee. Urban Refugees."

[30] Pavanello, Elhawary, and Pantuliano, "Hidden and Exposed: Urban Refugees in Nairobi, Kenya"; UNHCR, "UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas." Such challenges include the threat of arrest and detention, refoulement, harassment, extortion, vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence, human smuggling, and trafficking.

[31] UNHCR, "Urban Refugees Struggling to Survive as Economic Impact of COVID-19 Worsens in East, Horn and Great Lakes of Africa." "Without further support, many urban refugees will become extremely vulnerable to exploitation, risk falling into significant levels of debt and may be forced into desperate situations to survive, such as transactional sex or child labour."

[32] UNHCR, "UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas."

Furthermore, some people who are in refugee-like situations prefer not to be registered by the host government or UNHCR; thus, urban data collection efforts are often restricted to registered refugees.

4. The Urban Socioeconomic Survey (SES) helps close data gaps to inform a targeted response, which is crucially needed to address the needs of urban refugee and host populations in Kenya. Even though preceding surveys provide useful information on the living conditions of urban refugees and hosts, there is no analysis that uses national socioeconomic measurements to understand both communities' living conditions (see list of preceding surveys in Appendix 1). Understanding the socio-economic needs of urban refugees in Kenya is crucial, especially in light of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the potential closure of Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. Such potential closures may result in refugee influxes into urban settings.[33] The Urban SES provides comparable socioeco-nomic profiles for urban refugees and hosts by using an instrument that is comparable to the one used for the most recent national household survey, the Kenya Continuous Household Survey (KCHS) 2019. The survey provides one of the first comparable analyses of the economic lives of urban refugees and hosts in Kenya. The Urban SES and the preceding Kakuma SES and Kalobeyei SES can help address socioeconomic data gaps and inform targeted programming and development policy.[34] In doing so, they provide learning opportunities for how socioeconomic information may be collected and used in other urban and camp settings to facilitate replication.

2. Urban refugees in Kenya

5. Since the 1960s, Kenya has hosted refugees, shifting its refugee policy from integration toward encampment in the early 1990s. The flow of asylum-seekers into Kenya gathered momentum in the early 1970s, owing to the regime of Uganda's President Idi Amin. Many Ugandan refugees had relatives in Kenya and were relatively well-off professionals and businesspeople.[35] The refugee policy supported Kenya's interest in welcoming skilled workers and investment. Thus, refugees were able to work, move, and settle across Kenya. In the early 1990s, the refugee influx from Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo brought with it a shift in Kenya's refugee policy from integration toward encampment close to the borders with Somalia and South Sudan.[36]

6. Kenya hosts more than 500,000 refugees under the responsibility of the Refugee Affairs Secre-tariat (RAS), with the support of UNHCR under its mandate.[37] An estimated 16 percent of refugees in Kenya live in urban areas, while 84 percent reside in camps. Kenya's national refugee legislation came into force through the 2006 Refugees Act, which established the Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA), replaced by RAS in 2016 and updated in 2022.[38] A comprehensive review of the law was

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[33] The Guardian, "UN Outlines Plan to Close Camps Housing 430,000 Refugees in Kenya."

[34] UNHCR and World Bank, "Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Kenya. Volume A: Kalobeyei Settlement"; UNHCR and World Bank, "Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Kenya. Volume B: Kakuma Camp."

[35] Abuya, "Past Reflections, Future Insights: African Asylum Law and Policy in Historical Perspective"; Kagwanja, "Challenges and Prospects for Building Local Relief Capacity in Kenya: Reflections on Humanitarian Intervention."

[36] Lind, Mutahi, and Oosterom, "Tangled Ties: Al-Shabaab and Political Volatility in Kenya". Kenya's policy change can be partly explained by the escalation in the number of refugees, which overwhelmed Kenya's coping capacities, as well as by ethnic, political, and economic factors. Other factors reinforcing the policy shift included a decline in the Kenyan economy, regional conflicts, social unrest, and a shortage of arable land.

[37] UNHCR, "Kenya: Registered Refugees and Asylum-Seekers. February 2021."

[38] The draft Refugees Act 2019 is currently pending enactment.

undertaken, and the draft Refugees Bill 2019 is pending at the last stages prior to adoption into law. In 2017, RAS assumed responsibility for reception, registration, documentation, refugee status determination, and refugee management, with UNHCR's active support. RAS grants refugee status through individual interviews and prima facie group determination (only for South Sudanese). Upon status determination, refugees should be provided with a "refugee identity card," the Alien Refugee Certificate issued by the government and valid for five years (see Appendix 2).

7. Despite Kenya's encampment policy, more than 81,000 registered—plus an unknown number of unregistered—refugees live in urban areas, where their living conditions have remained largely unknown. Following a series of terrorist attacks in urban areas, in 2014 the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government called on refugees in cities to relocate to camps,[39] constraining their mobility and making it difficult for them to access employment and education.[40] Urban refugees have become rather invisible, as they have been "absorbed into the urban fabric, are dispersed over the city and are highly mobile."[41] As a result, understanding of their numbers, distribution, living conditions, and how they compare with the host community is limited. Such a limited understanding hinders efforts to help enhance urban refugees' and hosts' socioeconomic opportunities through evidence-based action.

8. Refugees in Kenya are not systematically included in national surveys; as a result, there is a lack of data on refugee welfare and poverty that are comparable to the national population. Kenya has made progress in data availability at the national and county levels and has made efforts to measure the impacts of forced displacement on refugees, hosts, and nationals. However, socioeconomic data gaps remain. Refugees are not systematically included in national household surveys that serve as the primary tools for measuring and monitoring poverty, labor markets, and other welfare indicators. Such information is critical for area-based development and targeting of assistance, especially when facing shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Data are also essential for engaging with development and humanitarian actors, which require this information for planning and investment.

9. The Urban SES and the preceding Kakuma SES and Kalobeyei SES provide comparable socioeconomic profiles for refugees and host community members. Initiated jointly by UNHCR and the World Bank to understand the living conditions of refugees in Kenya, the SES series was designed to support the global vision laid out by the Global Compact on Refugees and the Sustainable Development Goals.[42] The Urban SES covers socioeconomic indicators at both household and individual levels, aligned with the national 2019 KCHS. The Urban SES, ensuing analysis, and recommendations provide a comprehensive snapshot of refugees' and hosts' demographics, disabilities, housing characteristics, and access to services, while covering refugee-specific details of livelihoods, education, food security, social cohesion, trajectories of displacement, and intentions to move.

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[39] Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Press Statement by the Cabinet Secretary of Interior and Coordination of National Government on Refugees and National Security Issues on March 26, 2014.

[40] Muindi and Mberu, "Urban Refugees in Nairobi. Tackling Barriers to Accessing Housing, Services and Infrastructure"; UNHCR and ILO, "Doing Business in Dadaab. Market Systems Analysis for Local Economic Development in Dadaab, Kenya."

[41] Pavanello, Elhawary, and Pantuliano, "Hidden and Exposed: Urban Refugees in Nairobi, Kenya," 11.

[42] The series comprises the Kalobeyei SES (vol. A), Kakuma SES (vol. B), Urban SES (vol. C), and a comparative brief. The present report focuses on hosts and refugees in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Nakuru counties and does not provide comparisons with camp-based refugees.

BOX
1

Survey design and methodology

The Urban SES was conducted in parallel to an update of the refugee registration database (proGres). The Government of Kenya, with the technical support of UNHCR, maintains and updates a database of all registered refugees and asylum-seekers in the country. The SES was designed to take place during the 2020 Nairobi registration verification exercise (VRX). Due to COVID-19 social distancing measures, the Nairobi VRX and the SESs in Nairobi, Nakuru, and Mombasa were conducted via computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI).

Households are randomly selected to ensure a representative sample. The SES sample in Nairobi was selected in parallel to the VRX (in November to December 2020), while in Nakuru and Mombasa it was selected by using the updated proGres dataset which was verified in 2019. The SES is designed to be representative of urban households living in Nairobi, Nakuru, and Mombasa (see Appendix 1). The Urban SES covers 2,438 households: 1,300 in Nairobi, 409 in Nakuru, and 729 in Mombasa.

The SES questionnaire is designed to produce data comparable with national household survey instruments, as well as with the Kalobeyei SES 2018 and the Kakuma SES 2019. Modules on demographics, household characteristics, and assets are aligned with the most recent national household survey, the KCHS 2019, and are comparable with results reported at the urban Nairobi, Nakuru, and Mombasa levels.[43] The host community of urban refugees is defined as Kenyans who reside in the counties of Nairobi, Mombasa, and Nakuru (see chapter VI). Additional modules on access to remittances, loans and credit, vulnerabilities, social cohesion, coping mechanisms in response to lack of food, displacement trajectories, and durable solutions were administered to capture refugee-specific challenges.

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[43] The Urban SES's modules on education and employment are designed to be comparable with the KCHS. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on education and labor force participation, and since the KCHS data were collected before the COVID-19 outbreak, such modules are not compared across refugee and host communities.

BOX
2

Limitations

The mode of data collection limits comparability between refugee and host communities. The Urban SES was conducted through CATI, whereas the KCHS was done through computer-assisted personal interviews. Phone surveys can limit the representativeness of the sample and the external validity of their estimates due to telephone coverage, low participation, and response rates.[44] These limitations are a source of bias, which can be reduced by adjusting the survey weights using information from the population data. While the sampling weights for the SES control to some extent for differences in household profiles by phone ownership (households with phone vs. all households), they do not address the differences that might arise between the two modes of data collection. In addition, the training of enumerators and fieldwork might differ between phone surveys and face-to-face surveys. Hence, comparisons between refugees and hosts are limited. Poverty comparisons are also limited. Since collecting consumption data to estimate poverty can result in long interview times and reduced quality of phone survey data, the Urban SES did not include a consumption module. Therefore, poverty rates are not provided, although they are available through the KCHS for host communities.

Comparability between the refugee and host communities is also limited by the timing of the data collection. While data for the urban SES were collected after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the KCHS data were collected before. Therefore, it was not feasible to include comparative insights for education or employment.

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44 Ambel, McGee, and Tsegay, "Reducing Bias in Phone Survey Samples."

Findings

1. Demographic profile[45]

Most urban refugees fled conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, and most are living in Nairobi. Refugees are younger than hosts, and their households are more likely to be headed by women and have higher dependency ratios than host community households.

10. Since before 1990, Kenya's urban areas have hosted refugees mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, and Somalia, with the majority residing in Nairobi. Most urban refugees were displaced after 2007, with a peak in 2016 and a subsequent drop in 2017, despite the continuation of conflict in refugees' main countries of origin (Figure 1; Appendix 3). Such a drop may be partly linked with the government's announcement to close Dadaab camps in mid-2016. The announcement prompted some refugees to return, while it might have discouraged FDPs from seeking asylum in Kenya.[46] Another potential explanation is the enforcement of the encampment policy, which in 2017 began to require refugees registered in urban areas to reside in camps.[47]

▶ **FIGURE 1:** Year of arrival by country of origin of household head
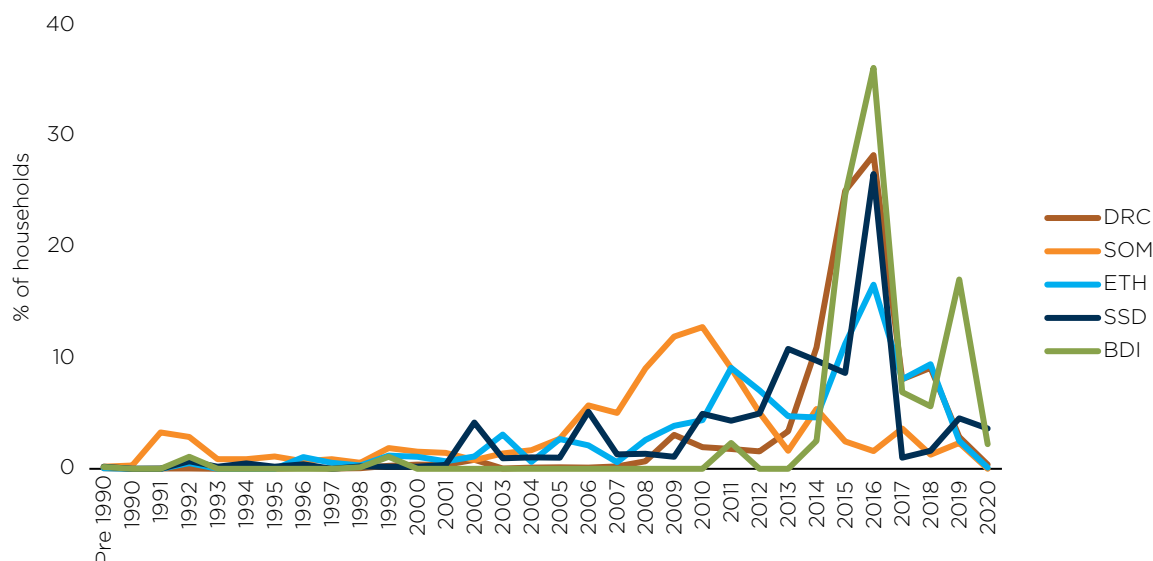
Source: UNHCR (2021). UNHCR Kenya ProGres Registration Database Sub-Sample. Data not publicly available.
Note: DRC = Democratic Republic of the Congo; SOM = Somalia; ETH = Ethiopia; SSD = South Sudan; BDI = Burundi.

11. About 89 percent of refugees reside in Nairobi, while 4 percent live in Nakuru, and 7 percent in Mombasa. Refugees' counties of residence vary by country of origin (Figure 2). While Nairobi hosts

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[45] Graphs and charts for refugee estimates were created based on Urban SES 2020–21 data. Graphs and charts depicting host community information were created based on the KIHBS 2015–16. Significance levels are reported as p-values for comparative figures, with 1% (p<.01) and 5% (p<.05) levels considered significant. Error bars in graphs display standard error estimates.
[46] Frelick, "Kenya: Involuntary Refugee Returns to Somalia."
[47] UNHCR-Kenya operation.

6

a population from a wider variety of countries, refugees in Nakuru are mainly from South Sudan, and those in Mombasa are mainly from Somalia. Notably, Nakuru has an existing South Sudanese community of migrants and refugees, while Mombasa has been the main county of residence for Somali refugees since before Kenya's policy shift toward encampment.

▶ **FIGURE 2:** Main countries of origin by county of residence
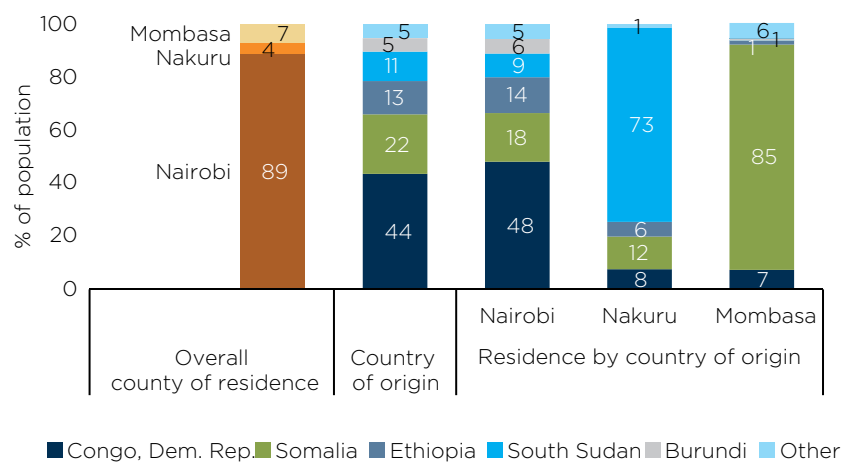
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

12. Nearly half of the urban and refugee populations are between 15 and 34 years old, with urban refugees being younger than hosts, especially in Nakuru. Around 49 percent of the refugees and hosts are between 15 and 34 years old (Figure 3). However, variations between communities are noted. Refugees are younger than hosts, with 45 percent of them being 18 years old or below, compared with 32 percent of hosts. Nakuru's population is the youngest, with 55 percent of refugees and 41 percent of hosts 18 years old or below. In contrast, only 1.8 percent of refugees are elderly (age 65 and above), compared with 0.72 percent of urban nationals. Age distributions across populations are particularly important when considering dependency ratios and needs according to age.

▶ **FIGURE 3:** Population pyramids for urban refugees and hosts
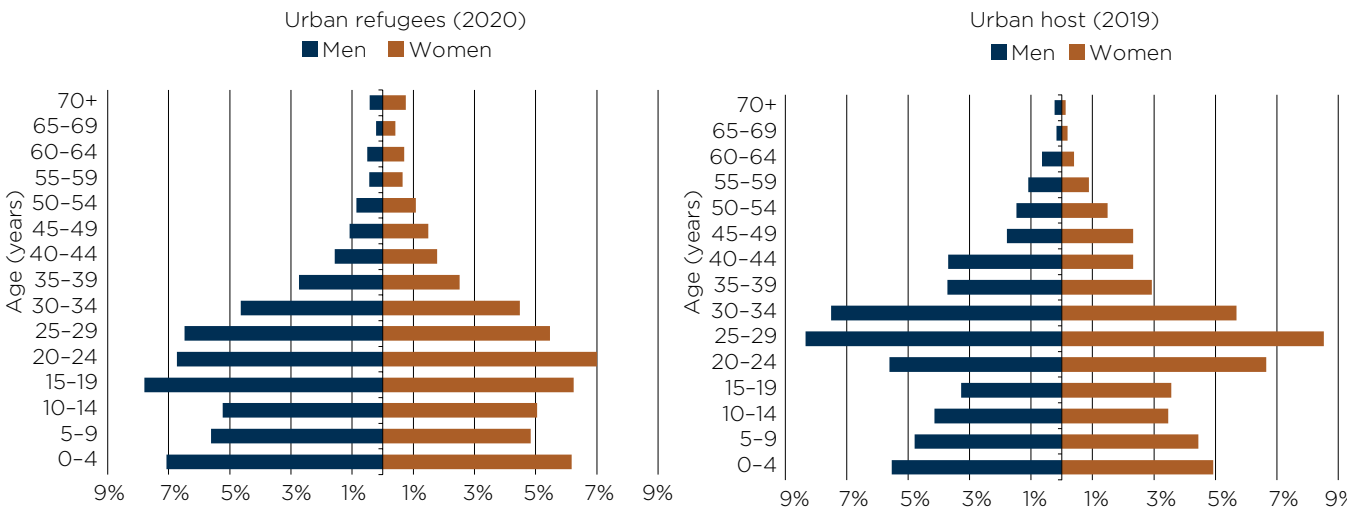
Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

13. Most refugee and host community households are headed by men, except for refugees in Nakuru, with dependency ratios being higher among refugee households, mainly those headed by women.
Refugee households in Nakuru, who are mainly South Sudanese, are more likely to be headed by women than those in other counties (Figure 4, p<0.01). In turn, host community households in Nairobi are more likely than those in other counties to be headed by women (p<0.01). Dependency ratios are higher for refugee than for host community households (Figure 5), with host and refugee households headed by women having higher dependency ratios than those headed by men (p<0.01). Nakuru-based households are the most likely to have the highest dependency ratios, partly reflected by the higher proportion of young population. This highlights that mainly refugee women heading households in Nakuru carry the responsibility of providing for large households.[48]

▶ **FIGURE 4:** Households headed by women
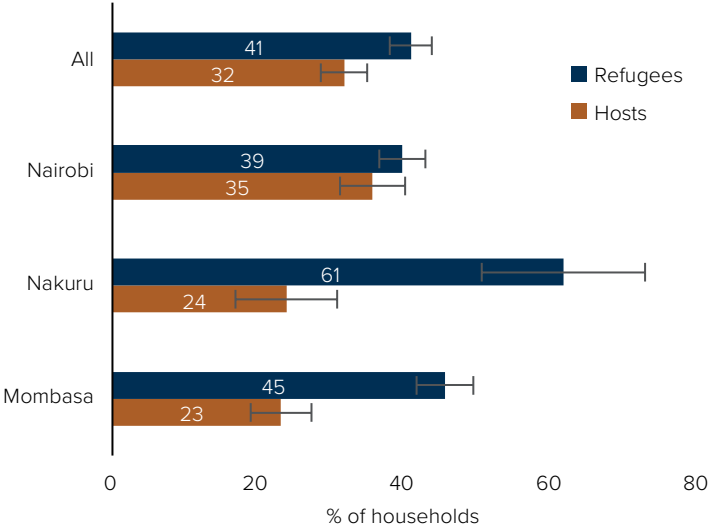
Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

▶ **FIGURE 5:** Dependency ratios by county of residence
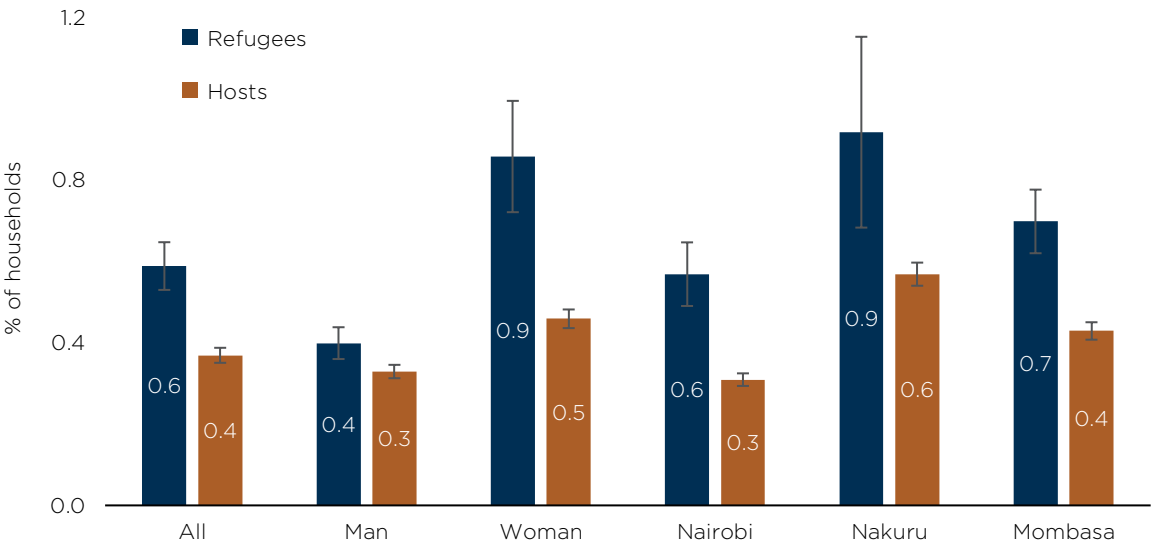
[48] In Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei settlement, most South Sudanese households are also headed by women and have large dependency ratios. This points to the heightened vulnerability of South Sudanese refugee households headed by women.

14. Refugees are more likely to have disabilities than urban nationals, with visual difficulties being the most common. Refugees in Mombasa and Nairobi are more likely to have disabilities than refugees in Nakuru (Figure 6). Refugees who are age 65 and above are more likely to have disabilities than refugees of other ages. The most common disability among refugees and urban nationals is visual impairments (38 percent of refugees and 44 percent of nationals) followed by mobility difficulties (33 percent of refugees and 34 percent of nationals). People with disabilities face difficulties accessing education and livelihood opportunities.[49]

▶ **FIGURE 6:** People with disabilities, refugees, and urban nationals (age five years and older)
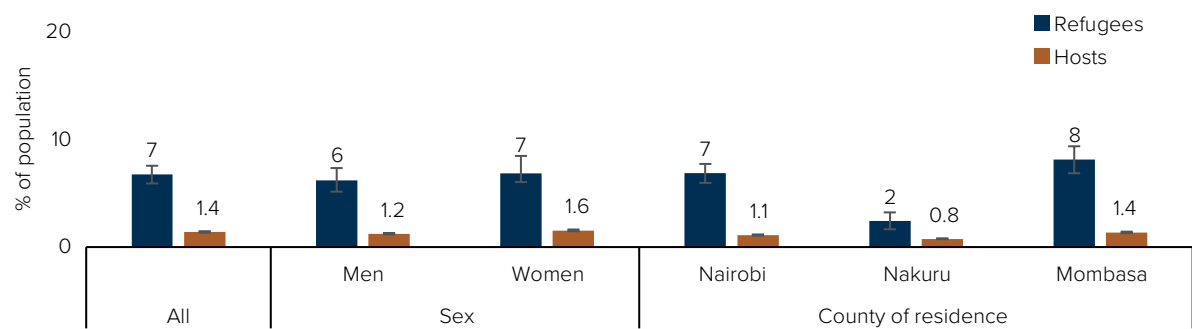
Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; Kenya Population Census 2019.
Note: Nationals include urban nationals in the whole country.

2. Services

While most refugee and host community households have access to improved housing, water, and sanitation services, some face limitations. Overcrowding and the use of biomass fuels for cooking are more common among refugee households headed by women. Furthermore, refugees' enrollment rates are strikingly low, especially for secondary school.

2.1 Housing, energy, water, and sanitation

15. Even though most urban refugee and host community households have access to improved housing, refugees are more likely to live in overcrowded rooms than hosts.[50] Nearly 8 in 10 refugee and host community households have access to improved housing. However, overcrowding is common. Refugee households in Nakuru are more likely to have access to improved housing than those in Nairobi and Mombasa (p<0.01; figure 7).[51] Overcrowding is most common among refugee households,

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[49] Compared with urban Uganda (where 12 percent of the population live with a disability), the prevalence of disabilities in Kenya is low. Nabulime, "Successes and Challenges in the Reporting about the Situation of Persons with Disabilities Inline with the SDGs: The Uganda Case."

[50] Improved housing is defined as having improved floor, wall, and roof construction. Improved floor consists of floor constructed with tablets/wooden planks, palm/bamboo/mat/adobe/polished wood, vinyl/asphalt, ceramic tiles, cement, carpet, stone, and bricks. Improved wall materials consist of cement, stone with lime/cement, bricks, cement blocks, covered adobe, wooden planks/shingles, and burnt bricks with cement. Improved roof types are made with metal, wood, ceramic tiles, cement, or asbestos. IFC, "DHS Analytical Studies. Using Household Survey Data to Explore the Effects of Improved Housing Conditions on Malaria Infection in Children in Sub-Saharan Africa."

[51] Most Nakuru refugees reside in Nakuru Town East and West, where housing conditions may be better than those in Nairobi refugees' main areas of residence (Eastleigh, Kayole, Kawangware, Kayole, Ruiru, Githurai, and Kangemi), and in "Little Mogadishu" in Mombasa, where most refugees live.

especially those headed by women.[52] Refugee households in Nairobi and Nakuru are equally likely to face overcrowding (both 38 percent), compared with 29 percent of households inn Mombasa. In turn, the most overcrowded host community households are in Mombasa (24 percent), followed by Nakuru (20 percent) and Nairobi (18 percent). Overcrowding is linked to a higher risk of mental distress and sexual assault.[53]

▶ **FIGURE 7:** Access to improved housing, and overcrowding by gender of household head
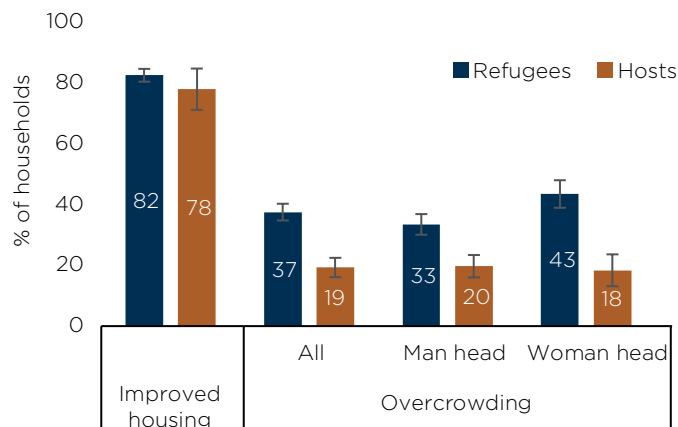
Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

16. Urban refugee and host community households largely use gas for cooking, while access to improved sources of water and sanitation varies between communities.[54] Refugee households are more likely to use charcoal for cooking than host community households (Figure 8). Among refugees, households headed by women are more likely to use charcoal than those headed by men (32 percent and 19 percent, respectively). Variations by gender are not significant among hosts. The combustion of biomass fuels such as charcoal emits large amounts of airborne pollutants that can generate acute respiratory diseases and other ailments, especially for women and girls, who are usually the main household cooks. This also affects children under age five, who normally remain in the proximity of the cooking area when food is prepared.[55] Refugees have better access to improved sources of water than hosts, although 72 percent of refugee households reported insufficient water supply in the month preceding the interview (Figure 9). In Mombasa, access to improved drinking water is low for both communities but, alarmingly low for hosts.[56] In contrast, access to improved sanitation is better for hosts. Access to private toilets is low among refugee households, while comparable information is not available for host community households. Low access to water and improved sanitation can increase the risk of contagion of COVID-19 and other diseases.

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[52] UN Habitat. 2010. "A Practical Guide for Conducting Housing Profiles," 84. Overcrowding occurs if three or more people occupy each habitable room. According to a UN Habitat slum-related definition of overcrowding, a house is considered to provide a sufficient living area for the household members if no more than two people share the same room.
[53] WHO. 2020. "What Are the Health Risks Related to Overcrowding?"
[54] More than 95 percent of refugee and host community households use the electricity grid or a generator for lighting.
[55] Smith, Mehta, and Feuz. 2004. "Indoor Air Pollution from Household Use of Solid Fuels"; Kurmi et al. 2012. "Lung Cancer Risk and Solid Fuel Smoke Exposure: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis"; Dasgupta et al. 2004. "Who Suffers from Indoor Air Pollution? Evidence from Bangladesh."
[56] Around 76 percent of refugee households have access to improved drinking water, compared wth 17 percent of host community households.

▶ **FIGURE 8:** Energy for cooking

Legend:
- Firewood
- Charcoal
- Kerosene/paraffin
- Liquefied petroleum gas/natural gas/biogas
- Electricity
- Other
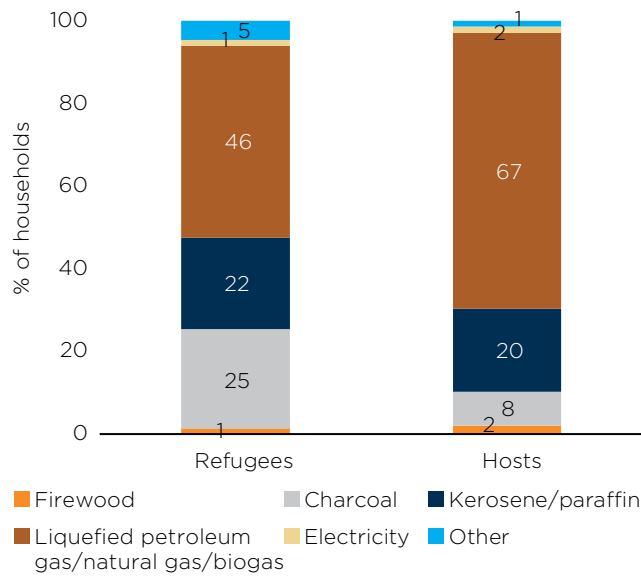
▶ **FIGURE 9:** Improved water and sanitation

Legend:
- Refugees
- Hosts
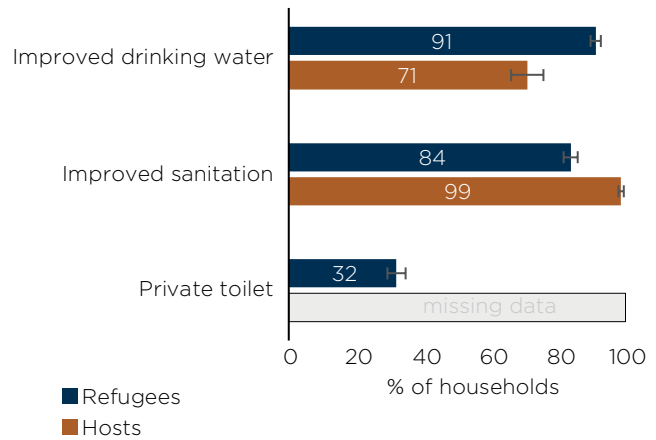
Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

2.2 Education

17. Refugees have lower educational attainment than hosts, with variations by gender and county of residence. Among both populations, women are more likely than men to have no education (Figure 10). In Mombasa, refugees are the most likely to have no education and the least likely to have attained secondary education. Hosts in Nairobi have the highest level of education overall.

▶ **FIGURE 10:** Educational attainment by gender and county of residence (age 15+, currently not attending school)

Legend:
- No education
- Primary
- Secondary
- Technical or vocational
- Higher
- Other
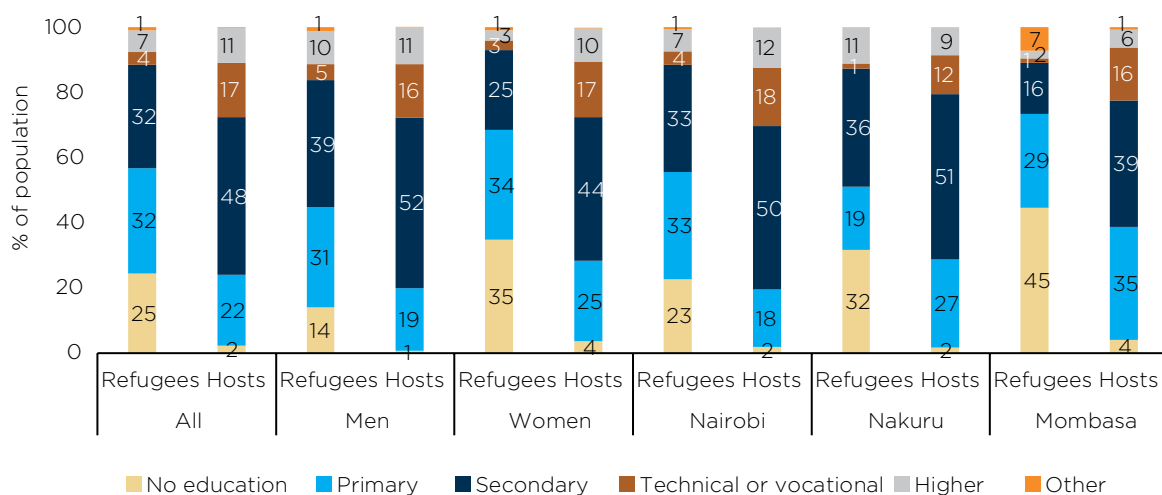
Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

18. Even though the government guarantees access to free primary education and free day secondary education, enrollment rates for refugees are low, while the COVID-19 may have hindered access to education.[57] Refugees' main barrier to accessing education is the cost of transport, books, uniforms, and other indirect costs.[58] To help overcome this, UNHCR and partners offer scholarships and support for refugee students. However, the number of available scholarships is very limited (see Appendix 5). Furthermore, different educational experiences and linguistic competencies can result in students falling behind or dropping out. Other key limitations include the lack of information and resources to support the process of recognizing prior learning, and the limited access to birth certificates, which are required for registration in the National Education Management Information System and for national examinations.[59] The impact of COVID-19, resulting in recurrent lockdowns and school closures, has also affected access and participation in education programs for refugees. For many, the loss of income has prevented households from meeting the wrap-around costs of public education (lunch, uniform, development fees, etc.).

19. Refugees' primary and secondary enrollment rates are low, especially in Mombasa, while in Nakuru, refugees are the most likely to be enrolled. School-age refugee boys and girls are equally likely to be enrolled in primary school, with Mombasa refugees being the least likely to be enrolled (Figure 11). Transition to secondary school is low, especially in Mombasa and for refugee girls (Figure 12). The most prevailing reason refugees have reported for being out of secondary school is cost. Despite progressive programs such as the Free Day Secondary Education, only a small percentage of refugees can afford the costs of public secondary schools such as transport, books, food, and uniforms. A small number of scholarships are available for learners with exceptional results at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, but opportunities are highly competitive. Slim prospects of work and university often result in the de-prioritization of secondary education.[60] In addition to barriers such as indirect and direct costs of education, the low primary enrollment rate in Mombasa may be explained by a preference among Mombasa-based refugees, who are mainly Somalis, to send children to faith-based schools (such as *madaris*).[61] In Nairobi, *madaris* are also attended by Ethiopian or Somali children. These children may not attend formal schooling due to socio-cultural reasons and the associated costs.[62]

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[57] The SES data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic; thus, estimates of access to education may have been impacted by it.
[58] Dix, "Urbanisation and the Social Protection of Refugees in Nairobi."
[59] UNHCR-Kenya operation.
[60] Ibid.
[61] *Madaris* is plural for *madrasa*, the Arabic word for school.
[62] Pavanello, Elhaway, and Pantuliano, "Hidden and Exposed: Urban Refugees in Nairobi, Kenya."

▶ **FIGURE 11:** Primary net (NER) and gross (GER) enrollment rates of refugees during COVID-19 lockdown
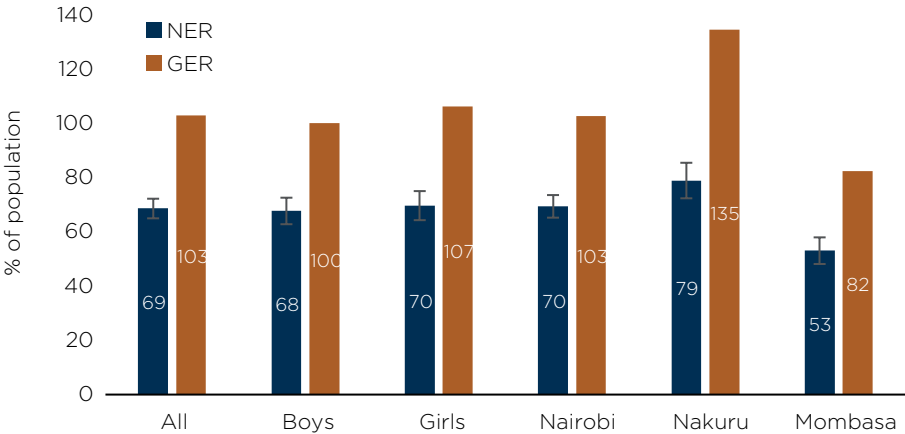
▶ **FIGURE 12:** Secondary net (NER) and gross (GER) enrollment rates of refugees during COVID-19 lockdown
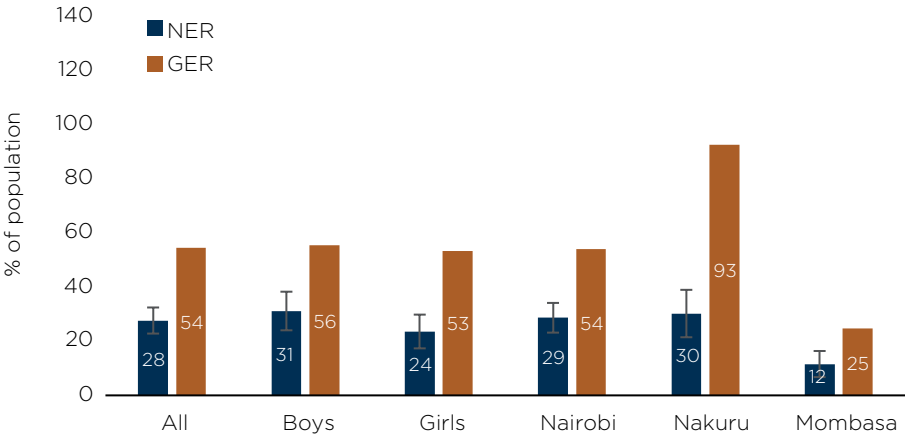
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Comparable statistics for host community members are not available.

3. Food security

In 60 percent of households, urban refugees face high levels of food insecurity, with refugees in Nakuru the most likely to be highly food insecure.[63]

20. Food insecurity is measured by using the World Food Programme's livelihoods-based and consumption-based coping strategies indexes. The Livelihoods-Based Coping Strategies Index (LCSI) assesses the longer-term coping and productive capacity of households in the presence of food shortages, and strategies commonly undertaken to address them in the last 30 days. These can include selling assets or livestock, reducing spending on health and education, using savings, and begging. The LCSI classifies households as using stress, crisis, or emergency coping strategies to deal with food insecurity. The consumption-based or reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) measures the level

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[63] Comparable data on food security are not available for nationals. Only refugee data are presented.

of stress faced by a household due to food shortages by assessing the frequency of adoption of five coping mechanisms, and their severity. Strategies include reducing meals, eating less preferred foods, and limiting adult food intake for children to eat. The rCSI module inquires whether, in the last seven days, strategies were used to cope with a lack of food.[64] The rCSI categorizes households as being in a situation of high, medium, or low food insecurity. Consumption-based strategies are more severe than livelihoods-based ones. This section focuses mainly on the rCSI, while results for the LCSI are presented in Appendix 7.7.

21. In Kenya, food insecurity is a threat for hosts and refugees, with COVID-19 having exacerbated this already difficult situation. Food security defines a situation in which all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.[65] At least 4 million Kenyans are severely food insecure. The current food security problems in Kenya derive from multiple factors. These include droughts, high costs of domestic food production due to high costs of inputs (mainly fertilizer), and low purchasing power of consumers. In urban areas, however, nationals are less likely to face high levels of food insecurity than in rural areas, although the COVID-19 pandemic might have increased food insecurity levels. Generally, national households headed by women are more likely to face food insecurity.[66]

22. Refugees face high levels of food insecurity, especially in Nakuru. Around 84 percent of households used consumption-based strategies to cope with the lack of food. Most of them ate less preferred foods (80 percent). In 34 percent of households, refugees implemented the most severe strategy: restricting adult consumption for children to eat. Nakuru refugee households are the most likely to face high levels of food insecurity (68 percent), which is striking, as most households in Nakuru have high dependency ratios, reflecting that young refugees are at risk of malnutrition (Figure 13). Woman-headed households are more likely to be food insecure than man-headed households. Food insecurity is negatively associated with the number of people employed in a household. An additional employed member in a household decreases the household's chance of being highly food insecure by 4 percentage points (Table 34). Food insecurity levels may have increased partly due to the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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[64] WFP, "Cameroon: Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) January 2019."
[65] FAO, "Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action."
[66] WFP, "Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) Kenya 2016." As of 2016, less than 10 percent of the population faced food insecurity in Nairobi, Nakuru, and Mombasa.

▶ **FIGURE 13:** Food insecurity level and consumption-based strategies (rCSI) among refugees
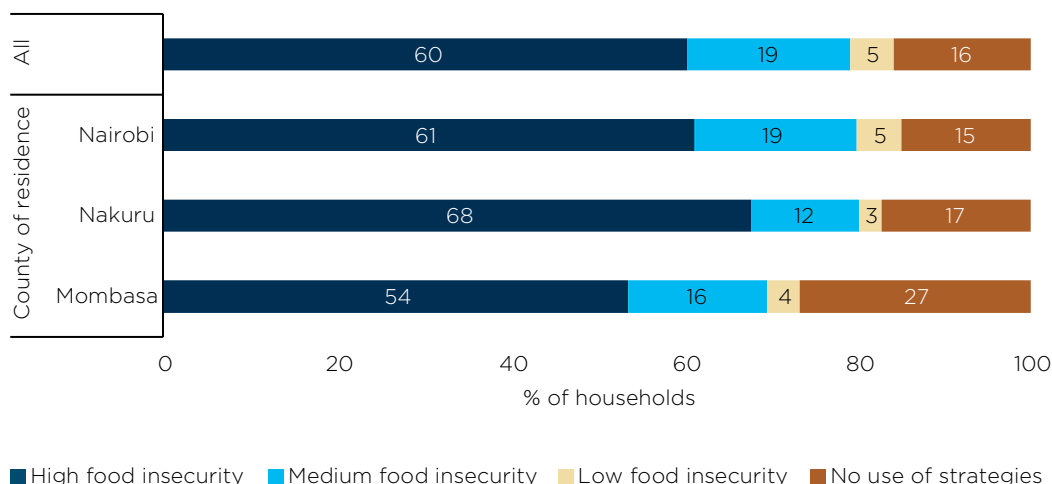
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Comparable statistics for host community members are not available.

4. Employment during the COVID-19 lockdown

Only 42 percent of refugees are employed, with the lowest employment rates among women and Nakuru-based refugees. Wage employment in the formal and/or informal sectors is the most common activity. Most refugees who are outside the labor force consider that limited employment opportunities and inadequate skills are the main obstacles to secure employment.[67]

23. The International Labour Organization (ILO) labor force framework is used to understand employment dynamics of urban refugees. The working-age population (15–64 years) is classified into three categories according to their labor force status. A person is (i) in employment if they are engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit, or only temporarily absent from such an activity.[68] Those who are not employed are either (ii) in unemployment, and recently carried out activities to seek employment and are available to take up employment given a job opportunity, or (iii) are outside the labor force if they do not fulfill these criteria (Figure 14). The categorization of labor force status refers to the seven days preceding the interview. The categories are mutually exclusive and exhaustive. Within those outside the labor force, the potential labor force is defined as all persons of working age who: (i) recently carried out activities to seek employment but are not currently available to start work (unavailable jobseekers); or (ii) did not carry out activities to seek employment but want employment and are currently available (available potential jobseekers).[69]

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[67] Comparable statistics are not available for host community members. Only refugee data are presented.
[68] In this report we have considered "employed" those who have carried out activities.
[69] ILO, "ILO Glossary of Statistical Terms"; ILO, "Resolution Concerning Statistics of Work, Employment and Labour Underutilization. International Conference of Labour Statisticians."

▶ **FIGURE 14:** Labor force classification
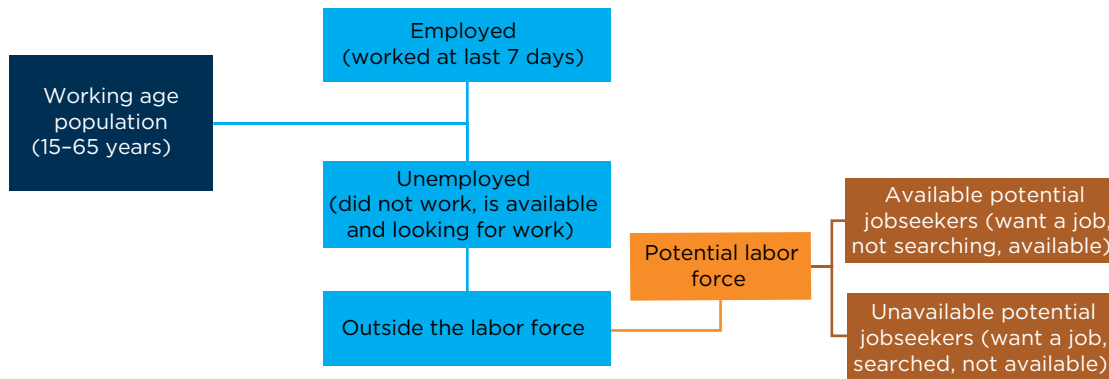
Source: ILO 2013.

24. Even though refugees have the right to work in Kenya, they face practical restrictions. The 2006 Refugee Act stipulates that refugees can work if they have a "Class M" work permit issued by the Ministry of Interior. Applications for permits need a recommendation from a prospective employer and must be accompanied by a letter from RAS confirming refugee status.[70] While refugees are legally allowed to work, it is reportedly much more difficult for them to find employment, given that work permits for asylum-seekers or refugees are very rarely issued.[71] Refugees living in Nairobi are able to acquire a business license from the city council to start a business. However, a lack of capital or credit prevents refugees from obtaining this license. Restrictions on freedom of movement also affect opportunities to engage in the labor market. While refugees in urban centers may be able to move more freely than camp-based refugees, freedom of movement for urban refugees was significantly restricted by the Government of Kenya's 2012 relocation directive and 2014 encampment directive.[72] Movement restrictions and the obstacles faced in obtaining work permits and business licenses fundamentally curtail refugees' ability to work and generate income, undermining self-reliance.

25. Some 42 percent of working-age refugees are employed, with women and Nakuru-based refugees being the least likely to be employed. Refugee women and those who are heads of household are less likely to be employed than men. Importantly, women heads are more likely to be employed than women who do not head households (p<0.01). Refugees in Nakuru are the least likely to be employed, and the most likely to be outside the labor force (Figure 15). Importantly, Nakuru refugee households and households headed by women are the most likely not to have any working-age member who is employed.[73] Low employment rates in Nakuru are alarming, as these households have the highest dependency ratios and are mostly headed by women. The lower employment rates among women may be influenced by gender-based and cultural norms that prevent women from engaging in economic activities while prioritizing unpaid care and domestic work. This reflects that women heading households in Nakuru face a particularly difficult situation, as even though they need to provide for their dependents, many of them are outside the labor force or unemployed.

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[70] Zetter and Ruaudel, "KNOMAD Study Part-II Refugees' Right to Work—An Assessment."
[71] Refugee Consortium of Kenya, "Asylum Under Threat. Assessing the Protection of Somali Refugees in Dadaab Refugee Camps and along the Migration Corridor."
[72] O'Callaghan and Sturge, "Against the Odds: Refugee Integration in Kenya."
[73] Around 35 percent of man-headed households and 46 percent of woman-headed households contain at least one employed working-age member (37 percent Nairobi, 78 percent Nakuru, and 50 percent Mombasa).

▶ **FIGURE 15:** Labor force status of refugees during COVID-19 lockdown
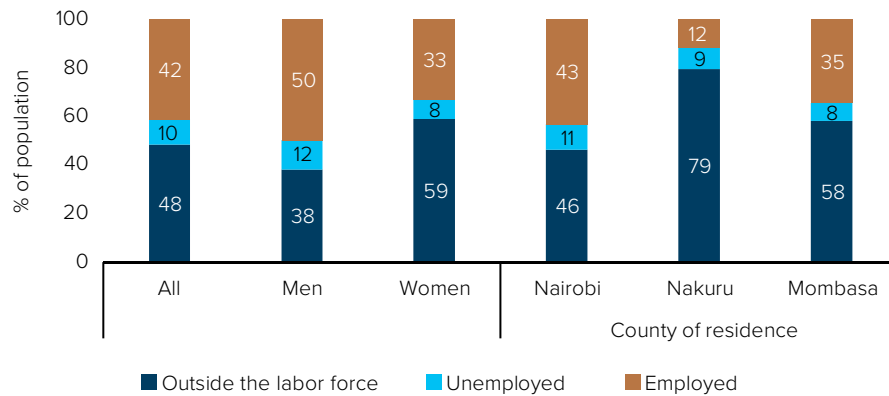
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Comparable statistics for host community members are not available.

26. Wage employment in the formal and/or informal sectors is the most common activity among urban refugees.[74] Most employed refugees work as paid employees in the formal or informal sector, with men being more likely to do so. Women are more likely than men to be self-employed in non-agricultural businesses. This may be partly explained by the flexibility that self-employment allows, as it enables women to combine paid work with domestic and care work (Figure 16). However, self-employment is a more vulnerable form of work than wage employment. This form of work is more likely to be affected and have wide-reaching effects during economic downturns such as the one resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Previous research has shown that most refugees who have access to work are engaged in the informal economy and tend to participate in the sectors that have been hardest hit by the pandemic.[75,76] Casual labor and petty trade are common. Several Somali refugees in Eastleigh have roadside stands where they sell fabrics, undergarments, fruit, and vegetables, among other items. Many sell *mira'a* or *khat*, a herbal stimulant. Some refugees are involved in small businesses such as kiosks, restaurants, driving taxis and *matatus*, and running hairdressing salons, which are common among Congolese and Ethiopian refugees.[77] Women mainly engage in petty trade, domestic labor, and tea- and coffee-making.[78]

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[74] The SES covers participation in the formal and informal sectors and does not differentiate between them.
[75] Pavanello, Elhawary, and Pantuliano, "Hidden and Exposed: Urban Refugees in Nairobi, Kenya."
[76] Peyton, "Refugees Working in Shops and Cafes Have Been Hit Hardest by Coronavirus." Refugees are disproportionately represented in the sectors that have been hardest hit by the pandemic, such as food services, manufacturing, and retail.
[77] Campbell, "Urban Refugees in Nairobi: Problems of Protection, Mechanisms of Survival, and Possibilities for Integration."
[78] RCK, "Enhancing the Protection of Refugee Women in Nairobi. A Survey on Risks Protection Gaps and Coping Mechanisms of Refugee Women in Urban Areas."

▶ **FIGURE 16:** Type of work in last seven days among employed refugees
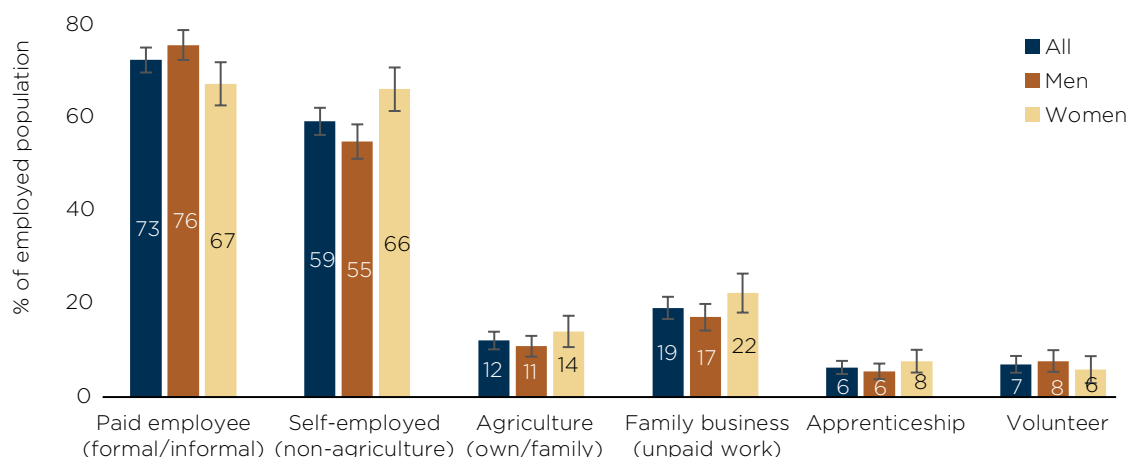
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Percentages do not sum up to 100, since refugees may have engaged in more than one activity.

27. Most refugees who are outside the labor force did not search for work—mainly due to studies, the lack of jobs, or homemaking responsibilities. The skills perceived to be needed to secure employment are mainly small business management skills. About 89 percent of refugees outside the labor force did not seek work in the seven days before the interview. Reasons varied greatly by gender. Among men, studies are the most important reason for not having sought work. Homemaking and childcare problems were important reasons mentioned almost exclusively by women (Figure 17). Refugees, especially women, are interested in strengthening their small business management skills, which may be partly explained by the timetable flexibility that entrepreneurship can offer (Figure 18). Importantly, women often lack access to capital or credit to acquire business licenses and have to rely on men to borrow cash and/or material on their behalf.[79] Among men, driving and information technology (IT) are important skills that are perceived to be needed to secure a job. Relatedly, 44 percent of refugees report to be proficient in using the internet (55 percent of men and 32 percent of women), while 25 percent know how to use a computer (34 percent of men and 15 percent of women).

▶ **FIGURE 17:** Reasons for not seeking work, by gender, among refugees outside the labor force

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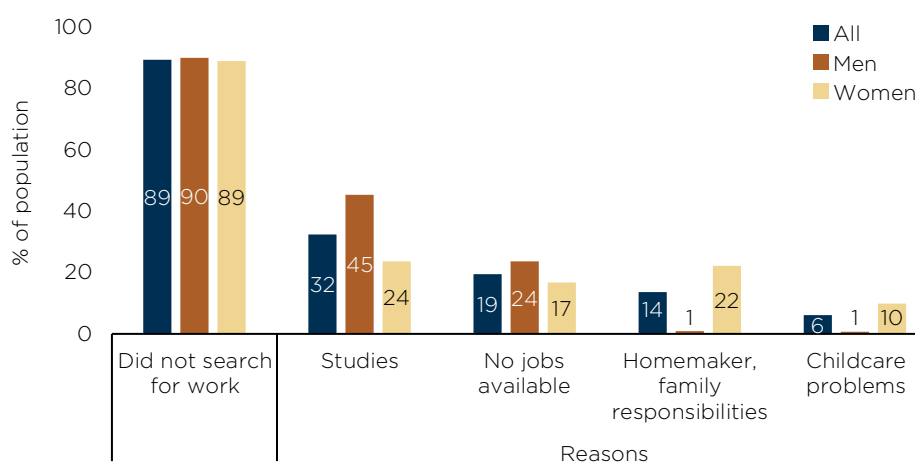
[79] Pavanello, Elhawary, and Pantuliano, "Hidden and Exposed: Urban Refugees in Nairobi, Kenya."

▶ **FIGURE 18:** Main skills perceived by refugees to be needed to secure employment

Small business management: All 32, Men 26, Women 38
Professional skills: All 20, Men 22, Women 18
Driving: All 9, Men 16, Women 2
Information technology: All 11, Men 16, Women 7
Automobile mechanics: All 2, Men 4, Women 0
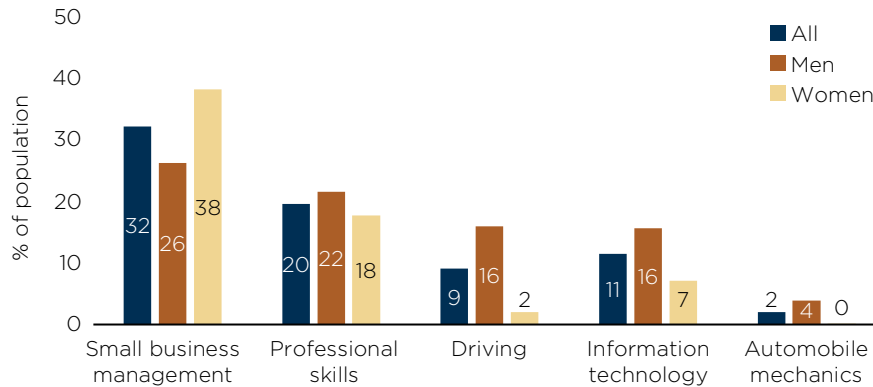
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

28. Among those outside the labor force, the main obstacles to securing employment are limited job opportunities and inadequate skills, while the main support needed includes loans or credit and documentation. The main obstacles to securing employment among those outside the labor force (Figure 15) vary for refugees who are interested in wage work or in self-employment. Those who are interested in wage work report that the main obstacle to securing a job is a lack of job opportunities (Figure 19). Among those interested in self-employment, access to expansion capital is the main obstacle. A lack of adequate skills is a key obstacle for those interested in wage work and in self-employment. The main support needed also varies depending on refugees' interest in wage work or in self-employment (Figure 20). Among those interested in wage work, the main support needed is to secure a work permit. For those interested in self-employment, loans, credit, and business training are the main types of support needed.

▶ **FIGURE 19:** Refugees' main obstacles to securing employment, by interest in self-employment or wage work

Lack of work permit: Self-employment 6, Wage work 3
Lack of other documentation: Self-employment 2, Wage work 4
Lack of information about local labor market: Self-employment 2, Wage work 7
Lack of start-up capital (seed capital): Self-employment 11
Lack of refugee ID: Self-employment 1, Wage work 12
Limited or irregular work opportunities: Wage work 15
Lack of access to loans or micro-credit: Self-employment 16
Lack of or inadequate skills: Self-employment 19, Wage work 20
Lack of work opportunities: Wage work 33
Lack of expansion capital: Self-employment 38

% of population outside the labor force

■ Self-employment ■ Wage work

▶ **FIGURE 20:** Refugees' main support needed to secure employment, by interest in self-employment or wage work

Technical/vocational skills training — Self-employment: 11, Wage work: 14
Business training — Self-employment: 17
Securing other documentation — Self-employment: 1, Wage work: 17
Securing contacts with other employers — Wage work: 20
Support with access to markets — Self-employment: 3, Wage work: 20
Securing work permit — Self-employment: 4, Wage work: 25
Loan or credit — Self-employment: 61

% of population outside the labor force

■ Self-employment   ■ Wage work

Source: Kenya Covid-19 Rapid Response Phone Survey, round 5.[80]
Note: More details are available on the online dashboard: www.kenyacovidtracker.org.

5. Access to finance and remittances

Mobile banking ownership is higher than bank account ownership, while access to formal sources of loans is low. Refugee households whose heads have been displaced for longer are more likely to have received remittances in the last year.[81]

29. Ownership of bank accounts is lower than mobile banking, while formal sources of loans are barely used. Refugees in Nairobi are more likely than refugees in other counties to own a bank account (Figure 21). In 98 percent of households where refugees own a bank account, the account is individually owned. In turn, mobile banking accounts are more likely to be shared. In 20 percent of households where refugees own a mobile banking account, the account is shared (15 percent shared with a Kenyan, and 5 percent with a refugee). The most widely used bank service is Equity Bank (42 percent). Despite documentation requirements to buy a SIM card in Kenya, most refugee households own a mobile banking account, with man-headed households being more likely to own one. Only 4 in 10 households reported access to loans, with family and relatives being the most common source, while formal financing and community savings are barely used (Figure 22).

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[80] As the Urban SES did not cover information on obstacles and support needed to secure employment, Kenya Covid-19 Rapid Response Phone Survey (RRPS) round 5 data were used to complement the employment findings for urban refugees in Nairobi, Nakuru, and Mombasa. RRPS round 5 data were collected in April to May 2021, while the Urban SES data were collected in November to December 2020.
[81] Comparable data on bank account ownership and loans are not available for nationals. Only refugee data are presented.

▶ **FIGURE 21:** Refugees' bank account and mobile banking ownership
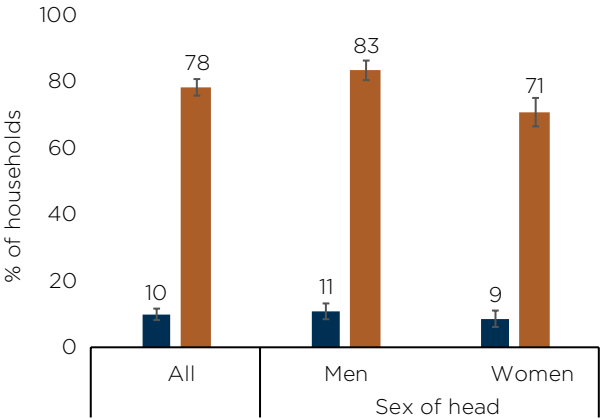
▶ **FIGURE 22:** Refugees' access to loans in last 12 months and main sources
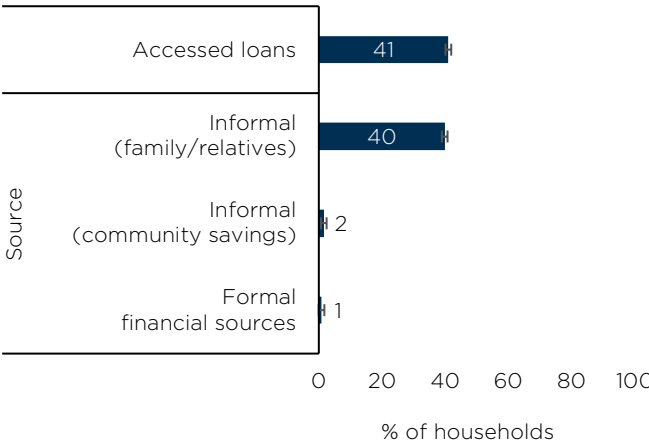
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Comparable statistics for host community members are not available.

30. Refugee households whose heads have been displaced for longer are more likely to have family members resettled in high-income countries and to have received remittances in the last year. Refugee households whose heads arrived before 2008 are more likely to have nuclear family members and relatives or friends resettled in high-income countries than those who arrived in 2015 (Figure 23), and they are also the most likely to have received remittances in the year preceding the interview (Figure 24). Refugees displaced for longer generally have more opportunities to be considered under annual quotas of resettlement programs, which could explain why their relatives who remained receive more remittances.

▶ **FIGURE 23:** Refugee households with nuclear family members or relatives resettled in high-income countries
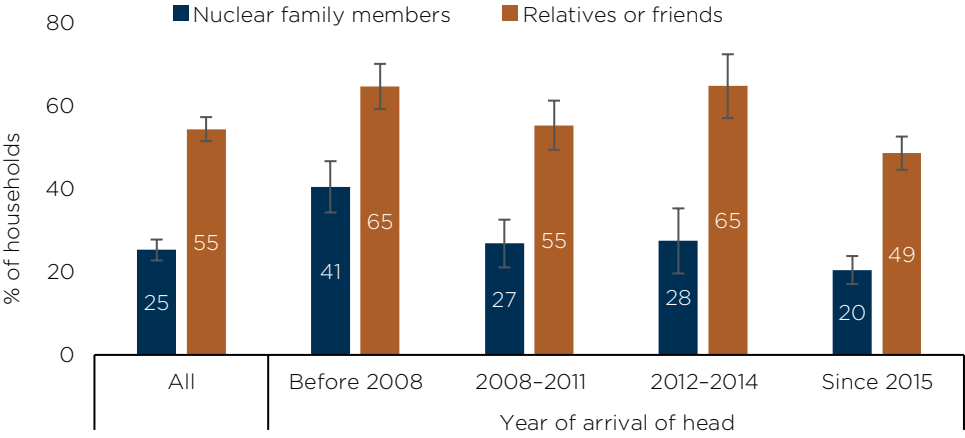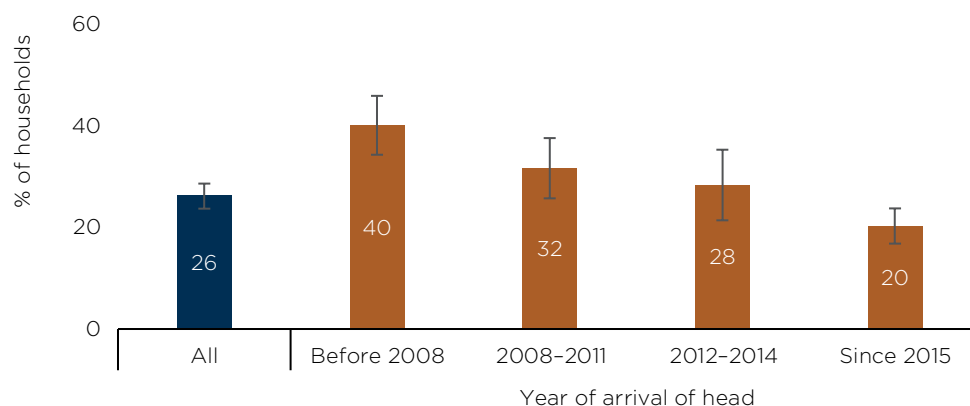
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Comparable statistics for host community members are not available.

6. Social cohesion

Perceptions of trust, safety, and participation are generally positive. Refugees who recently inter-acted with a host community member tend to have more positive social cohesion perceptions than those who did not recently interact with hosts.[82]

31. The concept of social cohesion in the context of displacement is rarely coherently defined, and its usage is elastic. Social cohesion is rather a "composite concept that encompasses a range of vectors, including the attitudinal and emotional (e.g., acceptance, empathy, and trust), the collective (for example, identity and propensity for joint action), the institutional and systemic (e.g., political participation), and the socioeconomic vector (e.g., relative deprivation and access to opportunities). Moreover, these vectors run both horizontally (between persons and groups) and vertically (between persons, communities, and institutions)."[83] In sociological terms, social cohesion refers to "the extent to which there are bonds within a group or society, which foster trust among strangers, willingness to cooperate, and confidence in institutions."[84] In contexts affected by fragility, conflict, and violence, social cohesion focuses on intergroup perceptions and interactions.

32. Refugees' perceptions of social cohesion are generally positive, although negative regarding consideration of refugees' opinions in decision-making, and safety at night. Perceptions of partici-pation tend to be worse than those for other dimensions of social cohesion (Figure 25). Nearly 7 in 10 refugees feel that the Kenyan political system does not allow refugees to have a say in what the gov-ernment does. However, they tend to have a more positive perception about their ability to express their opinion through the community leadership structure. Perceptions of safety at night and crime are generally negative. Notably, perceptions of trust in both neighbors and the host community tend to be positive.

33. Perceptions of trust and participation vary between refugees who did and did not recently interact with host community members. Refugees who interacted with a host community member in the seven days preceding the interview more often agreed that the host community is trustworthy

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[82] Comparable data on social cohesion are not available for nationals. Only refugee data are presented.
[83] De Berry and Roberts, "Social Cohesion and Forced Displacement," 27.
[84] Rodgers, "What Does 'Social Cohesion' Mean for Refugees and Hosts? A View from Kenya."

than those who did not recently interact (Figure 26). Similarly, refugees who recently interacted with hosts reported feeling comfortable with their children socializing with host community children and tend to have a more positive perception of their ability to express their opinion through the community leadership structure than refugees who did not recently interact with hosts. Social cohesion is being stretched thin during the COVID-19 pandemic, with riots and political and mob violence having increased substantially, especially in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.[85] Further, social cohesion and interactions have critical consequences for integration efforts.[86] Hence, exploring interactions between groups and how they shape perceptions of trust, safety, and participation is key to inform social cohesion programs that can help face the adverse social consequences of the pandemic.[87]

▶ **FIGURE 25:** Refugees' perceptions of trust, safety, and participation
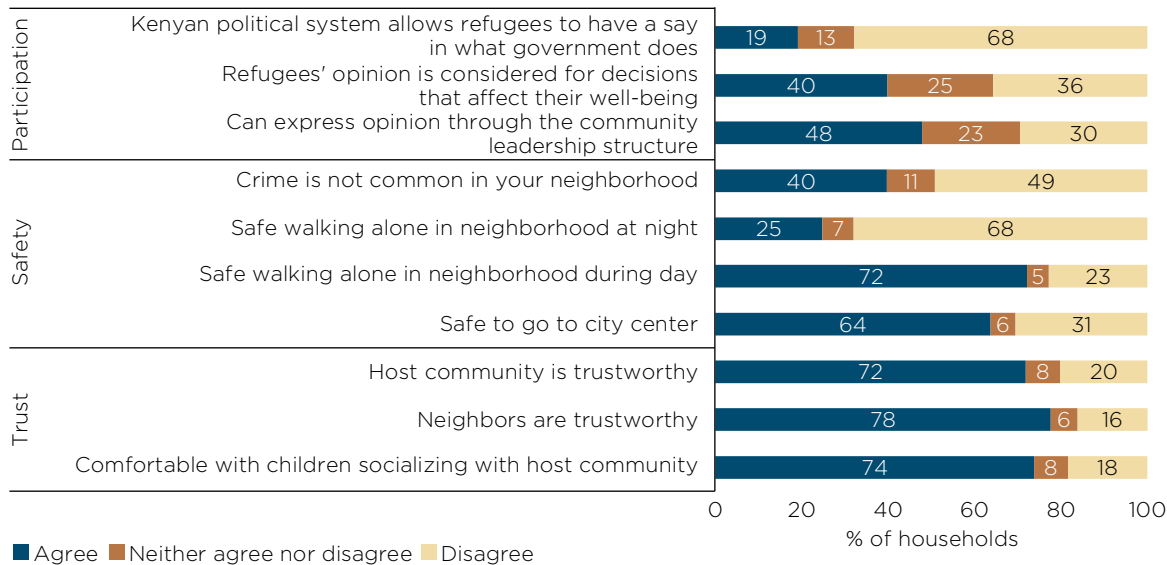
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Comparable statistics for host community members are not available.

▶ **FIGURE 26:** Refugees' perceptions of social cohesion by recent interaction (seven days preceding the interview)
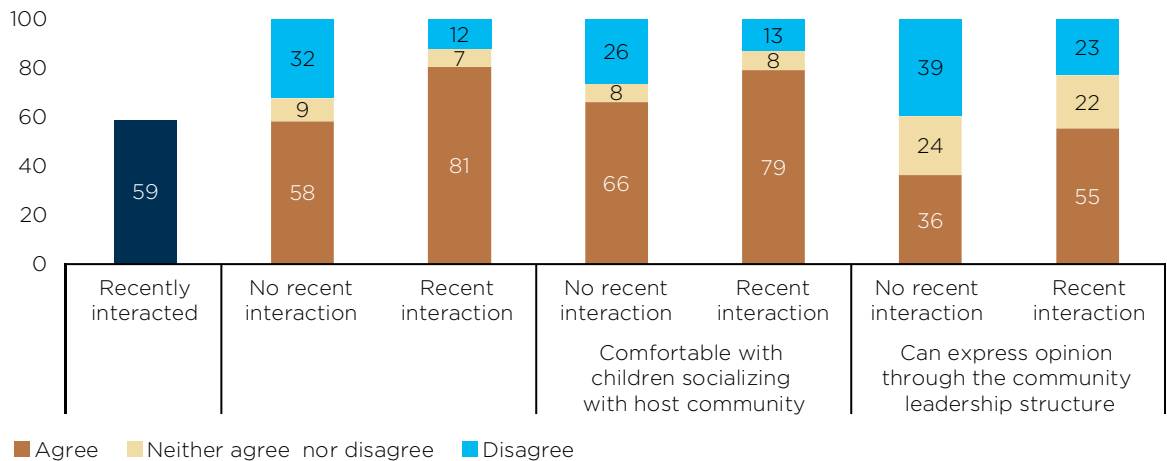
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Comparable statistics for host community members are not available.

85 UNDP, "Development Futures Series."
86 University of Groningen, "Integration despite Isolation."
87 Miller, "Social Cohesion Has Helped Communities Cope Better during Covid-19."

7. Trajectories of displacement and intentions to move

Most refugees fled conflict and violence, and most of them wish to leave Kenya.

34. Security concerns are the main reasons for refugees to have fled, and the most important reasons for not wanting to return to their country of origin. Around 8 in 10 refugee households fled due to a lack of safety in their home village, with households from the Democratic Republic of the Congo being the most likely to have fled for this reason (Figure 27). Increased crime, safety risks, and insecurity were the second most common reasons for having fled (40 percent). Somali households are the most likely to have fled for these reasons (50 percent).

▶ **FIGURE 27:** Refugees' main reasons for having fled
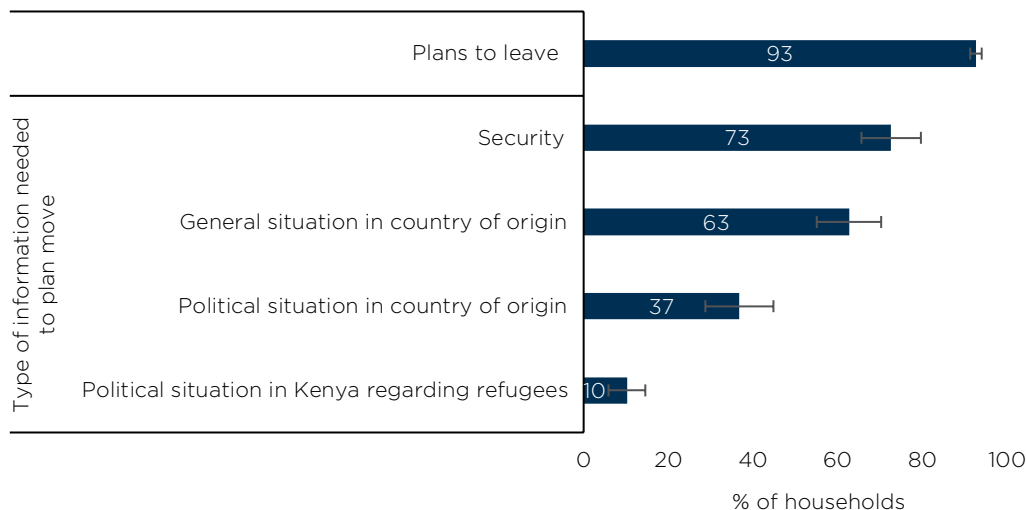
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

35. Most refugee households plan to leave Kenya at some point in time. Fewer than 1 percent wish to return to their country of origin, and 14 percent need information to guide their movement choices. About 93 percent of refugee households wish to leave Kenya. Fewer than 1 percent of them wish to return to their country of origin, while the rest wish to move to another area.[88] Armed conflict is the most common reason for not wanting to return for households from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. Ethiopian households are more likely not to want to return, mainly due to fear of ethnic, political, and religious discrimination. With the continuing conflict in the main countries of origin, it is not surprising to note that most refugees do not want to return due to security reasons (Figure 29; overview of conflict events in Appendix 3). Despite these ambitions of wanting to leave Kenya at some point in time, the average refugee in urban Kenya has resided in Kenya for seven years. About 73 percent of households who wish to move to another area would prefer to go to North America, while 11 percent would go to Europe. In 14 percent of households (15 percent in Nairobi, 8 percent in Nakuru, and 9 percent Mombasa), refugees do not have enough information to guide their decisions to move or stay in Kenya. Security information is the most critically needed by those who report not having enough information to guide their mobility plans (Figure 28).

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[88] When asked about their plans for the foreseeable future, 96 percent of refugees reported wanting to seek a solution in a third country, 4 percent would stay in an urban area in Kenya, and only 0.1 percent would move to a refugee camp.

Refugees' plans to leave and most needed information to guide mobility plans

Lack of safety in home village
86
75
79
80

Increased crime, risks to safety and insecurity
38
50
35
41

Lack of safety in neighboring villages
31
37
30
38

Death of spouse, family reasons
7
18
27
9

0   20   40   60   80   100
% of households

■ Congo, Dem. Rep. ■ Somalia ■ Ethiopia ■ South Sudan
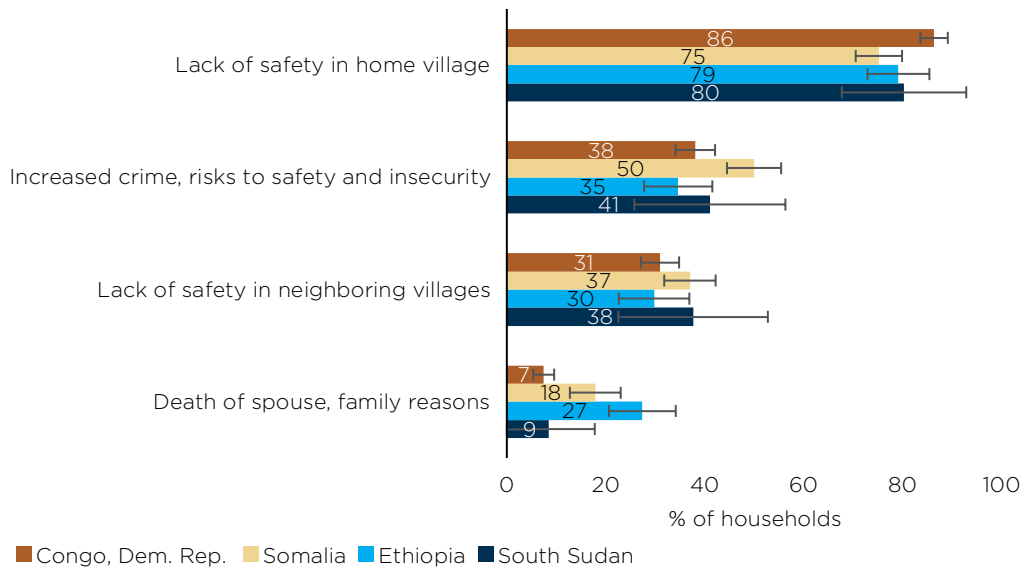
▶ **FIGURE 29:** Refugees' main reasons for not wanting to return

Armed conflict in the area of origin
70
55
62
74

Fear of ethnic, political, religious discrimination
58
51
67
43

Increased crime, violence, and insecurity
27
24
18
21

Armed conflict in the surrounding areas
16
25
29
37

0   20   40   60   80   100
% of households

■ Congo, Dem. Rep. ■ Somalia ■ Ethiopia ■ South Sudan
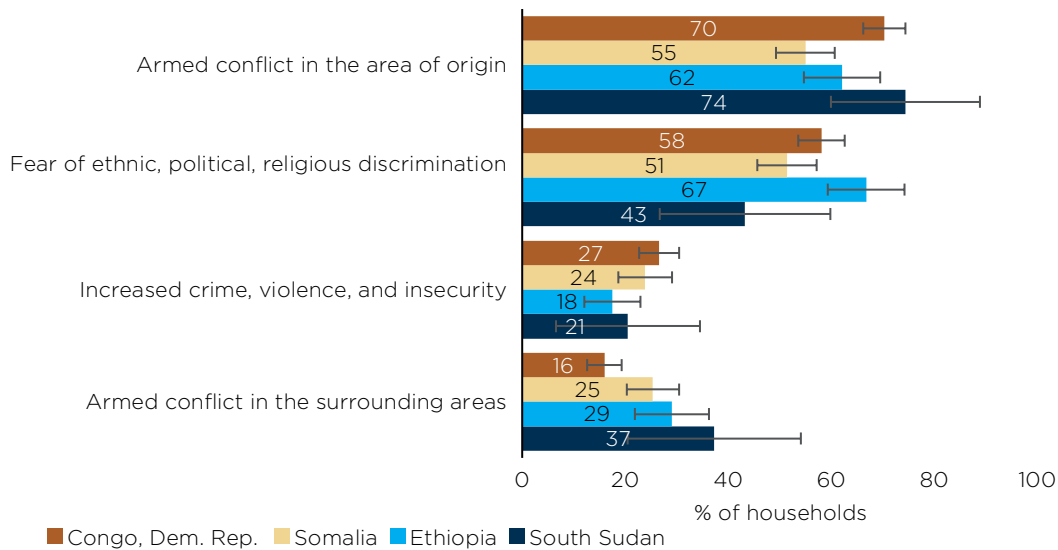
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

8. Conclusions

36. Refugees are younger than hosts, and their households are more likely to be headed by women and have higher dependency ratios than host households. Most of the urban refugee and host community populations are above 18 years old (55 percent of refugees and 68 percent of hosts; figure D3), with refugees being younger than hosts, mainly in Nakuru (Figure 3). Most refugee and host community households are headed by men, except for refugees in Nakuru, with dependency ratios being higher among refugee households, mainly those headed by women.

37. While food insecurity is alarmingly high among refugees, their employment rates are also very low. About 60 percent of urban refugee households are highly food insecure, and more among

households with fewer employed members (Figure 13). Only 42 percent of working-age refuges are employed. Urban refugees are more likely to be employed as wage workers (73 percent) and self-employed workers (59 percent). Strengthening refugees' job and entrepreneurial skills, broadening job markets and access to financial services, and easing documentation procedures for wage employment can support livelihood opportunities while contributing to a decrease in food insecurity.

38. Most refugee and host community households have access to improved housing, water, and sanitation services, while overcrowding is more common among refugee households. Most urban refugee and host community households have access to improved housing. Overcrowding is most common among refugee households, especially those headed by women. Overcrowding is linked with a higher risk of mental distress and increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence. Refugees have better access to improved sources of water than hosts, although 72 percent of refugee households reported insufficient water supply in the month preceding the interview (Figure 9). In Mombasa, access to improved drinking water is low for both communities, but alarmingly low for hosts.[89] In contrast, access to improved sanitation is better for hosts. Increasing investment through partnerships between humanitarian and development actors to support integrated water, sanitation, and hygiene delivery can improve access to improved water and sanitation. Around 26 percent of refugee households and 10 percent of host community households, mainly those headed by women, use biomass (charcoal or firewood) for cooking. Thus, expanding access to non-biomass fuel can improve the living standards of refugees and their hosts.

39. Women refugees have lower educational attainment and employment rates than men. Women refugees tend to have lower secondary enrollment rates than men, especially in Mombasa (Figure 12). Similarly, women refugees' employment rates are lower than those of men, with those employed participating in lower-earning sectors compared with those in which men participate (Figure 15). Women refugees are also less likely to have access to financial services than men, which severely impacts their capacity to start and grow businesses (Figure 21). Understanding the differences in refugees' and hosts' living conditions according to gender can help inform targeted responses to sustainably improve their socioeconomic opportunities by considering gender norms and restrictions.

40. Nakuru-based refugees, who are mostly South Sudanese and whose households are mainly headed by women, experience particularly vulnerable conditions. Worldwide, 80 percent of the South Sudanese refugee population are women and children, while 63 percent of them are under age 18.[90] Conflict and generalized violence in South Sudan have forced hundreds of women to become the sole breadwinners for their families, with some of them having entered the labor market for the first time in their life.[91] In urban Kenya, South Sudanese refugee households headed by women mimic some international trends.[92] South Sudanese refugee households are mainly based in Nakuru and are the most likely to be headed by women (Figures 4 and 5). Nakuru's population is the youngest overall (55 percent are 18 years old or below), and they have the highest dependency ratios. Food insecurity levels are also the highest among refugees in Nakuru (82 percent), reflecting the high level of vulnerability in which refugee women

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[89] Around 76 percent of refugee households have access to improved drinking water, compared with 17 percent of host community households.

[90] USA for UNHCR, "South Sudan Refugee Crisis Explained."

[91] Ibid. Many South Sudanese men—often husbands and fathers—are either staying behind to work or fight, or are missing or presumed dead.

[92] Similar trends are noticed in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei settlement. UNHCR and World Bank, "Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Kenya. Volume A: Kalobeyei Settlement"; UNHCR and World Bank, "Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Kenya. Volume B: Kakuma Camp."

and their dependents live (Figure 13). The higher incidence of food insecurity among woman-headed households in Nakuru exacerbates their existing vulnerabilities and may increase the risk of using other negative coping strategies, such as exchanging food for sex and abandoning children, while it can also result in children's malnutrition and stunting. Refugees in Nakuru also have the lowest employment rates (12 percent: 6 percent for women and 21 percent for men; Figure 49). Evidently, refugee woman-headed households in Nakuru, and women members of households headed by men, need support to be able to provide for and take care of their dependents, as well as to support household expenses and control their earnings, strengthen their bargaining power, and secure their self-reliance.

▶ **TABLE 3:** Findings and policy recommendations summary

Finding	Policy recommendation
Short-term priorities	
Food insecurity is high, with 60 percent of households being highly food insecure. Households headed by unemployed refugees are more likely than those headed by employed refugees to cope with the lack of food by using severe livelihoods-based strategies which deplete assets and risk human capital.	Livelihoods-based interventions can help refugees secure adequate and sustainable income, and contribute to reducing food insecurity. Targeting food security programs to households with children can help protect human capital. Mobile cash transfers can be a cost-effective instrument in urban settings to mitigate food insecurity.
Access to improved drinking water is higher among urban refugee households (91 percent) than among hosts (71 percent), with 72 percent of refugee households reporting insufficient drinking water in the last month. Access to improved sanitation is high for both refugees and hosts (84 percent of refugees and 99 percent of hosts), with shared toilets being common among refugees (68 percent).	Improving and providing adequate water and sanitation services is key to improve health outcomes. Ensuring 20 liters of water per person per day and enhancing the quality of sanitation services can result in improved health outcomes for refugees and hosts. Increased investment through partnerships between humanitarian and development actors, governments, and the private sector to support integrated water, sanitation, and hygiene service delivery can help boost access to these services.
Around 37 percent of refugee households are overcrowded, compared with 19 percent of host community households. Around 26 percent of refugee households and 10 percent of host community households, mainly those headed by women, use biomass (charcoal or firewood) for cooking.	Expanding access to adequate housing and non-biomass fuels and can help raise urban refugees' and hosts' living standards. Increasing funding for national housing programs to ensure hosts' housing needs are adequately addressed while including refugee communities can be key to help reduce overcrowding. Subsidizing improved biomass and non-biomass fuels while easing access to them can help prevent negative health impacts on women and children.
Refugees in Nakuru face particularly vulnerable conditions. They are the youngest overall (55 percent of them are 18 years old or below) and are mostly South Sudanese, and their households are mostly headed by women and have the highest dependency ratios. Food insecurity levels are also the highest among refugees in Nakuru (82 percent). They also have the lowest employment rates (12 percent: 6 percent for women and 21 percent for men).	Supporting Nakuru refugees' and hosts' participation in the paid labor market and enhancing their food security can help maintain human capital. Such efforts can also help lessen the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through strengthened self-reliance and resilience to shocks. Further research can provide a deeper understanding of socioeconomic barriers and how to overcome them through gender-responsive solutions.

| Finding	Policy recommendation
Medium-term priorities	
Only 42 percent of working-age refugees are employed, mainly as wage workers (73 percent) and self-employed workers (59 percent). The skills perceived to be needed to secure employment are mainly small business management skills. The main support needed among those outside the labor force and interested in self-employment is access to loans and business training, while among those interested in wage work it is access to documentation and training.	Strengthening refugees' job and entrepreneurial skills, broadening access to financial services, and easing documentation procedures for wage employment can support sustainable livelihoods. Multi-stakeholder collaborations can be essential to enable the creation of markets and job opportunities.
Refugees' primary and secondary school net enrollment rates are low (primary: 69 percent; 68 percent for boys and 70 percent for girls; secondary: 28 percent; 31 percent for boys and 24 percent for girls). Refugees' main barrier to accessing education is the cost of transport, books, uniforms, and other indirect costs, and the lack of birth certificates.	Increasing primary school attendance and supporting transition to secondary school can help develop transferable skills and expand socioeconomic opportunities. Inclusion of refugees in the national education system would be critical to expanding access to equitable and sustainable educational opportunities. Identifying schools in areas with high densities of refugees while providing support for rehabilitation, equipment, and building their capacity in terms of management and teachers' skills can be key to increase attendance. A deeper understanding of the bottlenecks that hinder enrollment is needed. Strengthening systems of recognition of prior learning can ease access to education. Financial incentives, information campaigns, and girls' and women's education programs can also help increase attendance.
Refugees who recently interacted with a host community member tend to have more positive perceptions of social cohesion than those who did not. Refugees' social cohesion perceptions are generally positive, although negative regarding consideration of their opinions in decision-making.	Fostering interactions between refugees and hosts could be key to improve perceptions of social cohesion. Raising the voice and concerns of refugees through community leadership structures can also help improve social cohesion.
About 93 percent of refugee households wish to leave Kenya, with fewer than 1 percent wishing to return, while the rest wish to stay. In 14 percent of households, refugees reported needing information to guide their movement choices.	Continuing existing efforts to inform refugees about resettlement, repatriation, and integration options will remain important.

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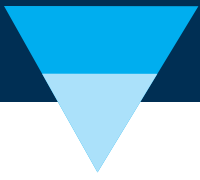
Appendices

1. Definitions

Household: This definition is aligned with what is used by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and was adapted to the refugee context. According to the KNBS's 2015–16 Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey (KIHBS), households are groups of people who are living together, have a common household head, and share "a common source of food and/or income as a single unit in the sense that they have common housekeeping arrangements […]." Based on the KNBS definition of a household, as well as on the feedback from the field-testing carried out before the data collection, the household definition adopted for this survey is: a set of related or unrelated people (either sharing the same dwelling or not) who pool ration cards and regularly cook and eat together.

Household head: The household member who makes the key day-to-day decisions for the household. Their headship must be accepted by all the members of the household.

Profile Global Registration System (ProGres) family: Defined upon registration. The Verification Registration Exercise (VRX) classifies individuals into proGres families, which are groups of people who "live together and identify as a family and for whom a relationship of either social, emotional, or economic dependency is assumed."[93]

VRX: UNHCR updating and verification of refugee registrations into the proGres data set.

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[93] UNHCR, "Implementing Registration within an Identity Management Framework."

2. Refugee identification documents

Type of document	Purpose	Validity	Issuing authority
Alien card	Identity card that includes a notation (either in the card's title or elsewhere) to indicate the holder is a refugee. Since 2006 they have been formally called "refugee identity cards" in Kenyan legislation. Depending on where and when the card was issued, its title could be "refugee identity card," "refugee certificate," "refugee certification," or "alien certificate." They can be renewed.	5 years	Government
Waiting card	Document or appointment slip that could refer to any number of documents. These documents usually indicate that the holder is waiting for a document, such as an alien card, that they are entitled to (but it may not state this is the case) or has an appointment for an interview as part of the refugee status determination process. These are common documents that vary significantly in form. Some refugees may have received multiple waiting documents, issued one after the other.		DRA/RAS or UNHCR
Movement pass	Document that requires a refugee to move from an urban area to a camp within 10 days. It is also the name used for the document that DRA/RAS issues to camp-based refugees that gives them permission to leave the camp temporarily.		DRA/RAS
Proof of registration	Document that lists the members of a family registered in an urban setting. Its camp equivalent is usually referred to as a "manifest" and is very similar in form. Proof of registration documents appear to have been issued by DRA/RAS at various points, including to refugees who took part in the urban verification exercise that was carried out by RAS and UNHCR in 2016–17.		DRA/RAS
Refugee recognition letter (or notification of recognition)	Letter that states the holder has been recognized as a refugee by the government and is waiting for an alien card.	1 year	DRA/RAS
Asylum seeker pass	Document that indicates the holder has been recognized as an asylum-seeker by the government.	6 months or 1 year	DRA/RAS

Source: NRC and IHRC 2017.[94]
Note: DRA: Department of Refugee Affairs; RAS: Refugee Affairs Secretariat.

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[94] NRC and IHRC, "Recognising Nairobi's Refugees: The Challenges and Significance of Documentation Proving Identity and Status."

3. Overview of conflict events in major countries of origin

41. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is experiencing multiple conflicts affecting several parts of its vast territory. Since its constitution as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (and before that), the country has lived in political unrest, conflict, and violence. War and conflict between rebels—who have reportedly been supported by different African countries—and the government continued from 1997 to 2002, when a peace agreement was signed in South Africa between rebel groups and the government in Kinshasa. Nevertheless, after the peace agreement, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has seen waves of fighting—especially in the eastern parts of the country. In 2016, a devastating wave of violence affected the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Kasai region, a vast area in the south and center of the country, which has caused thousands to flee. More than 800,000 Congolese live as refugees and asylum-seekers, while more than 5 million have been internally displaced.[95]

42. In Somalia, clan conflict, violence by armed non-state actors, and droughts have caused the displacement of nearly 2 million people. Somalia is one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Since the Siad Barre government collapsed in 1991, the country has experienced successive cycles of conflict, mostly in the south. Somalia has also experienced violent jihadism, as well as conflicts over land, natural resources, pastureland, and economic rents. Furthermore, levels of criminality, interpersonal violence, and gender-based violence are high. Added to conflict and generalized violence, Somalia is extremely vulnerable to climate shocks and has long experienced cyclical droughts, as well as floods, desertification, and land degradation. Violence and environmental hazards have caused the displacement of over 900,000 Somalis in the Horn of Africa and Yemen, while an estimated 2.6 million people are displaced within the country itself.[96]

43. Clashes between Eritrea and Ethiopia have marked a history of conflict in Ethiopia, with the Tigray region being the main conflict-affected area. In 1999, the Ethiopian–Eritrean border tensions turned into a full-scale war. Coupled with that, ethnic clashes with the Gambella region's Anuak people exacerbated insecurity conditions. In 2005, Human Rights Watch accused the army of "widespread murder, rape and torture." In the same year, election violence erupted, while in 2006, Ethiopian troops fought Somali Islamists. In 2015, the victory of the ruling EPRDF in the general election sparked wide-criticism by the opposition, leading to violent protests that continued up to 2018. In 2018, the war with Eritrea was declared to be over, putting an end to a 34-year armed rebellion. In November 2020, long-rising tensions between the federal government and the leadership of the northern Tigray region exploded into military confrontation.[97] Many Ethiopians have been displaced due to long-lasting conflict, mainly in the northern region.

44. South Sudan has faced war and conflict that has led to mass displacement of over 2 million people. South Sudan is the youngest African country. It gained independence from Sudan in 2011 after years of a secessionist war that lasted from 1955 to 1972, restarted in 1983, and ended in 2005. South Sudan has faced continuous violence between security forces and rebels, and ethnic clashes, as well

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[95] UNHCR, "DR Congo Emergency"; BBC News, "Democratic Republic of Congo Profile - Timeline"; UNHCR, "Global Trends. Forced Displacement in 2019."
[96] UNHCR, "Somalia"; Federal Government of Somalia et al., "Somalia Drought Impact & Needs Assessment"; UNHCR, "Global Trends. Forced Displacement in 2019."
[97] Gavin, "The Conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray Region: What to Know."

as conflict over recently found oil fields since independence. In 2013, a civil war erupted, forcing thousands more to flee. In September 2018, a peace deal between the government, the opposition, and other parties was signed. However, continued outbreaks of violence render the peace precarious. As a result, more than 2.2 million South Sudanese live as refugees; 63 percent of them are under the age of 18, and 1.3 million have been internally displaced within the country. South Sudanese refugees are hosted in Uganda (39 percent), Sudan (36.5 percent), Ethiopia (15 percent), Kenya (6 percent), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (4 percent).[98]

45. Decades of protracted conflicts and human rights violations have been the main drivers of forced displacement in Sudan. Peace in Sudan has been almost nonexistent due to war between the north and south of the country, tensions with Chad, fighting over oil in Abyei, Islamic extremism and *sharia* law punishments, ethnic clashes, numerous rebel groups' conflicts against the government, and protests against the re-election of former President Omar al-Bashir, who ruled Sudan from 1989 to 2019. Since 2003, conflict has mainly been concentrated in the western part of Sudan, Darfur. Around two-thirds of all conflict events in Sudan since 2003 have taken place in the five Darfuri states.[99] Although Sudan is a host country of refugees, mainly from South Sudan, there are nearly 800,000 Sudanese refugees, and an estimated 2.1 million Sudanese have been internally displaced.[100]

[98] World Bank, "Using Micro-Data to Inform Durable Solutions for IDPs"; Africa Union, "Final Report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan and the UN Panel of Experts Report to the UN Security Council"; BBC News, "South Sudan Profile - Timeline"; USA for UNHCR, "South Sudan Refugee Crisis."
[99] ACLED, "Armed Conflict Location and Event Database."
[100] UNHCR, "Global Trends. Forced Displacement in 2019."

4. Preceding socioeconomic surveys for refugees and host communities in Kenya

Survey[101]	Details
IFC. 2018. *Kakuma as a Marketplace. A Consumer and Market Study of a Refugee Camp and Town in Northwest Kenya*. Washington, DC: IFC.	A consumer and market study which examines Kakuma camp and town through the lens of a private firm looking to enter a new market. The study comprises four components: an in-depth review of previous studies, a survey of 1,417 households in Kakuma camp and town, interviews with UNHCR and other agencies present in Kakuma, and case studies of private companies already active in the camp or that might be potentially interested in launching operations there. The household survey instrument covers modules on business ownership, access to finance and credit markets, telecommunications, employment, education, housing, sanitation, energy, and financial literacy.
Kimetrica, UNHCR, and World Food Programme. 2016. *Refugee Vulnerability Study: Kakuma, Kenya*.	The study contributed to an increased understanding of refugee livelihoods and the level of and differences in vulnerabilities faced by refugee households. It also explored the feasibility of delivering targeted assistance and identifying the mechanisms that would need to be put in place to do so. The study comprised three phases of fieldwork: an initial scoping study, a survey of 2,000 refugee households, and a follow-up mission to explore the feasibility of various targeting mechanisms. The household survey instrument covered modules on employment, access to finance and credit markets, social and physical networks, food security, consumption, and expenditure.
World Bank. 2016. *'Yes' In My Backyard? The Economics of Refugees and Their Social Dynamics in Kakuma, Kenya*. Nairobi: World Bank and UNHCR.	This report provides an original analysis of the economic and social impact of refugees in Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp on their Turkana hosts. The authors use a methodology that enables running policy scenarios in a rigorous manner, ranging from encampment to decampment (that is, camp closure). A household survey for refugees and hosts in Turkana (in Kakuma and in other towns) was carried out. The survey instrument included modules on household demography, income, and perceptions. Information on consumption was also collected, albeit in a limited fashion, and only intended to detect short-term changes in consumption.
Betts, Alexander, Remco Geervliet, Claire MacPherson, Naohiko Omata, Cory Rodgers, and Olivier Sterck. 2018. *Self-Reliance in Kalobeyei? Socio-Economic Outcomes for Refugees in North-West Kenya*. Oxford, UK: Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford University.	The report draws on data collected from the first of three waves of surveys to be carried out over a three-year period. The resulting panel data set will be used to compare the self-reliance and socioeconomic indicators of recent arrivals living in the Kalobeyei settlement and the Kakuma camp. Focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were conducted with refugees, host community members in the region, and other stakeholders. The Kalobeyei refugee interviews cover individuals from South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Burundi, while in Kakuma they cover individuals from South Sudan.

[101] This is a non-exhaustive list of surveys that used a representative sample and were published between 2016 and November 2020.

Survey[101]	Details
Betts, Alexander, Naohiko Omata, and Olivier Sterck. 2018. *Refugee Economies in Kenya*. Oxford, UK: Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford University.	The study explores the distinctive regulatory environment faced by refugees in urban and camp contexts. The report represents a first systematic comparison of economic outcomes for refugees and host communities. The data collection is based on participatory methods, including the recruitment and training of refugees and host nationals as peer researchers and enumerators. The data were collected in and around Nairobi and the Kakuma refugee camps, and the quantitative methods are based on representative sampling, with a total of 4,355 survey respondents (1,738 from the host communities and 2,617 refugees).
Betts, Alexander, Antonia Delius, Cory Rodgers, Olivier Sterck, and Maria Stierna. 2019. *Doing Business in Kakuma: Refugees, Entrepreneurship, and the Food Market*. Oxford, UK: Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford University.	The report draws on a business survey with food retailers to assess the impact of the "Bamba Chakula" (BC) model of electronic food transfers and business contracts. The aim was to examine what role BC status, among other factors, has played in influencing business performance and market structure. The study is based mainly on a business survey of three groups of food retailers: successful BC applicants, unsuccessful BC applicants, and food retailers who have not applied to be BC traders. The survey targeted all traders in the World Food Programme's registry of applicants to BC and a random sample of non-applicant food retailers, sampled from a Norwegian Refugee Council census. A total of 730 entrepreneurs (of whom 629 currently have a business) were interviewed. The survey was complemented by qualitative data collection based on semi-structured interviews and focus groups.
Vemuru, Varalakshmi, Rahul Oka, Lee Gettler, and Rieti Gengo. 2016. *Refugee Impacts on Turkana Hosts*. Washington, DC: World Bank.	This social impact analysis describes the complexities of the interactions between refugees and their host community, and assesses their positive and negative outcomes within the current relief paradigm, contextualized by: (1) the history of interactions between the Turkana people and the central Kenyan government from the British colonial period to the current administration; (2) recent developments regarding devolution, oil, and water; and (3) since 1992, the arrival and continuing flow of large numbers of refugees into northern Turkana. To better understand the social economies of the Turkana people and the refugees of Kakuma, ethnographic approaches were used.
UNHCR and World Bank. 2020. *Understanding the Socioeconomic Conditions of Refugees in Kalobeyei, Kenya: Results from the 2018 Kalobeyei Socioeconomic Profiling Survey*. Nairobi: UNHCR and World Bank.	The Kalobeyei SES employed a novel approach to generating data that are statistically representative of the settlement's population and comparable to the national population. The SES included a range of standard socioeconomic indicators, at both household and individual level, aligned with the national 2015–16 KIHBS and KCHS. The SES and ensuing analysis provide a comprehensive snapshot of the demographic characteristics, standards of living, social cohesion, and specific vulnerabilities facing refugees regarding food security and disabilities.

5. Scholarship programs

As refugee students also access secondary education through private scholarships, this list is indicative only.

- **UNHCR** directly supports a small number of urban refugees to attend day and boarding secondary schools. These students are supported due to their vulnerability—that is, they reside in urban areas for protection reasons. Fees are paid directly to the school, while the wrap-around costs are paid through cash transfers to the student or guardian. While UNHCR monitors these students, in most cases the school community is not aware of the students' refugee status.

- **Wings to Fly** is a merit-based scholarship initiative from Equity Foundation that aims to support secondary school students from financially challenged backgrounds for the duration of their secondary education, based on their academic achievements or demonstrated talent. The program includes payment of tuition fees, accommodation, books, uniforms, pocket money, and transport to and from school during their four years of secondary education. It has so far supported eight refugee students. Students are selected by specially appointed boards comprising key leaders in the community and chaired by the County or Sub-County Director of Education.

- The **Elimu Scholarship Programme** is an initiative funded by the World Bank and the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Education, that seeks to improve access to secondary education under the Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project. To be eligible to apply, candidates must have been granted admission to a public or private secondary school that is registered with the Kenyan Ministry of Education (therefore, camp schools are not eligible). The scholarship, in most cases, will cover 100 percent of tuition, a monthly stipend, a dormitory room and board (where applicable), and other associated costs such as books, uniforms, and travel. Seven refugees were admitted in the first cohort—all from Kakuma but attending public primary schools in the host community.

- **M-Pesa Foundation Academy (MFA)** is a mixed boarding high school supported by Safaricom. Full secondary school scholarship and bursary opportunities are offered for talented but economically disadvantaged students across Kenya. The focus is not only on academic performance, but also on "building the whole person" by engaging the students in talent and skills development, enhancing self-reliance, and establishing linkages in the job market. MFA accepts applications from urban refugees directly, while UNHCR supports the process for refugees in Turkana West. No refugees from Dadaab have benefited to date.

- Other partners that have offered scholarships to refugees in the past include Education For All Children and KEEP (a recipient of the Girls' Education Challenge Fund).

6. Methodology

6.1 Design and survey instrument

46. The SES was conducted by using the UNHCR proGres data set as a sampling frame. The aim of the SES was to interview refugees living in urban Kenya: Nairobi, Nakuru, and Mombasa counties. Since the data collection occurred during the COVID-19 lockdown (November 2020 to January 2021), face-to-face interviews were not possible. Hence, the survey data were collected via telephone. Selected proGres families (see Appendix 1 for more details) were called by trained enumerators who conducted the SES interviews via computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). The SES is representative of households with active phone numbers registered by UNHCR.

47. While UNHCR proGres families were sampled, households were surveyed. The units in the proGres list are UNHCR proGres families, which are different from households as defined in standard household surveys. Upon registration, UNHCR groups individuals into "proGres families," which do not necessarily meet the criteria to be considered a household. A proGres family usually comprises no more than one household. In turn, a household can be integrated by one or more proGres families.[102] Households were selected as the unit of observation to ensure comparability with national household surveys. Households are a set of related or unrelated people (either sharing the same dwelling or not) who pool ration cards and regularly cook and eat together (see Appendix 1 for details).[103] As proGres families were sampled, the identification of households was done by an introductory section that confirms that each member of the selected proGres family is a member of the household, and whether there are other members in the households that belong to other ProGres families. Thus, the introductory section documents the number of proGres families present in the household under observation.

48. The SES was designed to produce data comparable with national household survey instruments, as well as with the Kakuma SES 2019 and Kalobeyei SES 2018. Modules on education, employment, household characteristics, and assets were aligned with the most recent national poverty surveys, the KIHBS 2015–16 and the KCHS, which have collected comparable statistics annually for all counties in Kenya since the end of 2019, making the comparison between refugees and nationals possible. Additional modules on access to remittances, loans and credit, vulnerabilities, social cohesion, coping mechanisms to lack of food,[104] displacement trajectories, and durable solutions were administered to capture specific challenges facing refugees. The questionnaire was divided into 12 sections (Table 4); four of them are comparable to the KIHBS and the KCHS, eight are comparable to the Kalobeyei SES 2018, and nine to the Kakuma SES 2019. The questionnaires were administered in English. The instrument was not translated into different languages, but rather enumerators were hired to interpret the questions during the interview. The questionnaire was interpreted from English to Oromo

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[102] For instance, someone may, at the time of registration, have identified a group of people as her family, yet they do not or no longer live together or cook and eat together. She would thus be registered as part of the same proGres family but not be part of the same household. Or a person may live and eat with a group of people but not have a shared proGres family ID. They will then be part of the same household but not be part of the same proGres family.
[103] Registered individuals have both an individual proGres ID and a proGres family ID, which are stated on a "UNHCR manifest" document. Single individuals who are not part of a family are registered as proGres family size 1. ProGres IDs grant access to ration cards; thus, food rations vary depending on the registered proGres family size.
[104] World Food Program Livelihoods Coping Index.

(west-central Kenya), Somali, Dinka, Rwanda, Kinyarwanda, Lingala, Kinyamurenge, Kongo, Kikongo, Congo, Rundi, Kirundi, Tigrigna, Amharic, and French.

▶ **TABLE 4:** 2015–16 KIHBS, 2019 KCHS, Kalobeyei SES 2018, Kakuma SES 2019, and Urban SES 2020–21 questionnaires

Questionnaire modules	KIHBS 2015–16	KCHS 2019	Kalobeyei SES 2018	Kakuma SES 2019	Urban SES 2020–21
Random household selection	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Informed consent	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Education	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Employment	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Household characteristics	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Assets	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Consumption and expenditure	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Access to finance			✔	✔	✔
Vulnerabilities			✔	✔	✔
Social cohesion			✔	✔	✔
Coping mechanisms			✔	✔	✔
Displacement and durable solutions				✔	✔

Sources: KIHBS 2015–16; Kalobeyei SES 2018; Kakuma SES 2019; Urban SES 2020–21.

49. The Urban SES data can be linked to UNHCR's proGres database for additional analysis and targeted programming. The SES questionnaire recorded the proGres IDs of the participants, which enables cross-checks and comparisons across the proGres and SES data sets. Such comparisons allow verification of the accuracy and plausibility of the data in the analysis. The correlation between variables in the proGres database and the more detailed SES indicators can be further explored and used to inform targeted program design. Moreover, comparisons between proGres and the SES can be useful to better understand the implications of the currently available proGres data, which are collected for a large number of refugee populations worldwide.

6.2 Sample size estimation and sampling weights calculation

50. A sample size of 2,500 was needed to ensure a margin of error of less than 5 percent at a confidence level of 95 percent for groups represented by at least 50 percent of the population. The sample for the urban SES is designed to estimate socioeconomic indicators, such as food insecurity, for groups whose share represents at least 50 percent of the population. Considering the total urban refugee population as of August 2020 (Table 5) and the proportions of main countries of origin, as well as a 10 percent nonresponse rate, the target sample size is 2,500 households in total, with 1,250 in Nairobi, 700 in Nakuru, and 550 in Mombasa. A total of 2,438 households were reached: 1,300 in Nairobi, 409 in Nakuru, and 729 in Mombasa.[105]

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[105] The formula for the sample size is $n = \frac{\frac{Z^2\, p(1-p)}{e^2}}{1 + \left(\frac{Z^2\, p(1-p)}{e^2 N}\right)}$ where $Z = 1.96$, $p = 0.5$, $e^2 = 0.03$ and $N = 43,340$. This yields a total sample size of ≈ 1,050. To ensure that the sample is large enough to be representative of the Nairobi population ($N = 39,667$ households), using the given formula (where $Z = 1.96$, $p = 0.3$, $e^2 = 0.05$ and $N = 39,667$), and 20 percent nonresponse rate, the target sample size per stratum is 460 ≈ 500. Each stratum sample ensures proportional representation of main countries of origin. Mombasa considers 75 percent of households to be Somali = 500/.75 ≈ 700, Nairobi considers 41 percent of households to be Congolese = 500/.40 ≈ 1,250, while 93 percent of households in Nakuru are South Sudanese = 500/.93 ≈ 550.

▶ TABLE 5: Number of families in locations, and selection probabilities

	Nairobi	Nakuru	Mombasa	Total
ProGres families in population	40,096	934	2,755	43,785
ProGres families	1,250	550	700	2,500
Families proGres selection probability	3.1%	58.9%	25.4%	

Source: Authors' calculations.

51. Before selecting the survey strata, the team attempted to better understand the type of bias observed by focusing on refugees with access to a phone. According to the proGres data, phone penetration in urban areas is high (Nairobi and Mombasa: 93 percent; Nakuru: 95 percent). To understand the type of bias observed by focusing on refugees with access to a phone, we looked at socioeconomic outcomes for proGres family refugees with access to a phone number and those without. There are clear differences with respect to phone number ownership across the three locations, with refugees with phone numbers seemingly better off, with better educational outcomes, larger family sizes (larger households are typically poorer), and longer length of stay in Kenya (Table 6).

▶ TABLE 6: Households (head) by phone ownership

	Has phone: No		Has phone: Yes		Two-tailed
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	P-value
Age	29.81	13.49	32.39	12.71	0.00
Family size	1.44	1.16	1.88	1.75	0.00
Female-headed household	0.43	0.50	0.45	0.50	0.13
Married	0.27	0.45	0.35	0.48	0.00
Separated/divorced	0.01	0.11	0.01	0.11	0.88
Single	0.67	0.47	0.59	0.49	0.00
Widow	0.04	0.20	0.05	0.21	0.24
Burundi	0.15	0.35	0.07	0.25	0.00
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.34	0.48	0.38	0.49	0.00
Eritrea	0.03	0.18	0.03	0.17	0.12
Ethiopia	0.15	0.36	0.16	0.36	0.31
Somalia	0.20	0.40	0.24	0.43	0.00
South Sudan	0.06	0.23	0.08	0.27	0.00
Rwanda	0.02	0.13	0.02	0.12	0.66
Other	0.05	0.23	0.03	0.17	0.00
Tenure in Kenya	5.94	6.56	7.76	6.48	0.00
No education	0.26	0.44	0.24	0.43	0.01
Some primary	0.29	0.45	0.25	0.43	0.00
Completed primary	0.04	0.20	0.04	0.19	0.06
Some secondary	0.17	0.37	0.17	0.38	0.36
Completed secondary	0.03	0.16	0.04	0.18	0.01
Tertiary	0.21	0.41	0.27	0.44	0.00

52. To obtain unbiased estimates from the sample, the information reported by households needs to be adjusted by a sampling weight (or raising factor). To construct the sampling weights, the steps outlined in Himelein (2014) were followed: (i) base weights; (ii) derive attrition-adjusted weights; (iii) trim weights; and (iv) post-stratify weights to known population totals.[106]

53. As a first step, the base weights ($wi1$) are computed. The base weights ($wi1$) will equal 1 for all households interviewed:

$$w_{i1} = 1$$

54. Derive attrition-adjusted weights for all households. To obtain the attrition adjustment factor, the probability that a sampled household was successfully interviewed in the survey is modeled with the linear logistic model at the level of the household. A binary response variable is created by coding the response disposition for eligible households that are not interviewed in the survey as 0, and households that are interviewed as 1. These calculations use a logistic response propensity model with the binary variable as dependent and the household and individual characteristics measured in ProGres data set as covariates.

Let X_i be a vector of characteristics, where i indicates the household in the location j:

$$\ln\left(\frac{P_{ij}}{1 - P_{ij}}\right) = \beta X_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{1}$$

Where P_{ij} is the probability that household i living the location j is surveyed, $1-P_{ij}$ is the probability that the household is not surveyed, and X_i is the set of regressors considered (the characteristics of households and heads). Usually, the characteristics of the household head (i.e. education, labor force status, demographic characteristics), characteristics of the household (consumption, assets, financial characteristics), and characteristics of the dwelling (house ownership, overcrowding) are used. While the proGres database is limited in the number of socioeconomic variables, we have characteristics of the household head and household. β is a vector of parameters, and ε_i is the idiosyncratic error term.

Based on the estimation results of (1), the attrition correction factor (ac_i) is computed as:

$$ac_i = \hat{P}_{ij}$$

Consequently, the weights are adjusted and computed as follows:

$$w_{ij}^2 = w_{i1} * ac_{ij}$$

55. The weights of the previous step are trimmed to correct outlier weights. Complex weight calculations have the potential to produce outlier weights, which increase the standard errors of estimates. A common practice is, therefore, to "trim" the weights at this stage to eliminate the outlier weights. Common values for trimming range between 1 and 5 percentage points at the top and bottom of the distribution. We trim weights by replacing the top 2 percent of observations with the 98th percentile cut-off point (r_98):

$$w_{ij}^3 = \begin{cases} w_{ij}^2, & | \quad w_{ij}^2 < r\_98 \\ r\_98, & | \quad w_{ij}^2 \geq r\_98 \end{cases}$$

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[106] Himelein, "Weight Calculations for Panel Surveys with Subsampling and Split-off Tracking."

56. As part of post-stratification, weights were scaled to the number of households in each location. The number of households in each location (N_HHj) was projected by the number of proGres families ($NfamPGj$) in the location j divided by family household factor conversion ($Conv\_FamToHHj$), which is the average number of proGres families in surveyed households of a given location.

$$N_{HHj} = \frac{NfamPG_j}{Conv_{FamToHHj}}$$

The final weights are given by:

$$w_{ij}^4 = w_{ij}^3 * \frac{N\_HH_j}{\Sigma_j(w_{ij}^2)}.$$

57. Estimates of national averages are calculated using the 2019 KCHS. The KCHS data used to obtain national estimates are downloaded from the KNBS website.[107] Nationally representative estimates from the KCHS data are compared with population figures from the urban SES data to enable comparisons of socioeconomic indicators between urban refugees and Kenyans living in the three counties where urban refugees reside: Nairobi, Mombasa, and urban Nakuru (Table 7).[108] However, since the KCHS data were collected before the onset of COVID-19, employment and education comparisons are not meaningful. Hence, for these two sections, no comparisons with nationals are made. P-values from one-sample t-tests to test for differences between the KCHS estimates and the refugee population values are shown throughout the main report. Confidence intervals (95 percent) are also provided for figures based on the national estimates.

▶ **TABLE 7:** Sample allocation for KCHS 2019

County	Number of households
Nairobi	543
Nakuru	211
Mombasa	471

Source: KCHS 2019.

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[107] https://www.knbs.or.ke/
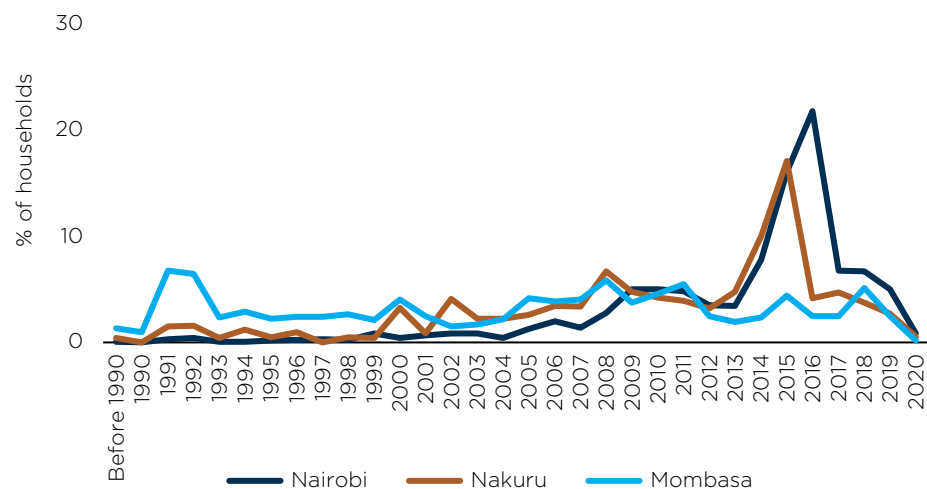[108] Both Nairobi and Mombasa counties are urban areas.
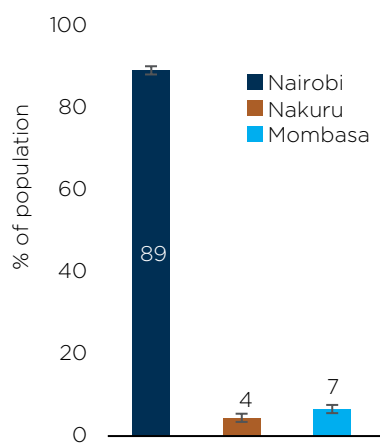
7. Additional figures

7.1 Demographics

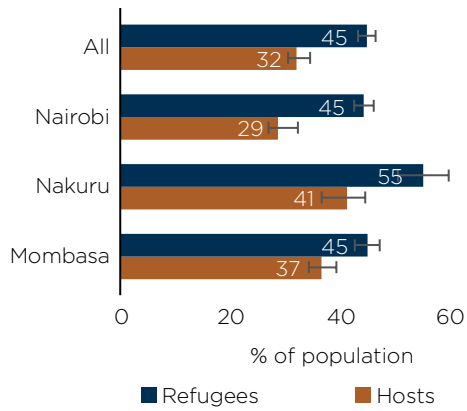▶ **FIGURE 30:** Year of arrival by county of residence

Source: UNHCR 2021. UNHCR Kenya ProGres Registration Database Sub-Sample. Data not publicly available.

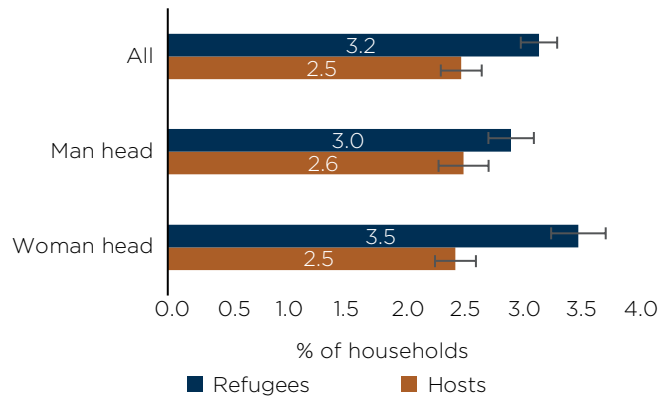▶ **FIGURE 31:** County of residence of urban refugees

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

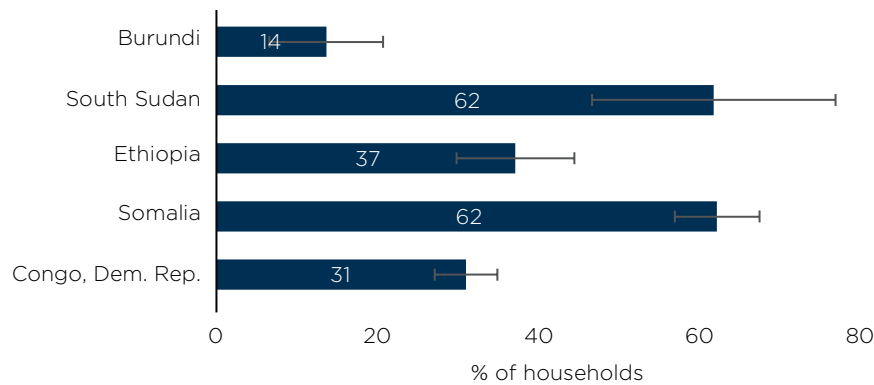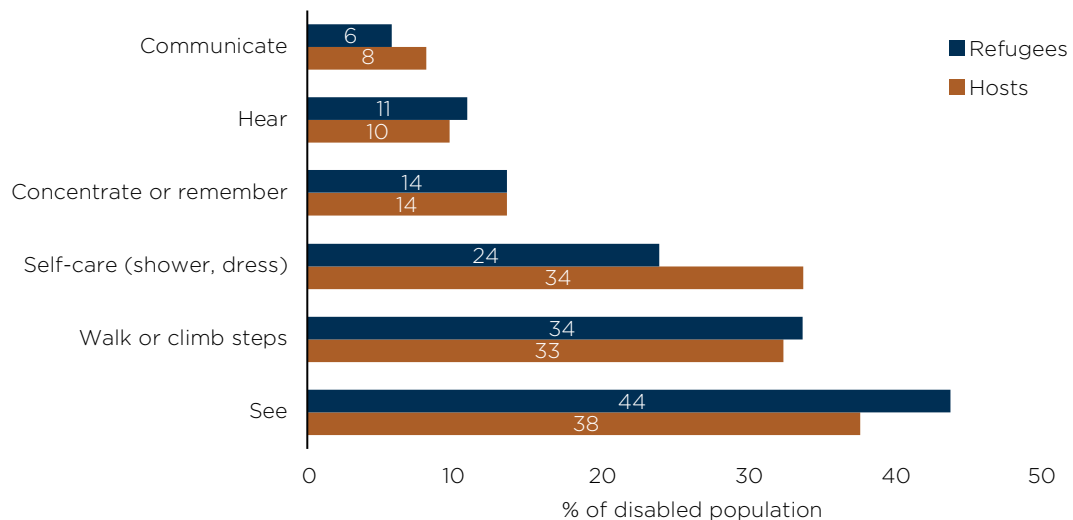**FIGURE 32:** Population 18 years and below

% of population

- Refugees
- Hosts

	Refugees	Hosts
All	45	32
Nairobi	45	29
Nakuru	55	41
Mombasa	45	37

FIGURE 33: Household size

% of households

- Refugees
- Hosts

	Refugees	Hosts
All	3.2	2.5
Man head	3.0	2.6
Woman head	3.5	2.5

Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

FIGURE 34: Refugee woman-headed households by country of origin

% of households

Country	%
Burundi	14
South Sudan	62
Ethiopia	37
Somalia	62
Congo, Dem. Rep.	31

FIGURE 35: Type of disability among refugees (age 5+) and urban nationals (age 5+)*

% of disabled population

- Refugees
- Hosts

	Refugees	Hosts
Communicate	6	8
Hear	11	10
Concentrate or remember	14	14
Self-care (shower, dress)	24	34
Walk or climb steps	34	33
See	44	38

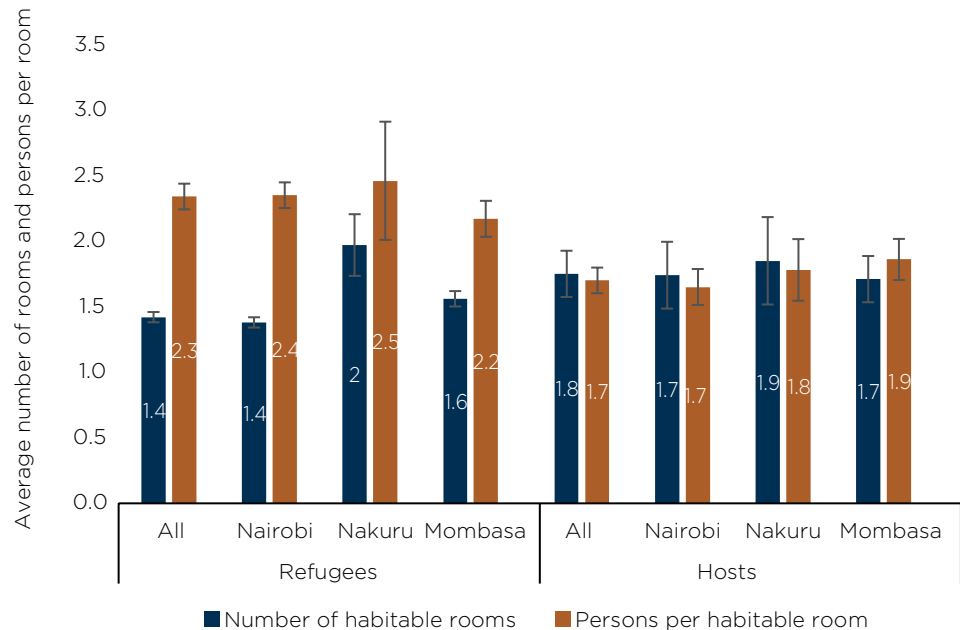**Sources:** Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

▶ **FIGURE 36:** Type of document held, by gender
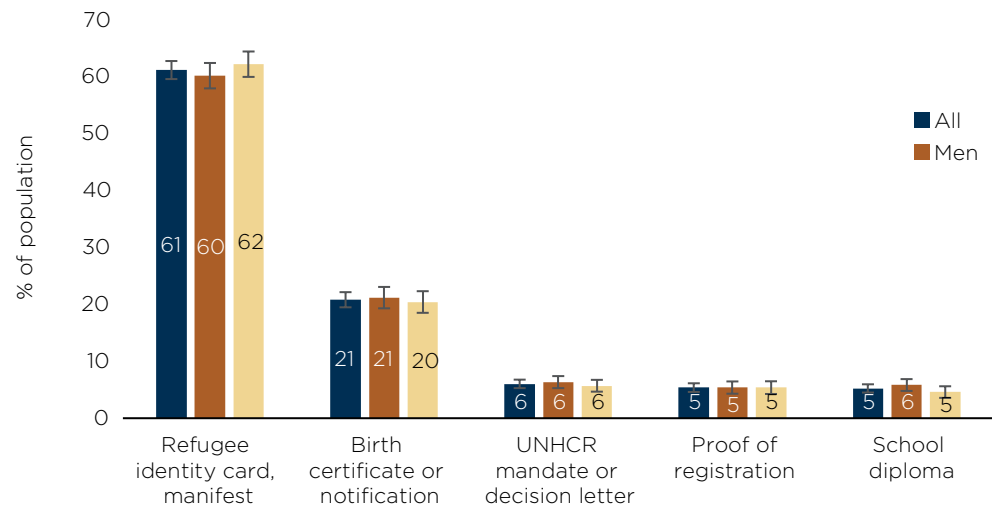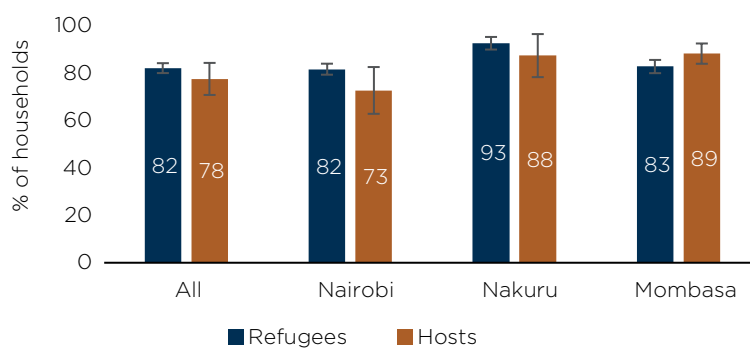

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

7.2 Services

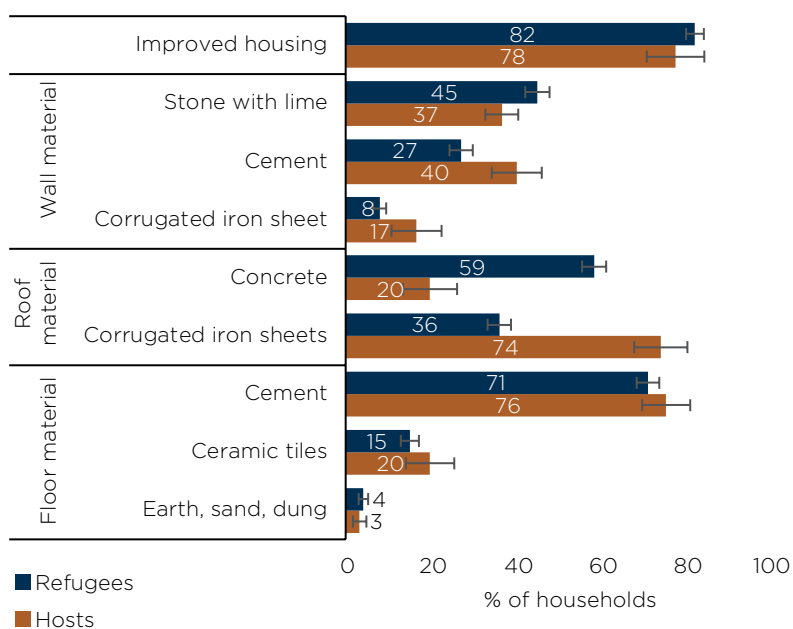▶ **FIGURE 37:** Number of habitable rooms and density, by county of residence

Source: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

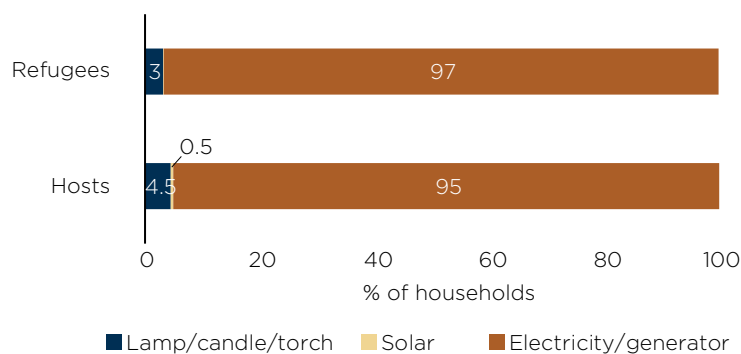▶ **FIGURE 38:** Access to improved housing, by county of residence

Figure 38 bar chart — % of households (Refugees, Hosts):
- All: Refugees 82, Hosts 78
- Nairobi: Refugees 82, Hosts 73
- Nakuru: Refugees 93, Hosts 88
- Mombasa: Refugees 83, Hosts 89

Source: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

▶ **FIGURE 39:** Main housing materials

Figure 39 bar chart — % of households (Refugees, Hosts):
- Improved housing: 82 / 78
- Wall material — Stone with lime: 45 / 37
- Wall material — Cement: 27 / 40
- Wall material — Corrugated iron sheet: 8 / 17
- Roof material — Concrete: 59 / 20
- Roof material — Corrugated iron sheets: 36 / 74
- Floor material — Cement: 71 / 76
- Floor material — Ceramic tiles: 15 / 20
- Floor material — Earth, sand, dung: 4 / 3

Source: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

▶ **FIGURE 40:** Energy for lighting

Figure 40 stacked bar chart — % of households (Lamp/candle/torch, Solar, Electricity/generator):
- Refugees: 3 / — / 97
- Hosts: 4.5 / 0.5 / 95

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 41:** Energy for cooking

Firewood ■ Electricity ■ Liquefied petroleum gas/natural gas/biogas

■ Kerosene/paraffin ■ Charcoal ■ Other
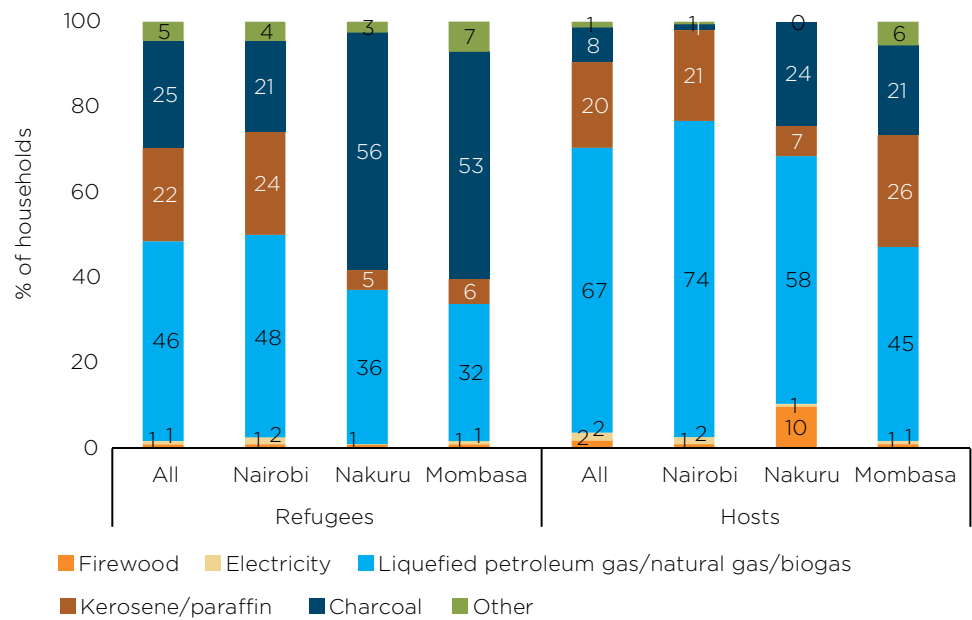
Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

▶ **FIGURE 42:** Water and sanitation

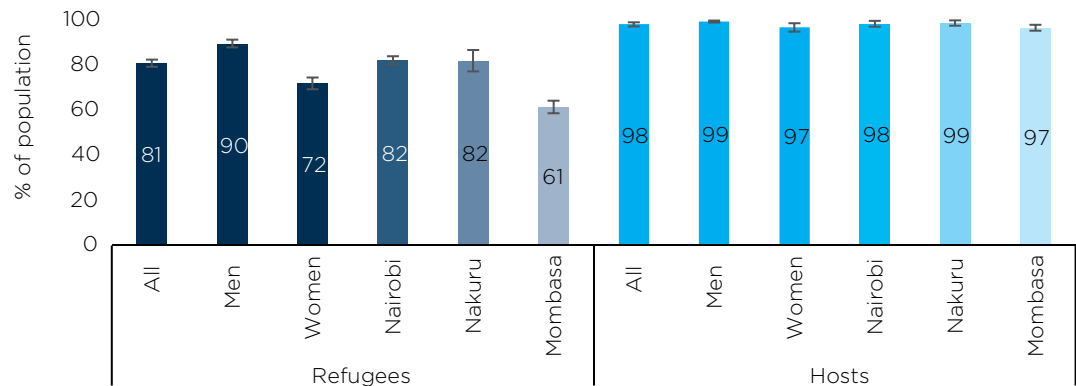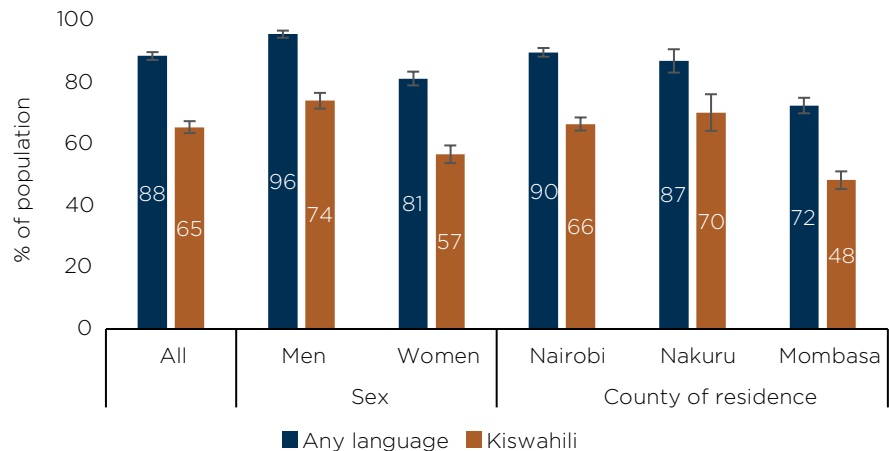■ Improved drinking water ■ Improved sanitation ■ Private toilet
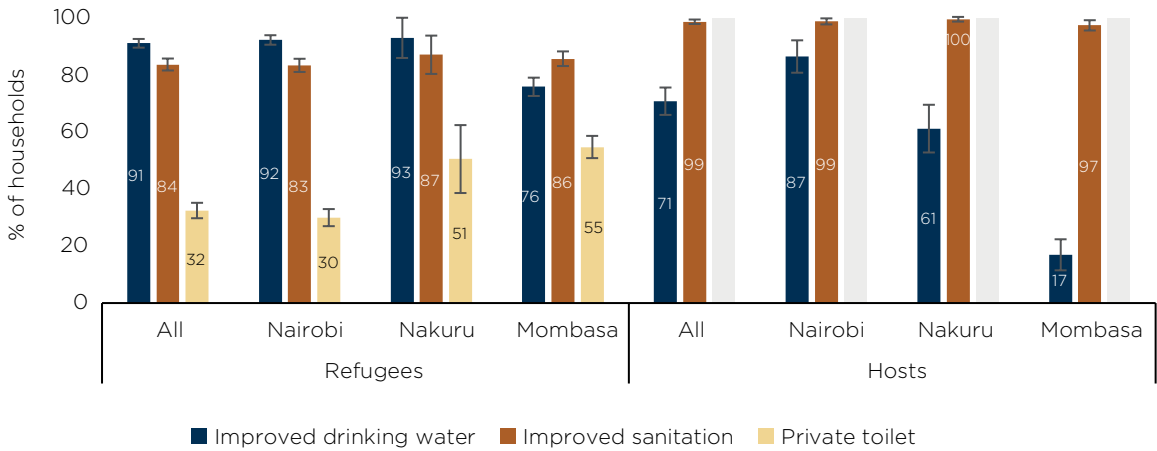
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

7.3 Education

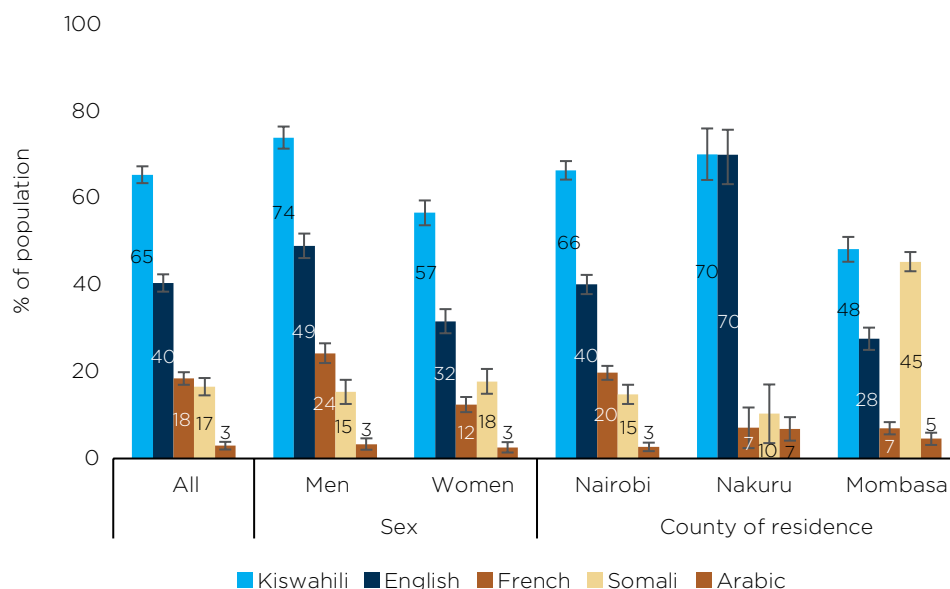▶ **FIGURE 43:** Distribution of population who have ever attended school (age 15+)

Sources: Urban SES 2020–21; KCHS 2019.

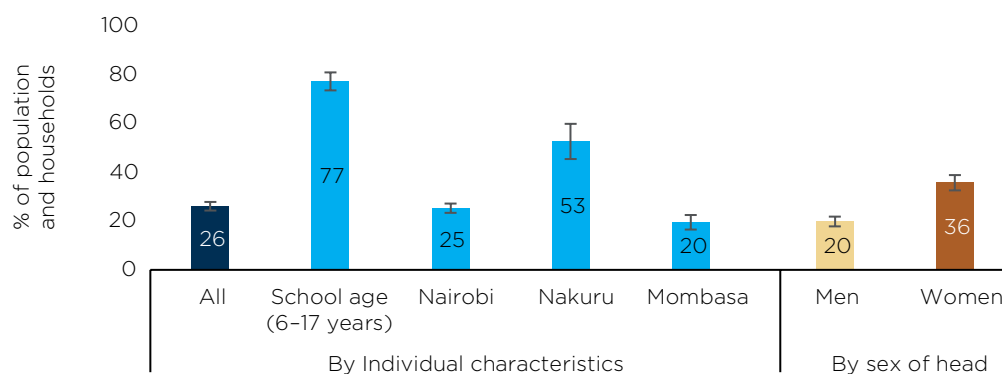▶ **FIGURE 44:** Literacy, by gender and county of residence

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

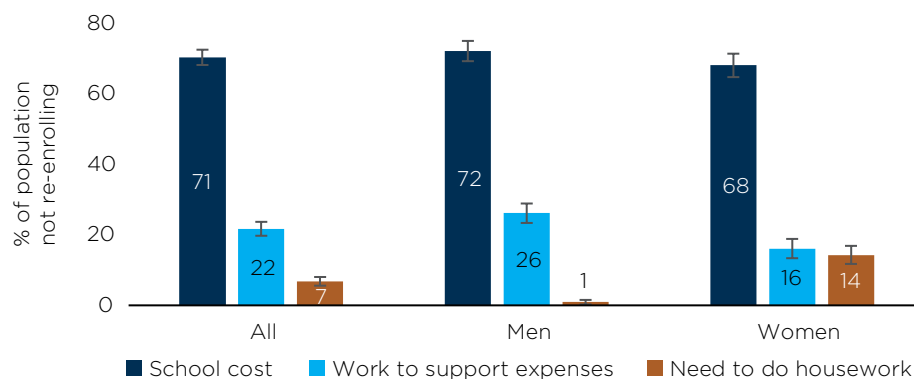▶ **FIGURE 45:** Literacy in languages, by gender and county of residence

Kiswahili ■ English ■ French ■ Somali ■ Arabic

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 46:** School attendance before COVID-19 among those currently not attending
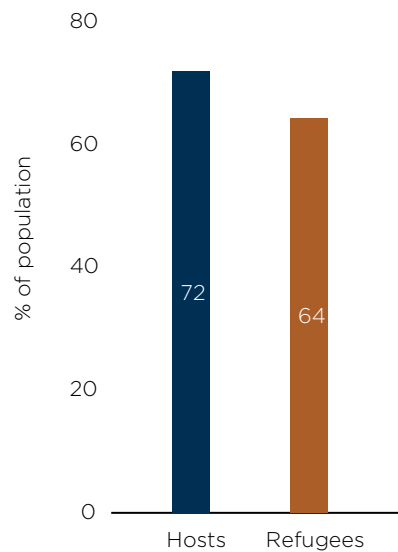

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 47:** Main reasons for not re-enrolling in school

■ School cost ■ Work to support expenses ■ Need to do housework

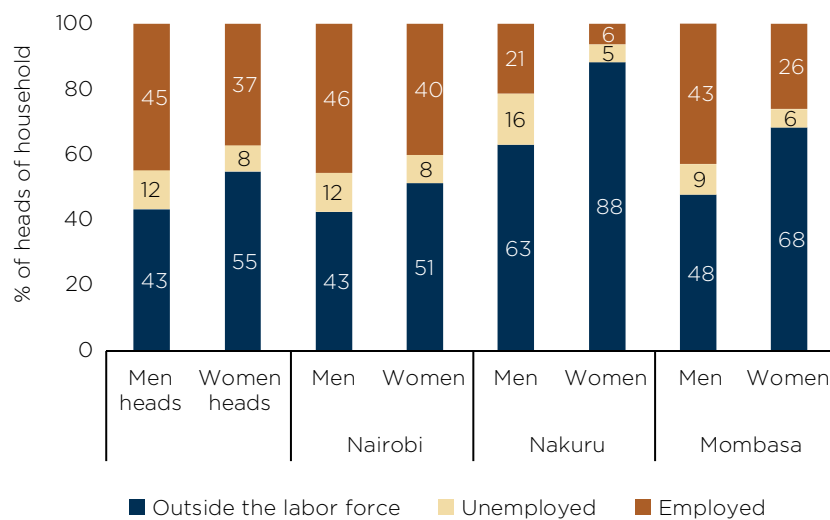**Source:** Urban SES 2020–21.

7.4 Livelihoods

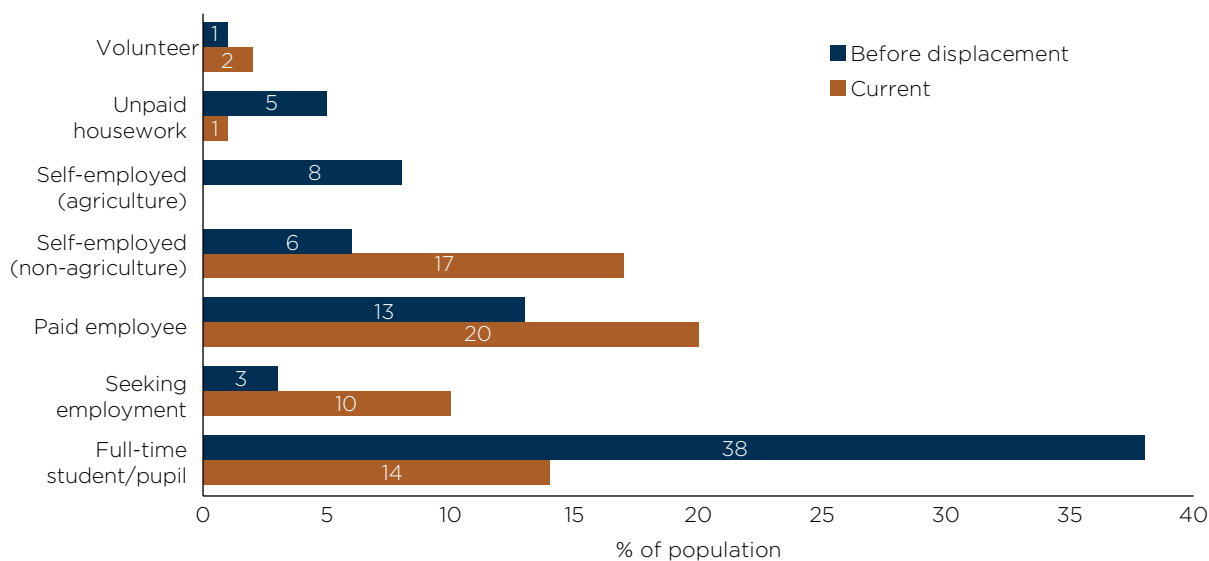▶ **FIGURE 48:** Working-age population

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

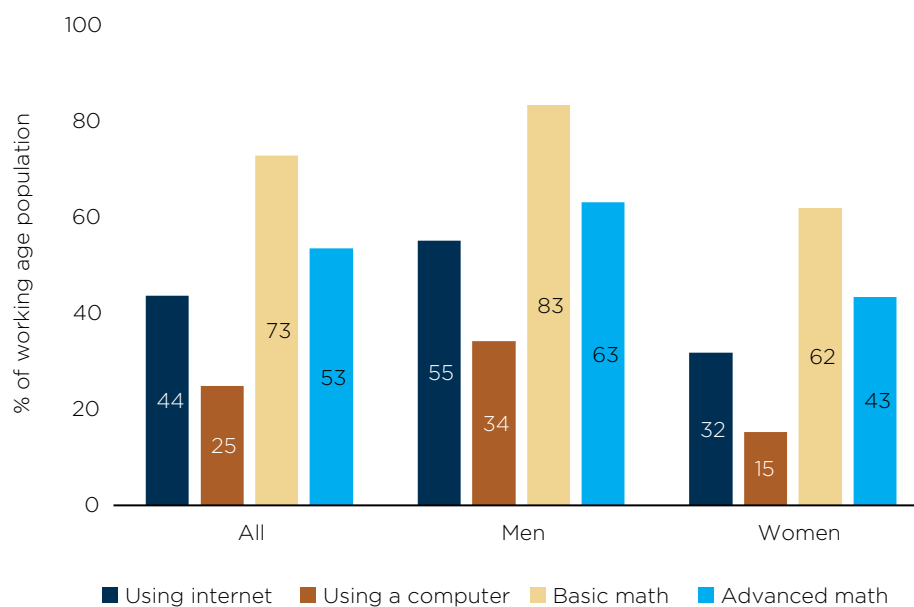▶ **FIGURE 49:** Labor force status, by gender of head and location

► **FIGURE 50:** Primary activity before and after displacement
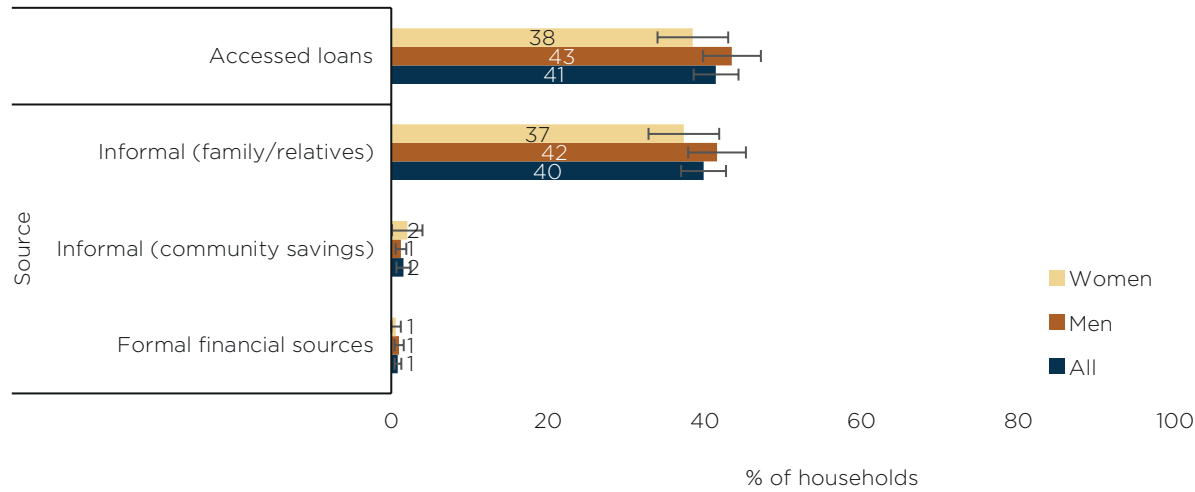

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

► **FIGURE 51:** Excellent or good proficiency in job-related skills
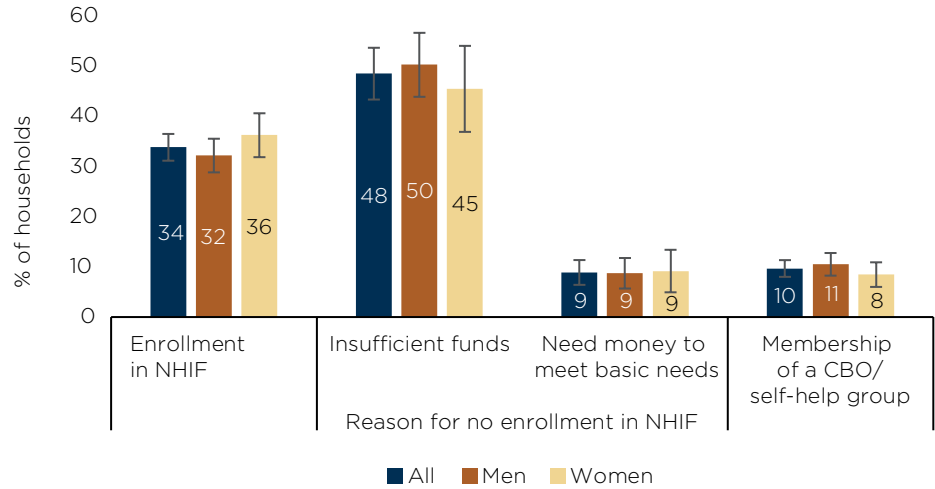

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

7.5 Access

▶ **FIGURE 52:** Access to loans in last 12 months and main sources

Accessed loans
- 38 (Women)
- 43 (Men)
- 41 (All)

Informal (family/relatives)
- 37 (Women)
- 42 (Men)
- 40 (All)

Informal (community savings)
- 2 (Women)
- 1 (Men)
- 2 (All)

Formal financial sources
- 1 (Women)
- 1 (Men)
- 1 (All)

Source (y-axis)
% of households (x-axis)

Legend:
■ Women
■ Men
■ All

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE D24 53:** Enrollment in NHIF, and membership of a CBO or self-help group

% of households

Enrollment in NHIF: All 34, Men 32, Women 36
Insufficient funds: All 48, Men 50, Women 45
Need money to meet basic needs: All 9, Men 9, Women 9
Membership of a CBO/self-help group: All 10, Men 11, Women 8

Reason for no enrollment in NHIF

Legend: ■ All ■ Men ■ Women
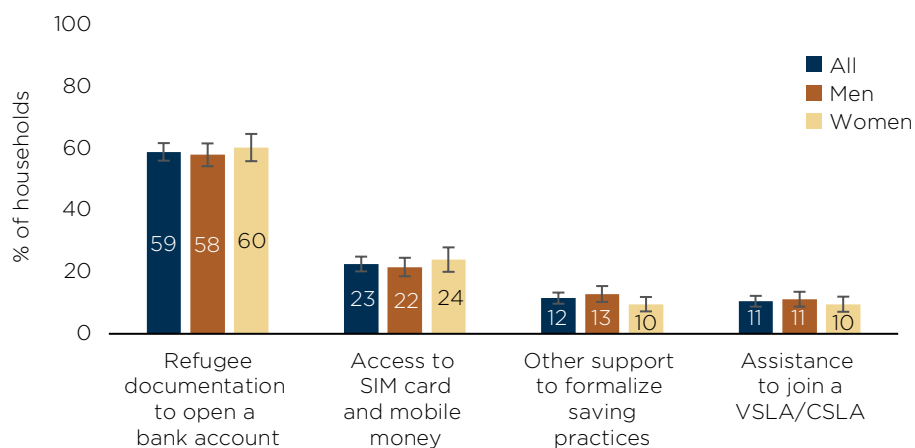
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: NHIF = National Hospital Insurance Fund; CBO = community-based organization.

▶ **FIGURE 54:** Saving practices
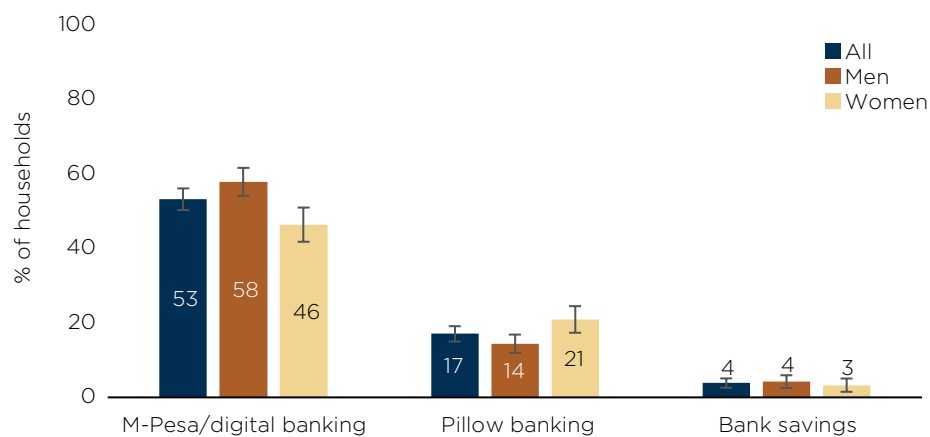
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

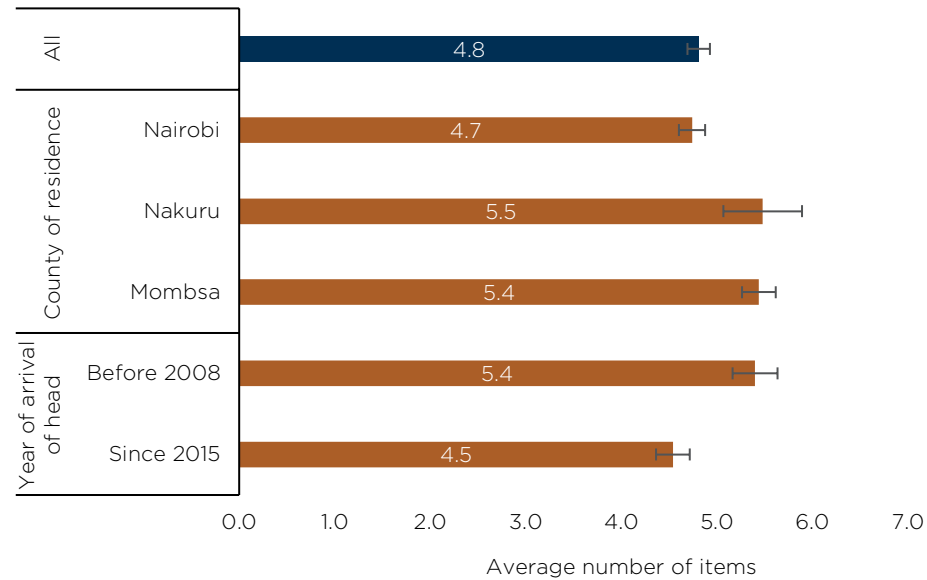▶ **FIGURE 55:** Support needed to formalize saving practices

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
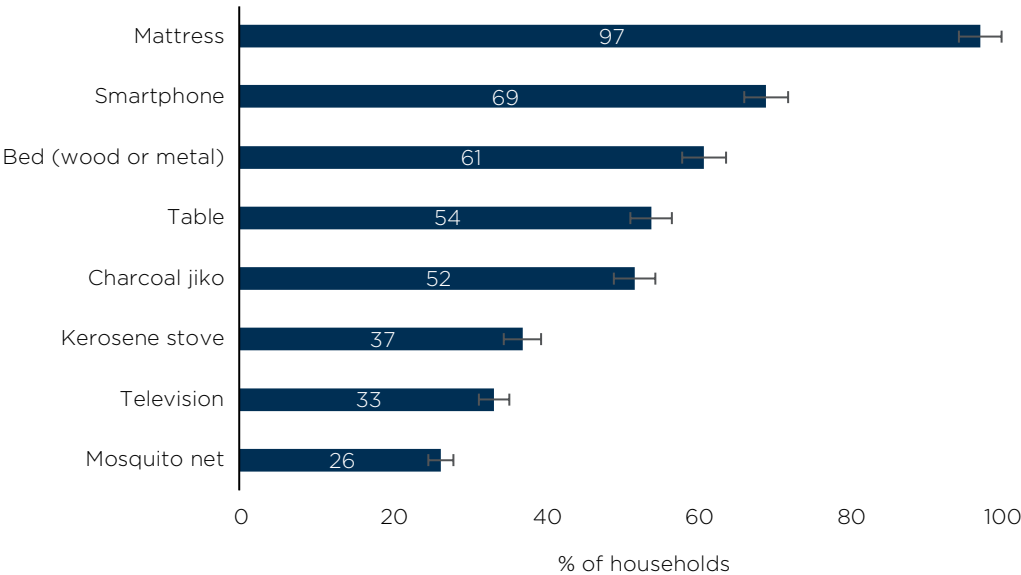**Note:** VSLA/CSLA = village/community savings and loans associations.

7.6 Assets

▶ **FIGURE 56:** Number of owned assets, by county of residence and year of arrival of head

All	4.8	
County of residence	Nairobi	4.7
	Nakuru	5.5
	Mombsa	5.4
Year of arrival of head	Before 2008	5.4
	Since 2015	4.5

Average number of items

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 57:** Owned assets

Asset	%
Mattress	97
Smartphone	69
Bed (wood or metal)	61
Table	54
Charcoal jiko	52
Kerosene stove	37
Television	33
Mosquito net	26

% of households
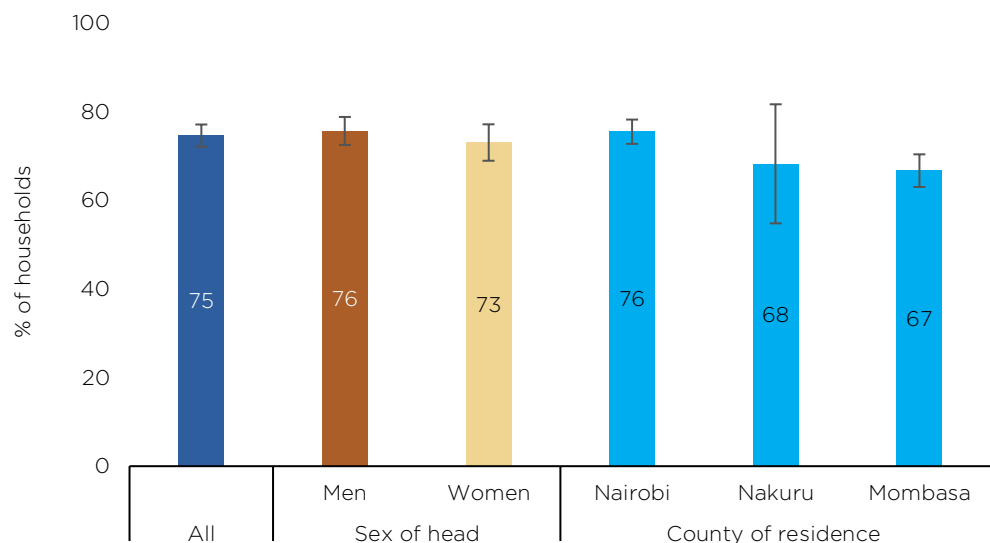
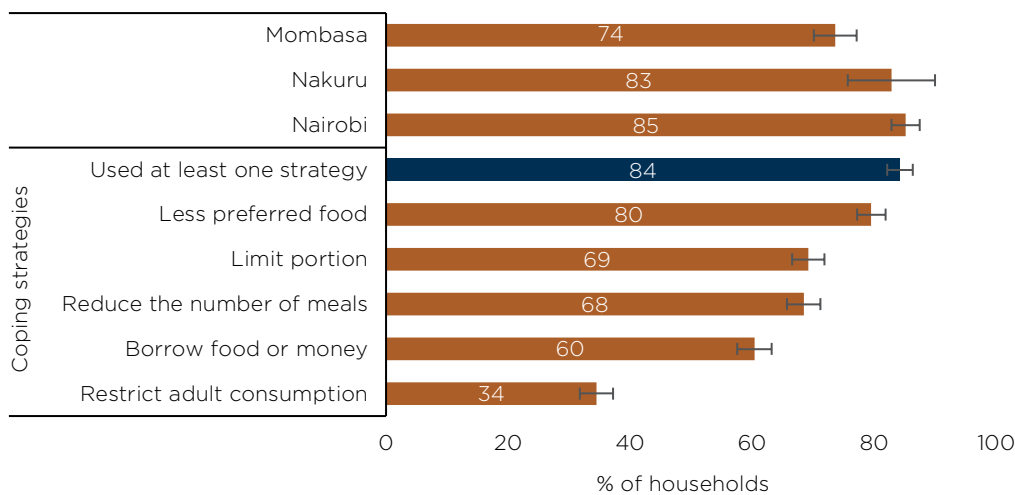**Source:** Urban SES 2020–21.

7.7 Food insecurity

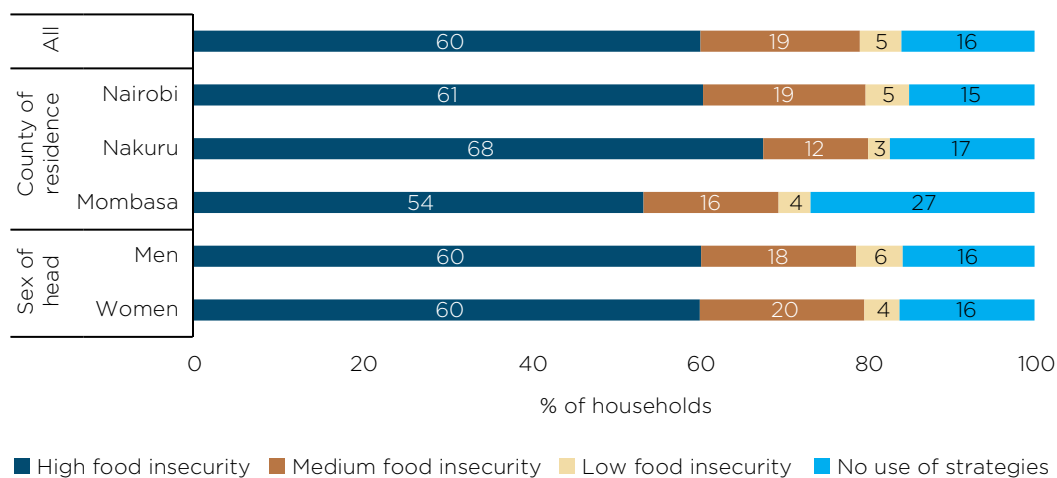▶ **FIGURE 58:** Lack of food or money to buy sufficient food in the last 7 days

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 59:** Use of consumption-based coping strategies in the last 7 days
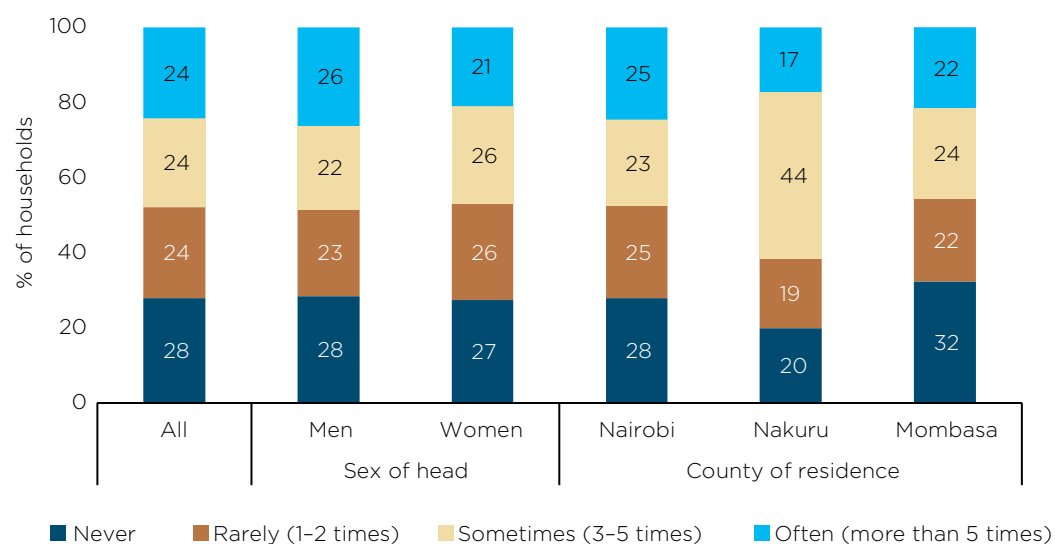

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 60:** Food insecurity level, consumption-based strategies

		High food insecurity	Medium food insecurity	Low food insecurity	No use of strategies
	All	60	19	5	16
County of residence	Nairobi	61	19	5	15
	Nakuru	68	12	3	17
	Mombasa	54	16	4	27
Sex of head	Men	60	18	6	16
	Women	60	20	4	16

% of households

■ High food insecurity   ■ Medium food insecurity   ■ Low food insecurity   ■ No use of strategies

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 61:** Number of times there was no food to eat due to a lack of resources to buy it in the last 30 days

■ Never   ■ Rarely (1–2 times)   ■ Sometimes (3–5 times)   ■ Often (more than 5 times)

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 62:** Livelihoods-based coping strategies
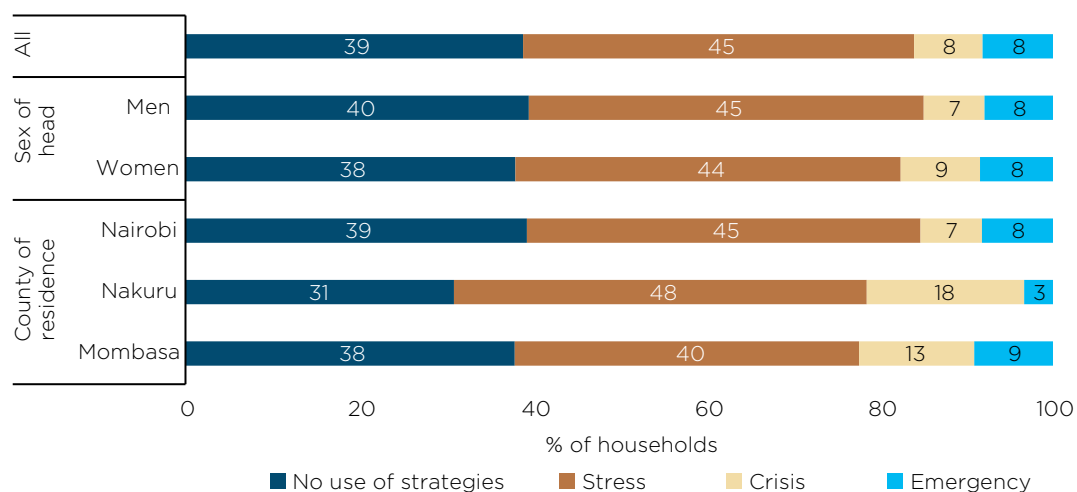
Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **TABLE 8:** Determinants of food insecurity

	High food insecurity
Number of employed members	-0.045**
	(0.008)
Asset index (base: Q1)	
Q2	0.033**
	(0.007)
Q3	-0.050**
	(0.008)
Q4	-0.066**
	(0.011)
Q5	-0.157***
	(0.015)
Received remittance	-0.099**
	(0.010)
Woman head	0.024*
	(0.008)
Head has secondary or higher education	-0.007
	(0.012)
Head is literate in Swahili	0.021
	(0.019)
Head has disability	0.045**
	(0.010)
R2(%)	10.7
N	2,041

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.
Note: Significance level: 1%(***), 5%(**), 10%(*). Regression includes other control variables such as age of household head, country of origin of head, marital status of head, household size, access to private improved sanitation, access to electricity, sufficient drinking water, and access to a modern house.
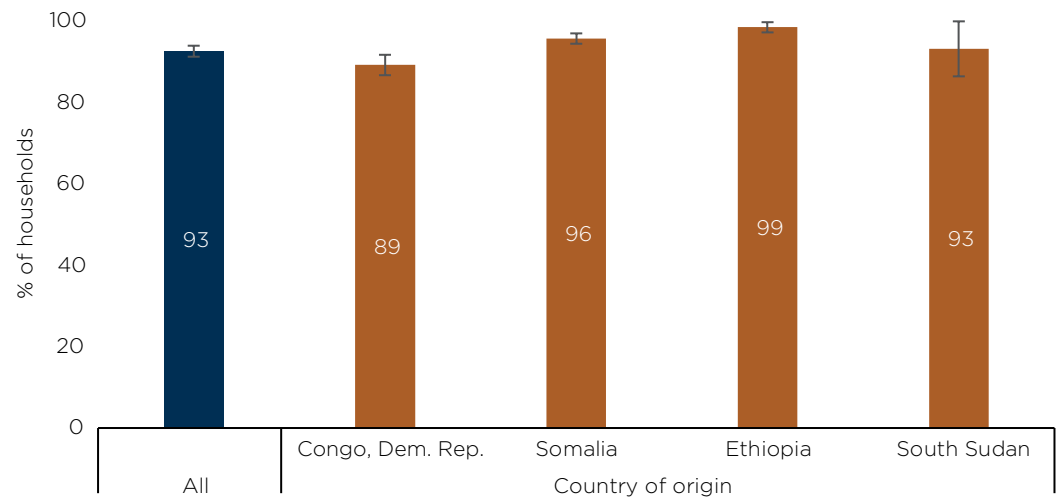
7.8 Trajectories of displacement and intentions to move
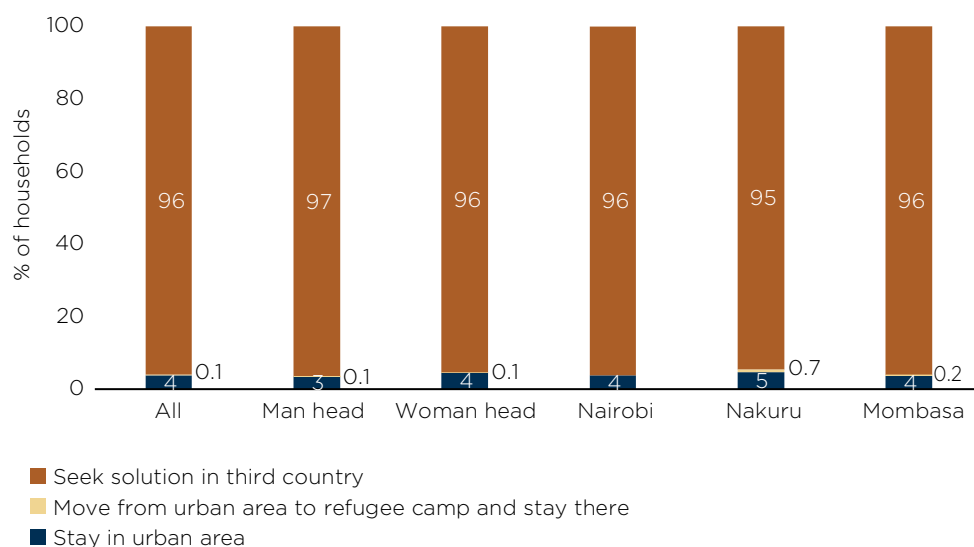
▶ **FIGURE 63:** Conflict events and arrival year
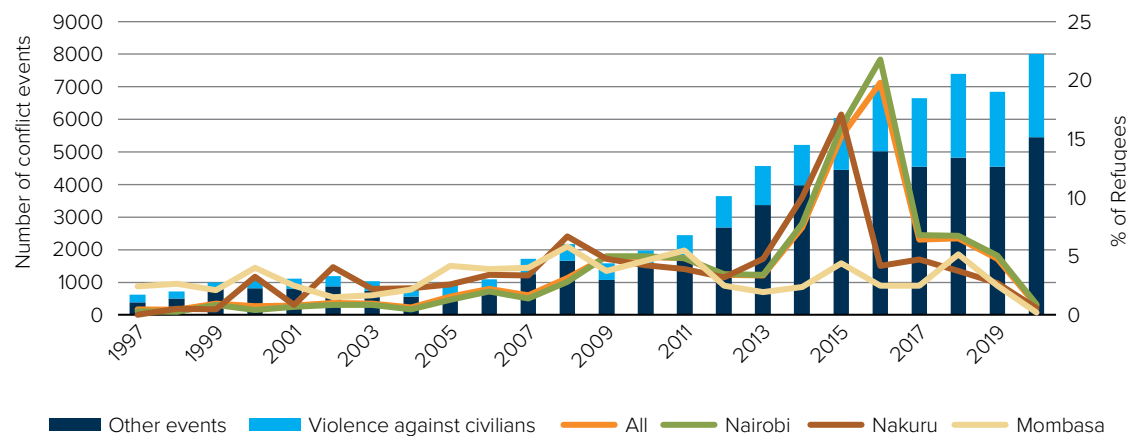
Sources: ACLED conflict events 1997–2019; Urban SES 2020–21.
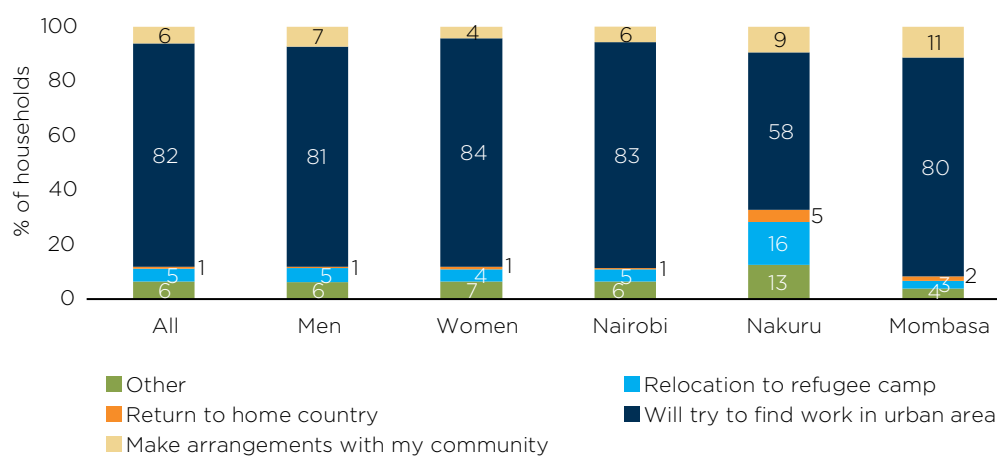
▶ **FIGURE 64:** Plans to leave

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

Plans for the foreseeable future among those not wanting to return

■ Seek solution in third country
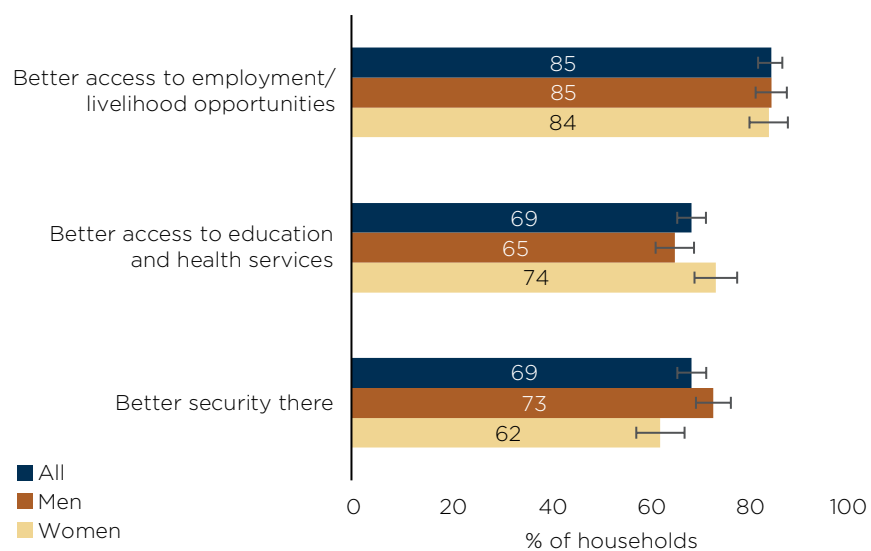■ Move from urban area to refugee camp and stay there
■ Stay in urban area

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 66:** Plans if faced with an economic crisis and no support from UNHCR or partners

■ Other
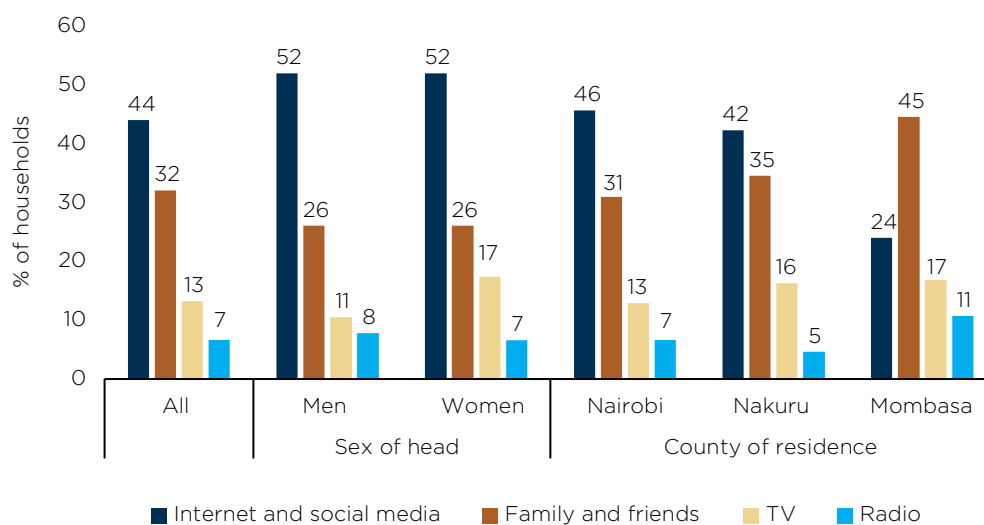■ Return to home country
■ Make arrangements with my community
■ Relocation to refugee camp
■ Will try to find work in urban area

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 67:** Main reasons for wanting to leave based on destination

Better access to employment/livelihood opportunities
- All: 85
- Men: 85
- Women: 84

Better access to education and health services
- All: 69
- Men: 65
- Women: 74

Better security there
- All: 69
- Men: 73
- Women: 62

■ All
■ Men
■ Women

% of households

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.

▶ **FIGURE 68:** Most common sources of information

% of households

	Internet and social media	Family and friends	TV	Radio
All	44	32	13	7
Men	52	26	11	8
Women	52	26	17	7
Nairobi	46	31	13	7
Nakuru	42	35	16	5
Mombasa	24	45	17	11

Sex of head   County of residence

■ Internet and social media   ■ Family and friends   ■ TV   ■ Radio

Source: Urban SES 2020–21.