

Chapter 3

Methodology

The study was conducted by Echo Bravo Consultants and led by Barry Sesnan, with a senior researcher and a field researcher for East Africa (Kenya and Uganda). In South Africa research assistants who are refugees themselves were used to conduct interviews and focus groups. All three countries, as well as South Sudan, were visited.

3.1 Choice of countries

It was decided to focus on three Commonwealth countries with refugees representing three stages of conflict: current intensive conflict (Somali refugees in Kenya, complicated by new arrivals following a drought); longer-term post-conflict and sporadic conflict (Sudanese and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) refugees in Uganda); and refugees from long-term violence (e.g. Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa). While the study was underway it was further decided to take advantage of the now virtually complete return of refugees to South Sudan from Uganda, to enrich the report with information about returnees.

South Africa has for solidarity reasons decided to give refugees the freedom to live among its own population. It has no camps; the teaching of refugee children by refugee teachers was not an issue except where locally arranged, commonly at kindergarten or vocational levels.

Uganda was once a major source of refugees, in the 1970s and 1980s, and this is often given as an important factor in the welcome given to refugees coming into Uganda. Large waves of refugees have often arrived at once and the Ugandan authorities lodge them in camps at first out of necessity. However, the country is not in practice very restrictive on the rights of refugees to farm, move around, go to school or take a job. Many refugees, particularly from Sudan, have lived for nearly 20 years in Uganda, living through the period during which refugees became self-supporting under a settlement (but not naturalisation) policy. This has provided time for a generation of refugee teachers to be trained in Uganda.

Kenya, which maintains a much stricter policy on refugees, hosts well over 600,000, mainly South Sudanese¹ and Somali refugees who are kept in remote camps. Being an urban refugee is discouraged, and in December 2012 was disallowed. There are Eritreans and Ethiopians also, and a small group of Ugandans. Almost all refugees in Kenya are either in Dadaab or in Kakuma camps (see Figure 4.1). Kenya has a problem of illegal dual identity, with many refugees, after being in Kenya for many years, having obtained some sort of Kenyan ID. Towards the end of 2012 following several acts of terrorism, the Kenyan Government took a stronger line against refugees not in camps.

The populations and locations studied appear in Table 3.1. Maps are provided in Figure 4.1 for Kenya (camps) and Figure 4.2 for Uganda (settlement areas).

Table 3.1 Study locations

Country	Target group (major in bold)	Study locations
Uganda	Congolese, Eritrean, Rwandese, South Sudanese	Urban (Kampala and Kakira); Bweyale, Kyangwali settlements
Kenya	Somali, South Sudanese	Nairobi and Dadaab refugee settlement and camp complex
South Africa	Zimbabwean and DR Congo, Ugandans, Rwandese	Cape Town and Gauteng; there are no camps in South Africa
South Sudan	Returnees from Kenya and Uganda	Juba, Kajo Kaji and Rumbek

3.2 Selection of informants

Informants were chosen both geographically and by a social mapping process that developed as the study progressed, using additional information gained from refugees or ex-refugees themselves. Care was taken that the interviewees represented a variety of situations. Both self-reported and official statistical data were used to develop a profile of refugee/migrant teachers in each host country, although the data on refugee teachers is limited and often out-of-date.

Some refugees in each country were chosen for case studies and were asked to provide further information as the study evolved. Some of these case studies illustrate this report.

3.3 Field research and interviews

The field research was carried out in urban areas and refugee camps/settlements, where they exist. Interviews were held with refugees, individuals and others who work with refugees and with key institutional actors. In some cases the discussions took place in small homogenous groups (usually of one nationality of origin). A structured interview form was available and used (particularly if the refugee was filling it in him- or herself or being interviewed via Skype). The interviewer had discretion to vary the interview to focus on specific issues.

Refugee teachers (or ex-refugee teachers) who have worked with CARE, Echo Bravo, JRS, Windle Trust and UNHCR over the years since 1990 were also contacted, sometimes less formally, to verify information.

Both the official view and the ‘on the ground reality’ were sought. Anecdotal information was valued, but was cross-checked. The proportion of male and female refugees interviewed reflected as near as possible the proportions within the refugee population itself, recognising that a smaller number of women choose to be teachers (often because educated refugee women have more options available, as referred to elsewhere in this document).

Most refugee teachers found in South Africa were male, an indicator that family is being left at home. In both Uganda and Kenya where whole families were present and new generations growing up, specific NGO programmes existed to train girls to become teachers.

Some refugee organisations were approached (mainly in South Africa), but this was not completely satisfactory as several organisations had changed their names or split from others, while other refugee organisations were more political than educational. In one case the organisation contacted seemed to have formed just for the study.

Some interviews were conducted via Skype. There was no evidence that this biased the sample as most refugees have easy access to an internet café. Refugees were reimbursed for their transport costs to interviews.

3.4 Interviewees' expectations

Despite the great care taken in how the study was presented to potential interviewees, there were often expectations about employment, assistance or scholarships arising directly from participation. The interviewer was instructed to recognise this and deal with it politely. It is noted that refugees have often complained of being 'over-interviewed' without anything concrete resulting for them.

Note

- 1 With a distinct number of Ethiopians and Eritreans.