**THE RWANDAN REFUGEE PHENOMENON:   
LIVELIHOOD, RIGHTS AND SECURITY IMPLICATIONS IN UGANDA**

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The world is currently grappling with the refugee crisis and forcibly displaced persons. It is estimated by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees that there are 25.9 million refugees displaced of the 70.8 million of displaced persons world-wide. Uganda has hosted refugees since 1940s and currently has approximately 1,800,000 million refugees. The study examined why Rwanda refugees who fled into Uganda since 1959 continue to flee into Uganda in spite of the threats that they pose for themselves and Uganda as a whole. The study drew on the Case Study design and employed a qualitative approach. Data collection methods included, key informant and in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and participant observations in Nakivale refugee settlement, Nakaseke, Lyantonde and in areas populated by refugees in the urban areas of Kampala. Special attention was paid to ethics of research since refugees are a vulnerable population.

The study attributes the continued influx of Rwandan refugees to political conditions in Rwanda that are characterized by denial of first and second generation human rights, Uganda’s refugee policies and neglect of preventive diplomacy byboth countries. Attempts by Rwandans to repatriate home voluntarily have been frustrated by lack of clear policies on repatriation and other structural limitations. Those refugees that return to Uganda following failed repatriation suffer triple challenges. They are denied their third-generation human rights particularly land in the settlements on grounds that it is for new caseloads, they suffer segregation in service delivery on grounds that they are nolonger eligible for humanitarian assistance and are denied resettlement in a third country of asylum with the justification that resettlement to a third country is the prerogative of the recipient country.Rwandan refugees are faced with an identity crisis. If they have to access any resources and be eligible for naturalization, they have to affiliate themselves to other countries like Burundi or Democratic Congo.

It was concluded that given the refugee crisis in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, countries like Uganda and its neighboring countries should commit to providing better support to refugees regardless of their countries of origin (in this case) Rwanda. Rwanda should implement durable solutions such as opening up political space. At the regional and international level, countries should commit to burden sharing. The last recommendation is premised on the grounds that internationally, refugees have become a bargaining chip in the changing nature of humanitarianism.