

## EXAMINING THE ROLE OF ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS ON REFUGEES' ACCESS TO DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP, TURKANA COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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### Abstract

This study was undertaken to examine the role of accountability mechanisms on refugees' access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County, Kenya. It was anchored on Transparency and Accountability Theory and employed mixed methods with explanatory approach as a research design. The study targeted a population of 305, 000 refugees from which 100 respondents were selected using Krejci & Morgan Formula. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through an online Google form. The quantitative data was statistically analyzed using SPSS version 27, and applied correlation, multiple regression analyses, and Anova to test the relationships between study variables. Qualitative data was analyzed after the data was coded, categorized into themes and analyzed thematically using content analysis. The findings revealed that over 36.36% of respondents agreed that weak accountability mechanisms within UNHCR affect refugees' access to Durable Solutions. This reflects a perceived lack of proper accountability mechanisms in UNHCR's Durable Solutions framework. Along the same lines, about 32.86% of respondents agreed that lack of accountability mechanism within UNHCR limits refugees' access to Durable Solutions. Together these findings suggest that weak accountability measures to be barriers for refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp to access Durable Solutions. These findings confirm that the lack of accountability mechanisms in the allocation processes of Durable Solutions by UNHCR likely fosters corruption and consequently prolonging refugees' displacement within Kakuma Refugee Camp. The study concludes that there is a need for embedding accountability mechanisms in humanitarian programming by institutionalizing a robust accountability mechanisms and adopting effective anticorruption measures. The study recommends for adequate implementation of such reforms to promote more transparent processes and broaden equitable access of Durable Solutions for refugee populations stranded in protracted situations in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

**Key words:** Accountability, Mechanisms, Refugees, Durable Solutions

### 1. Introduction

Forced Displacement is one of the most pressing global humanitarian concerns. According to the UNHCR Global Trends Report (2024), the world faces record levels of displacement, with more than 117 million people forcibly displaced from their homes due to conflict, persecution, governance failures, and climate related disasters. Among these displaced populations, refugees account for over 43 million, the majority hosted in low- and middle-income countries, mainly in Africa. Protracted displacement has become the norm rather than the exception, with many refugees'

population spending decades in refugee camps without access to Durable Solutions (Crawford & O'Callaghan, 2019).

Ferris & Kerwin's (2023) examines the extent to which the three internationally recognized Durable Solutions that include voluntary repatriation, local integration, and third country resettlement have limited access. Voluntary repatriation among the refugee population is the most desirable option for many states and can be followed by further displacement, as often happens when political turmoil or when the grounds of their displacement persist. Although nations such as Kenya

which houses significant refugee populations are not explicitly opposing locally integrating and assimilating refugees, it remains unachievable for at least now. Durable Solutions, and Resettlement in particular, on the other hand, are hard to access by many refugees because they are severely limited and restricted. The process of accessing Durable Solution in refugee camps is also widely perceived by most refugees to be fraught with corruption allegations.

Lack of transparency around access to Durable Solutions globally has been connected to the weak transparency practices, and corruption which occurs within humanitarian agencies while providing these services. Additionally, mismanagement and information asymmetry also weaken refugees' trust in the systems managing refugees. From different refugee contexts and evidence from various studies reveal the existence of corruption challenges facing access to Durable Solutions for refugees. Refugees from Syria who lived in Lebanon, for example, have reported similar cases. They reported that access to clear, and timely information regarding resettlement and aid eligibility is very limited or did not exist at all. These claims of limited access to information on Durable Solutions are supported by Janmyr and Mourad (2018). They argued that lack of clear information around access to Durable Solutions fosters frustration and mistrust among refugees. These were the same problems raised by Schmid-Scot, (2021) too. Specifically, Schmid-Scot highlighted that, despite Germany's advanced asylum systems, refugees continued to raise similar concerns. He stated that refugees' concerns mainly stem from limited access to information regarding Durable Solutions. Lengthy bureaucratic procedures and lack of proper information have caused confusion for Syrian refugees to access Durable Solution in Lebanon. To solve these problems

which associated with accessing Durable Solutions by Syrian refugees, Schmid-Scot emphasized the need for more transparent and accessible information.

Uganda, a country in East Africa, praised for its strong refugee policies, is currently hosting the largest refugee population. Despite being praised for its progressive refugee policies, Uganda is still facing significant challenges managing refugees. One of such challenges stem from ensuring that refugees should understand their rights and entitlements fully, particularly in relation to land use and local integration opportunities (Betts et., 2019). Uganda's challenges with managing refugees underscores the broader refugee issues many countries' faces in the region today. That is why the Global Compact on Refugees was developed in 2018 to address these broader refugee challenges. Specifically, this refugee policy highlights the importance of sharing refugee issues among countries. This means that the burden and responsibility of managing refugees globally should be shared among refugee nations in the region and beyond just one country or few countries. Of course, the policy didn't only call on countries to share the burden of refugees among themselves. It also emphasized the crucial role of transparent processes in enabling refugees to access Durable Solutions which are very critical for them to rebuild their lives. In fact, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 16 also builds on the importance of developing effective tools that enable refugees to rebuild their lives in a dignified way. These tools as outlined by SDG 16 include building accountable and inclusive systems as a requirement for ensuring sustainable development for all and peace around the world. Without strong systems of transparency practices and accountability, Schmid-Scot notes, refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions can always be fraught with corruption and other filthy practices.

The lack of transparency practices in humanitarian contexts, evidence shows, refugees become more vulnerable. But when transparency practices are prioritized in humanitarian contexts, refugees are empowered and protected. They are likely to have more access to Durable Solutions to avoid protracted situations in refugee camps. Refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions becomes even more effective when transparency practices are well implemented in humanitarian contexts. These results are also well supported by Canada's community-based sponsorships model. Through Canada's community-based sponsorships, refugees are sponsored for resettlement in Canada without any allegations of corruption. This clearly shows how accountability, openness, and stakeholder engagement can create more sustainable solutions for refugees as noted by Hyndman et., (2021). At the same time, however, when opaque practices and corruption are rampant within humanitarian organizations, desperate refugees get exploited. These opaque practices around access to Durable Solutions were scrutinized by researchers, especially in some resettlement referral centers in East Africa. As evidence shows, refugees globally risk being exploited and discriminated against when they cannot access Durable Solutions to rebuild their lives. In fact, lack of access to Durable Solutions is likely to create prolonged displacement for refugees both in the refugee camps, and in urban centers, as well.

Transparency practices in refugee regime should not just be a procedural consideration. But it should be an important basis for enabling refugees to have equitable access to Durable Solutions free from corruption or any form of refugee exploitation. Evidence from around the world still reveals that, when refugees have access to clear information, humanitarian institutions are perceived to be more accountable for them. In fact,

when humanitarian organizations are held accountable, refugees are also included in decision making. These pathways to repatriation, local integration, and resettlement become more successful and refugees trust the processes. In the same way, when transparency frameworks in humanitarian contexts are weak, this perpetuates exclusion, prolongs refugees' displacement, and therefore, undermining commitments made by international community to the protection of refugees. This global viewpoint delivers the foundation for which transparency practices can be examined in specific refugee camps such as Kakuma Refugee Camp. In camps such as Kakuma Refugee Camp, the intersection of accountability, information access, and anti-corruption measures influences how refugees access Durable Solutions.

A significant population of the world's refugees are being hosted in Africa, particularly in Eastern African. This is due to Africa being a place where so many conflicts, political instability, and climate related disasters occur continuously. Refugee movements across the continent strain natural resources, infrastructure, and social systems in host countries. In fact, Schön, et al. (2018), points that the refugee populations and persons of concern put pressure on natural resources such as water and land, particularly since wars and conflicts in these countries intensify, and refugee populations grow significantly. Subsequently, as a way to curb strain on natural resources, refugee hosting nations in Africa often enforce limitations on refugees by limiting their rights, including free movement, or limiting their access to the local labor markets. And failing to account for any resources received from UNHCR through donor countries. Refugees are then left to face risks of being encamped, and of course, "warehoused" for years in refugee camps.

While regional initiatives such as the Kampala Declaration on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons, developed in 2010, and the IGAD Nairobi Declaration on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees, enacted in 2017 aimed to enhance cooperation among refugee hosting nations. However, implementation of such refugee frameworks faces challenges. In Several African countries, humanitarian agencies working in displacement contexts, can be seen grappling with corruption and weak institutional accountability, which in turn, hinder refugees to access to Durable Solutions (Roth, 2021). In fact, UNHCR through its own investigations that it conducted a few years ago against the claims of corruption (Info, 2020) in Kenya and Uganda have documented cases of corruption in the resettlement process. In these investigations, UNHCR found that its staff were involved in cases of bribery and corruption in the resettlement processes, and exploited refugees. These challenges underscore the need for stronger oversight, transparent procedures, and inclusive policies across the regions hosting refugees where humanitarian organizations are managing Durable Solutions for refugees. Addressing these challenges, humanitarian organizations and the UN refugee agency, the UNHCR Office, strive to improve the lives of refugees who are being warehoused for decades.

Kenya, an East African nation, is one of the Africa's largest refugee hosting nations, with a long-standing refugee camps such as Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement, and Dadaab Camp. Of course, Kenya does not only host refugees in rural centers, thousands of refugees are also living in its many urban centers such as Nairobi, Nakuru, and Eldoret. Kenya as a country, currently hosts over 600,000 refugees and asylum seekers who came primarily from countries like Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, the

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Burundi among others (UNHCR, 2024). While Kenya has not outrightly rejected local integration, corruption in the resettlement processes and other factors have forced many refugees to remain confined in refugee camps with restricted socio-economic opportunities.

Although policies exist to guide the allocation of Durable Solutions accessing these opportunities in refugee contexts, like Kakuma Refugee Camp, in many cases, the processes is extremely marred with lack of transparency and corruption (Info, 2020). Evidence shows that, despite refugees finding access to Durable Solutions hard, access to these pathways can be enhanced by policy changes that put refugees' wellbeing first. Doing so, it is important to consider what is sometimes referred to as the "4th solution" to the suffering of refugees and internally displaced persons, that is, to legalize their status as migrants within the country they first took asylum. To improve refugees protracted situations, Refugee Act (2021) and the Sharika Plan (2020-2030) were introduced by Kenya government in partnership with UNHCR. These refugee frameworks mark a paradigm change towards refugee inclusion, aiming to integrate them into national systems and development planning in Kenya.

As highlighted, Durable Solutions are long-term solutions that offer refugees who cannot return to their home countries an opportunity to rebuild their lives in a safe and dignified way (Durable Solutions and Refugee Protection, 2025). For protracted refugees, the only effective solution for them is merely through these options. Providing such refugees with a lengthy history of prolonged displacement, assisting them to access Durable Solution is crucial for rebuilding their lives in a dignified way. Evidence still reveals, despite positive aspects of Durable Solutions, refugees still raise concerns about corruption and limited information from

the UNHCR systems that process these pathways (Lindley, 2011). Even at a national level, in Kenya for example, refugees, particularly those living in urban centers such as Nairobi, still face this broader protracted refugee situation. For them, like those in Kakuma Refugee Camp, accessing Durable Solutions is extremely difficult through proper channels. It is almost like there is gatekeeping, and many of those refugees living in urban centers raised similar concerns of corruption in the process of allocation of Durable solutions. These challenges, for refugees, create prolonged, or even worse, indefinite displacement, trapped in refugee camps such as Kakuma Refugee Camp. It is home to more than 305,00 refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless people according to (UNHCR Data, 2025) statistics. Founded in 1992 and located in Northwestern Kenya, Kakuma Refugee Camp is one of the largest refugee camps in the world after Dadaab Camp. For many refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp, displacement has become intergenerational, due to limited access to Durable Solutions, particularly, resettlement due to lack of transparency in the process. At a local level, however, transparency challenges are particularly acute. In Kakuma Refugee Camp, for example, refugees often raise similar concerns of lack of information from humanitarian agencies, especially the UNHCR, regarding Durable Solutions. Refugees also report perceptions of corruption and favoritism in providing essential humanitarian assistance and critical pathways such as scholarships for further studies. Perceptions of corruption around accessing critical humanitarian assistance do not only reduce refugees' trust in humanitarian actors such as UNHCR, but it also underpins the sense of uncertainty that describes life in prolonged displacement as argued by Jaji (2020). Under the initiatives such as Sharika Plan which essentially aims to integrate refugee inclusion and accountability of

humanitarian agencies, the extent to which it will have positive impact on refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp is yet to be seen. In fact, refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp started to raise concerns that the Sharika Plan framework will be like those previous frameworks that were enacted but never worked in real senses. Structural barriers remained which prevented refugees from accessing essential services in rural and urban centers alike.

Consequently, looking at how the role of transparency at global level, including regional, and local, influences and enhances access to Durable Solutions, is central to this study. In Kakuma Refugee Camp refugees face the same challenges. They cannot access Durable Solutions in a more dignified way. Refugees being able to access life-changing solutions are essential for effectively addressing protracted refugee situations. Although, this is a localized study, it does not only intend to contribute to academic knowledge supported by evidence from the field. This study also attempts to provide some policy recommendations to strengthen transparency practices, including accountability, and fairness in refugee contexts in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The transparency practices around Durable Solutions and challenges associated with it need to be examined. And in doing so, proposing solutions and policy recommendations can improve refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions in unrestricted ways. Refugees in a protracted situation such as those who live in Kakuma Refugee Camp deserve an opportunity to rebuild their lives away from being warehoused.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

Refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County, Kenya, for more than three decades, have been living not only in protracted situations, but also in intergenerational displacement. As Opono & Ahimbisibwe (2024) argue, corruption offers refugees



stranded in refugee camps with limited prospects of accessing Durable Solutions such as third country resettlement, local integration, and voluntary repatriation, to rebuild their lives. Although the UNCHR and the Government of Kenya have continuously made efforts to improve living conditions for refugees, accessing those pathways are not easy at all, for many refugees. However, despite UNHCR's efforts, refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions is still heavily restricted, as if UNHCR is deliberately doing it so. As a matter of fact, Elliott (2021), highlights that the biggest hurdle for refugees to access Durable Solution is often complicated by bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, and weak accountability mechanisms. These claims are also strongly supported by Milner (2024). In support of those claims, he argues that intergenerational and protracted refugee displacement are not only humanitarian crises but rather political in nature as well. These challenges as highlighted by Milner (2024) arise from the fact that there is inadequate international cooperation and weak political will globally. Although evidence shows that corruption, structural, and political barriers exist in refugee contexts, researchers and policy makers globally have paid little attention to the important role transparency practices play in allowing refugees to access Durable Solutions.

In Kakuma Refugee Camp, where refugees frequently report corruption, lack of information, and limited oversight in the processes that should guarantee fairness and equity, lack of transparency, is particularly a concerning and raising issue. When transparency practices are absent in humanitarian contexts, refugees' trust in humanitarian institutions such as UNHCR is undermined, and prolongs their displacement in refugee camps. It leaves, as Utsch (2020) noted, many refugees without a chance and hope for rebuilding their lives

away from refugee camps. Durable Solutions are the only solutions recognized in the International Refugee Regime. They are the only sustainable solutions for refugees to get out of protracted refugee situations (Srouf, 2022). However, it is quite challenging to provide refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp and elsewhere with access to Durable Solutions. The challenges stem from the UNHCR's lack of seriousness to fight corruption found in its systems. In fact, Ramizova (2020) highlights that the transparency practices in most UNHCR systems are absent. He goes on to say that transparency is critical, but when under examined refugees are more likely to endure prolonged displacement in the refugee camps. Therefore, and against this backdrop, this study assessed the role of accountability mechanisms in refugees' access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County, Kenya. The study intended to address this urgent and underexplored dimension of intergenerational and protracted situations that refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp continue to suffer from.

## **2. Theoretical and Literature Review**

This study relied on one theory, Transparency and Accountability theory. First institutionalized by the World Bank in 1992, this theory in essence promotes accountability and openness in service delivery (Transparency and Accountability, 2025). The theory was widely adopted and used in various developments and humanitarian contexts to advance good governance and improve service delivery. This theory drew many scholars supporting its perspectives. In fact, one of the scholars and the proponent of this theory is Fox (2007). He emphasizes that adopting transparency and accountability mechanisms in public programs is crucial for marginalized populations. He claims that the theory's perspectives potentially enable marginalized people to have meaningful access to services. By

marginalized communities, Fox (2007) refers to people such as refugees who are vulnerable. If properly implemented in refugee contexts, such as Kakuma Refugee Camp, the theory's perspectives can provide a useful Lense for explaining refugees' access to critical services including Durable Solutions and other services alike.

But this theory is not without scholars challenging its perspectives. The scholars who challenged its perspective are but not limited to Mcgee and Gaventa (2010). They both argue that this framework lacks the potential to strengthen civic engagement to improve responsiveness and governance. They go on to argue that the framework incorrectly assumes a one-size-fits-all model. Meaning that, for example, as they both emphasized, the theories' assumptions do not consider contextual differences, especially in fragile situations with limited resources, like Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Another critic of this theory includes but not limited to Joshi (2013). He criticizes the theory for its focus on institutional support and cultural alignment rather than the realities within the institutions providing services. He goes on to argue that this framework cannot deliver meaningful changes if applied, for instance, in contexts like Kakuma Refugee Camp. Regarding its applicability, the theory is highly applicable to this research. It focuses on openness and good governance which is an important aspect this research is trying to examine in Kakuma Refugee Camp. Evidence shows that the way in which humanitarian agencies deliver humanitarian assistance in Kakuma Refugee Camp, especially Durable Solutions, is fraught with claims of lack of transparency.

The theory's applicability in Kakuma Refugee Camp may likely face limitations. The contexts of Kakuma Refugee Camp are politically dynamic which means it can be challenging for its implementation. One of such

challenges that will face the theory's application there is the camp's diversity. Kakuma Refugee Camp is known to have one of the most diverse refugee populations in the world. The camp has cultural complexities, poor infrastructure, as well as resource shortages. These are not the only challenges to theory's application in refugee contexts. The bureaucratic inefficiencies within the humanitarian agencies are also likely to limit the effectiveness of transparency practices and accountability mechanisms. All these challenges exist locally in Kakuma Refugee Camp. And perhaps the theory may tend to overlook how these local power relations work.

The contextual limitations of Transparency and Accountability framework can be addressed with the integration of institutional theory (Lecht & Jenkins, 2010). The cultural dynamics in Kakuma Refugee Camp may also have direct implications for the implementation of the Transparency and Accountability theory. These limitations can negatively or positively the implementation of transparency practices within the humanitarian organization providing aid to refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp. Institutional theory, when integrated into these dynamics, can help explain how organizational structures can shape these cultural norms. The theory goes on to assess transparency mechanisms which exist in those institutional contexts. It looks at transparency practices and how effectively they function within the humanitarian agencies in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Even though it has limitations when applied in the contexts of Kakuma Refugee Camp, the Transparency and Accountability theory remains central to this research. The theory provides more useful Lense Through which transparency practices influencing refugees' access to Durable Solutions can be examined.

The theory also allows the researcher to assess how policy gaps and how resource constraints can affect transparency and refugees' access to Durable Solutions. This framework is highly relevant to this research topic despite its contextual limitations.

### **2.1. Role of Accountability Mechanisms on Refugees' Access to Durable Solutions for Refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp**

According to Nayla Rush (2024), found a significant gap in the existing literature. Despite the crucial importance of accountability in shaping refugee's access to Durable Solutions, existing studies do not comprehensively explore how these agencies implement and uphold accountability frameworks in their efforts. The literature reviewed does not explicitly examine the role of accountability mechanisms in promoting refugees' access to Durable Solutions for refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

However, some of the explored literature analyzed, to some extent, does evaluate accountability practices in humanitarian action and the shift towards holding humanitarian agencies accountable before affected populations. Some of the important existing literature accessed include the "The Operation of UNHCR's Accountability Mechanisms by (Pallis, 2025) which critically examines the accountability mechanisms of the UN refugee agency, the UNHCR. These literature findings reveal that these accountability frameworks fail to make the agency meaningfully accountable to the people it serves, the refugees.

The study focuses and critically examines the accountability mechanisms of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and notes that these mechanisms fail to make the agency truly accountable to refugees. The study further explores challenges faced by the accountability models used by the refugee managing body, the UNHCR. The study

found that accountability mechanisms currently in practice within its systems are weak and not taking refugee input into account in relation to making important decisions to improve refugee access to services such as Durable Solutions in refugee camps.

In fact, according to the study (*Pallis-The-Operation-of-UNHCRs-Accountability-Mechanisms-2025*),

UNHCR currently operates outside Kenyan national legal frameworks, making it difficult to hold the agency legally accountable for corruption perpetrated by its staff. The findings from the study point out that decision-making processes within refugee status determination and camp management are blurred and fraught with filthy practices. Evidence from the study further reveals that accountability bodies within UNHCR just focus on internal reviews while ignoring corruption found in the system. Transparency practices are crucial elements for enabling refugees to access humanitarian assistance. They can be increased to safeguard Durable Solutions when information sharing and decision-making processes are improved.

Also, findings from another study conducted on the Operation of UNHCR's Accountability Mechanisms (2005) suggest that accountability mechanisms of UNHCR are flawed. The study findings revealed that UNHCR's accountability mechanisms were only implemented to serve donor states. The accountability within these organizations did not necessarily serve refugees who were in dire need of humanitarian assistance. The study recommended the adoption of strong participatory models, independent oversight, and legal accountability frameworks that give refugees some power to challenge UNHCR when their decisions are unfair. Addressing these challenges, findings from the study recommended that when there are strong accountability measures in place, refugees can report corruption and protect their rights effectively.



Hilhorst et al., (2021) conducted similar study where they drew empirical evidence from many countries in Asia and Africa. The countries they conducted their research included Myanmar, Afghanistan, and Sierra Leone. Through their study, they aimed at examining different accountability mechanisms, and how effective they were. Evidence from the study offers historical accounts on accountability application in humanitarian contexts. They argue that before 1990, humanitarian organizations which have not adopted structured accountability mechanisms in their humanitarian programming, significantly failed to deliver assistance to affected populations. However, few years later, in 1994, the beginning of formal accountability efforts marked by a code of conduct was introduced. According to Hilhorst et al., (2021), over the years, to improve transparency practices in providing humanitarian assistance to refugees and affected communities, new standards and monitoring frameworks were introduced. They stressed that it is not new for accountability frameworks to exist in humanitarian contexts, but they faced challenges in their implementation in humanitarian action.

The evidence from field research in Myanmar found that accountability mechanisms in humanitarian contexts were weak because community participation was limited in their development phases. Additionally, inconsistent application of humanitarian standards, further weakened these accountability measures. Similarly, in Afghanistan, the security concerns have restricted access to affected communities. This had led to humanitarian actors to overly resort to writing fake reports for donor accountability. Along the same lines, in Sierra Leone, however, a landslide disaster response exposed challenges in how government oversight should be balanced, as well as donor expectations, and community engagement.

Findings from the study by Hilhorst et al., (2021) notes that, accountability frameworks have evolved significantly over the years. However, the real impact to be created by these accountability frameworks, better enforcement, stronger community involvement, and less donor-driven bureaucracy, should be adopted. As suggested, the "everyday politics of accountability" for trust to be gained in humanitarian organizations depends on how effectively transparency and responsiveness are implemented.

The study by Williamson (2020) critically examines how humanitarian organizations implement accountability when serving affected populations (AAP). In crisis settings, such as those in protracted refugee situations, and the role of participation in aid efforts, meaningful accountability is prevented by several barriers. The study indicated that challenges existed in implementing accountability frameworks in crisis settings without implicitly making any reference to whether these accountability hurdles also impact refugees' access to Durable Solutions. The study assumes that the problem with accountability is not a lack of policy but a failure to turn principles into practice.

Despite numerous humanitarian frameworks, according to the study, affected populations still struggle to hold organizations accountable. For real change to occur, the humanitarian sector must prioritize locally driven leadership, improve transparency, and involve communities in decision-making rather than just treat them as passive aid recipients.

Summarizing literature results, it was found that extensive research on refugee protection in refugees' camps as well as urban centers has been carried out. But the evidence from the literature still shows that there were no previous studies conducted to examine the role of accountability mechanisms that can influence

refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions in displacement contexts. The systemic challenges around accessing Durable Solutions persist, especially in Kakuma Refugee Camp. This gap is particularly notable. This study attempted to examine the role of accountability mechanisms and how they affect refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp. It is important to understand anticorruption measures' impact refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions. The application of robust transparency practices can ensure fairness and strengthen trust between UNHCR and refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Therefore, it was crucial for this study to examine the real causes and consequences for lack of accountability mechanisms in the provision of Durable Solutions for refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp. This study sought to fill this critical gap. And ultimately, offering insights that could inform for a more accountable and stronger policy anchored on refugees' needs and not on the needs of those serving them.

### **3. Research Design and Methodology**

The research design is defined as the overall strategy which integrates the different components of the study in coherent and logical way. This process ensures that questions under research are answered (Creswell, 2014). In investigating the relationship between transparency practices and access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County, Kenya, the study was anchored on explanatory research design. The objective was to examine the relationships between variables, and for this study, adopting explanatory research design was appropriate.

The rationale behind the choice lies in the power of explanatory research design nature to explain the research findings. In fact, instead of merely explaining the lack of transparency process, and then trying to find

out their impact on the experiences of refugees, this design enables the use of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. This design rests on the assumption that by using both qualitative and quantitative techniques, a better understanding of the problem being researched can be gained more than using either technique alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

### **3.2. The Study Area**

The study area was Kakuma Refugee Camp. This camp is in the Turkana County, near the border between Kenya and Ethiopia. It was established in 1992, following the arrival of the Sudanese "Lost Boys", who fled the civil war in the then, Southern Sudan, now Republic of South Sudan. Later, following political instability in Ethiopia and in many other countries in the region, Kakuma became home to refugees from those countries. As of today, it is the second largest refugee camp on the African continent, after Dadaab Refugee Camp. It hosts over 305, 000 refugees from approximately 16 nationalities (UNHCR, 2024).

Geographically, geospatial information available reveals that Kakuma Refugee Camp falls between 3°42'N and 3°46'N latitude and 34°51'E and 34°49'E longitude. This reflects that Kakuma's position is relatively in a hot, and arid ecological zone (Omolo et al., 2013). Near Kakuma refugee Camp lies adjacent to it, Kakuma town. Administratively part of Turkana County, the Kakuma town, unlike Kakuma Refugee Camp, is situated at approximately 3.7168°N, 34.8569°E (Turkan County govern, 2025).

Kakuma Refugee Camp, together with nearby Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement (established in 2016), are faced with extreme living conditions, including high temperatures, dust storms, as well as health risks such as malaria and cholera. New arrivals of refugees are

received at the Kakuma Reception Center, located in Kakuma 3.

The camp is divided into four zones, Kakuma 1, 2, 3, and 4, and most of the refugees are South Sudanese, Sudanese, Somali, Ethiopian, and others. Although most refugees receive aid provided by the UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies, still many engage in small scale entrepreneurship activities to support themselves and their families (UNHCR, 2024).

### **3.3. Target Population**

The target population of this study were refugees who lived in Kakuma Refugee Camp. This study was conducted focusing on refugees who have experience with access to Durable Solutions. Currently, and as mentioned, Kakuma Refugee Camp is hosting more than 305,000 refugees who fled from conflicts in the neighboring counties, according to UNHCR and Kenya government statistics (UNHCR Data, 2025).

The sample size of the study was 100 refugees. The participants of the study were randomly selected through stratified and purposive sampling techniques. The processes made sure that respondents were represented based on their diverse backgrounds and how they experienced accessing Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp. Valuable insights on the effectiveness of transparency practices accessing Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp were provided by the study participants.

This sample was enough to examine the gaps in transparency mechanisms. The purpose was to assess whether these practices enable refugees to access Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp. This research's findings can then be used to provide policy recommendations to enhance refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions.

### **3.4. Sample Size and Sampling Procedures**

The sampling procedures used in this study were stratified random as well as purposive sampling methods. The use of these procedures allowed for a fair representation of the research participants. These processes helped capture the in-depth insightful information from the study participants. The diverse refugee population in Kakuma Refugee Camp justified the use of stratified random sampling approach. The random stratification selection process can capture perspectives from refugees of different backgrounds, such as nationality, age, as well as gender, among others. Only the legally recognized refugees who lived in Kakuma Refugee Camp were the study participants. Part of the reason for doing so was to ensure relevancy of the study. Additionally, study only focused on the refugees directly affected by Durable Solutions policies Kakuma Refugee Camp.

The sample size composed of both men, women, and the youth from different refugee communities in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The sample size intended to vary between 100 to 80 respondents only. The diversity of the sample helped strike a balance between the depth and breadth of the collected data. As mentioned earlier, combining random and purposive sampling methods strengthened the validity and reliability, balancing breadth, as well as depth aspects of the study. The sample size of 100 respondents was methodological and practically justified based on the accepted statistical principles, population homogeneity, resource constraints, and the explanatory nature of the study. The sample size, despite being sample, was sufficient to generate reliable and insightful information into transparency and access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

### **3.5. Methods and Instruments of Data Collection**

As shown above, the research used both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection. Online structured questionnaires were used on a sample population of 100 refugees to obtain quantitative data on their perceptions of transparency, corruption, and access to Durable Solutions. A five-point Likert scale was used to gather respondents' views on transparency practices implemented to protract the integrity of accessing Durable Solutions. Online questionnaires were suitable to use for collecting quantitative data due to being cost effective, and ideal for reaching many respondents at a time when most of them were not available for in person interviews.

Qualitative data was obtained using semi-structured online interviews conducted through questionnaires which were administered, also, to a sample of 100 refugees residing in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The online interviews were particularly useful for the study, again, as most of the respondents were not available for in-person interviews. These methods were cost effective, allowing for remote participation, and capturing diverse perspectives from refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

#### **3.5.1. Response Rate**

Out of 100 questionnaires distributed, 70 were dually completed and returned, making a very high response rate of 70.%. This is considered very high in social science, especially in refugee contexts where factors like mobility, lack of common language, lack of internet, and lack of trust in research processes may limit receiving high responses. A response rate of 50 or above is generally deemed adequate for analysis, while lower rates may still provide valuable insights if the sample is representative (Mugenda,2003). Similarly, it is asserted that response rates of 30% or lower may be considered as insufficient in survey study (Babbie, 2010). Therefore, the study achieved response rate

which is suitable and allowed for meaningful analysis and reliable interpretation of findings.

#### **3.5.2. Pilot Testing**

The pilot testing was carried out among a small sample of 10 refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp who were not part of the final study sample. The purpose of the pilot test of the research instruments was necessary to assess the logical consistency and reliability of the survey questionnaire and interview guide. The objectives of the pilot test were to identify ambiguities or unclear wording in the questionnaire items. The processes ensured the test to have the logical flow and sequencing of questions, and accessed the average time required to complete the questionnaire. These test processes helped establish the reliability of the instruments using alpha coefficients of Cronbach.

Results from test participants showed that there were terms associated with “Durable Solutions”, “Transparency Mechanisms”, and “Accountability Structures” that need clarification. Some of the questions had to be rewritten for clarity. Those items concerning sources of information and the fairness in access to Durable Solutions had additional alternatives added to include more response options.

With the feedback received, some adjustments were made to ensure that the instruments were user-friendly and contextually appropriate. The following changes were made to the instruments, and then later was subjected to a reliability analysis. Cronbach's alpha values were calculated on each of the main variables to assess the internal consistency of the questions being asked. The reliability standards, according to Nunnally (1978), a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is acceptable in social science research. The pilot test for all variables met this threshold. The test results showed that the instruments had sufficient internal consistency and were appropriate for full-scale data collection.

### **3.5.3. Validity of the Instruments**

To ensure the instruments of conducting this research were valid, emphasis was sought on validity of the content during the test, as the survey questionnaires were being developed. The survey questionnaire and interview guide were developed based on the study's objectives. The process was conducted in line with literature review and relevant theoretical frameworks used in this study. The research tools were reviewed by the academic supervisors to ensure consistency as well as the logical flow of the items. Following the test process, academic supervisors provided valuable feedback. It was used to refine the questions to improve clarity and relevance.

### **3.5.4. Reliability of the Instruments**

To determine the reliability of the instruments, a small pilot study was conducted. The pilot test was done in Kakuma Refugee Camp with 10 participants who were not part of the final study. Part of the reason this procedure was done was to establish whether or not the items in the questionnaire had internal consistency. The internal consistency of the study was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951). A reliability coefficient value of 0.82 was obtained following the test to measure internal consistency. The results of the test indicated suitable level of reliability. The pilot results were used to achieve consistency of the items.

The interview guide was reviewed to ensure consistency in language and interpretation of the questions used in the questionnaire. This served to further establish the validity of the data gathered for the study, both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

### **3.6. Data Analysis Procedures**

The descriptive and inferential analysis were used to analyses the data. Using descriptive analysis, the respondents' answers were quantified in terms of percentages, standard deviations, among others. This

analysis provided clear understating of access to information, accountability mechanisms, anticorruption measures, UNHCR policies, and the intensity of efforts to fight corruption around access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The SPSS was used to analyses quantitative data which were coded and entered. The descriptive statistics were used to generate crosstabs charts and tables which explained key patterns of the responses. For the inferential analysis, the relationships between the study variables were examined, and assessed to achieve whether they were statistically significance. Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships between the variables of transparency practices, accountability mechanisms, anti-corruption measures, UNHCR polices, and their significance regarding access to Durable Solutions. The process of regression analysis was conducted to determine the analytical impact of the study variables, and how they influenced refugees' ability to access Durable Solutions.

The combination of descriptive and inferential analyses was necessary for this study to effectively quantify and examine the linkages between the variables of the study. The procedures established a basis for producing scholarly based evidence, conclusions, as well as the policy recommendations. On the other hand, the qualitative data was coded and categorized thematically. The data was then analyzed thematically based on the research objectives using content analysis.

### **3.7. Ethical Considerations**

The ethical and moral values considerations were very crucial to make this study a success. They were used to guide this study. Before the data collection exercise, the researcher acquired a letter from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and approval from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation. In the process of data collection exercise, the informed

consent was first sought from each study participants as the study kickstarted in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The study participants were fully informed on the purpose, objectives, as well as the voluntary nature of the study. At any stage of the study, the researcher ensured that the participants have had the right to participate or decline without facing any consequences. Additionally, the researcher treated participants with respect and dignity throughout the study.

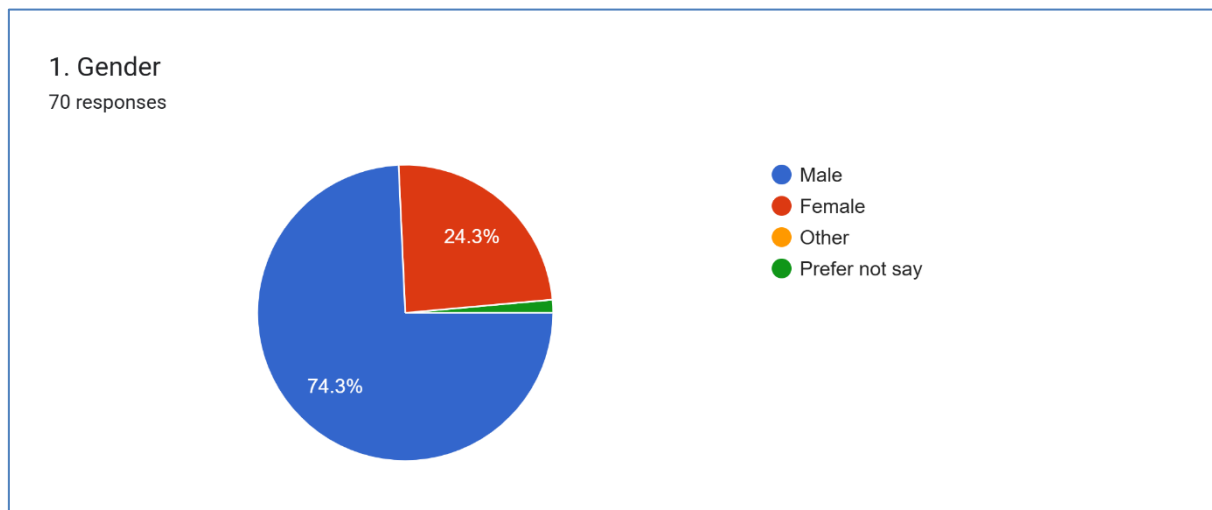
The safety and privacy considerations for the refugee participants who live in vulnerable situations took

precedence during the study. Not only that, but also the researcher followed strict confidentiality protocols. Upholding these protocols were ensured responses were anonymized to protect each participant's identity to prevent any form of harm. The researcher upheld these ethical principles before, during, and after data collection exercise. These ethical considerations helped the research to ensure the high integrity of the processes, while also respecting and protecting participants' dignity.

## 4. Findings of the Study

### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics

**Figure 4.1.** Distribution of Respondents by Gender

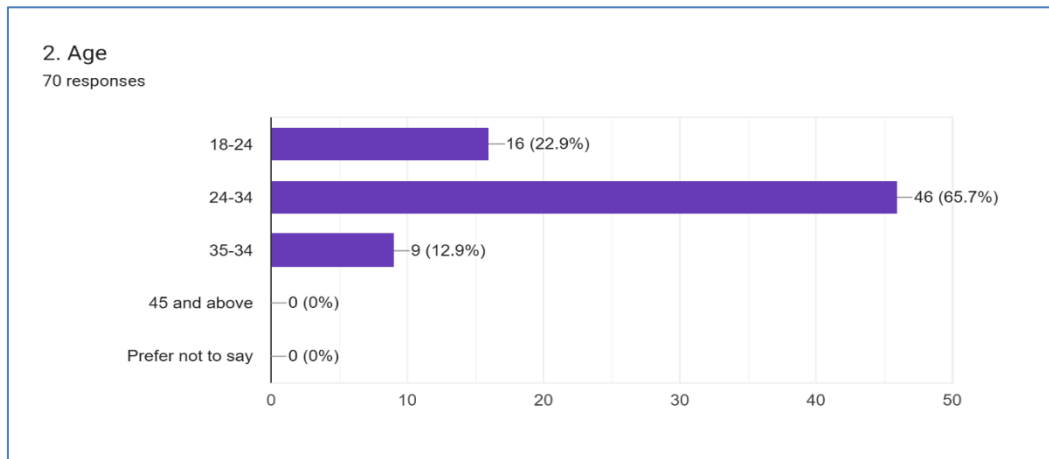


*Source: (Field Data, 2025)*

From the graph, it is seen that out of the total respondents, 52 are male, 16 are female, and 2 did not disclose which gender they were. This shows that the majority of the respondents who took part in the research were male, which constituted to nearly 52%, while the female respondents were the minority in the study constituting 16%.

**Figure 4.2.** Distribution Of Respondents by Age Group

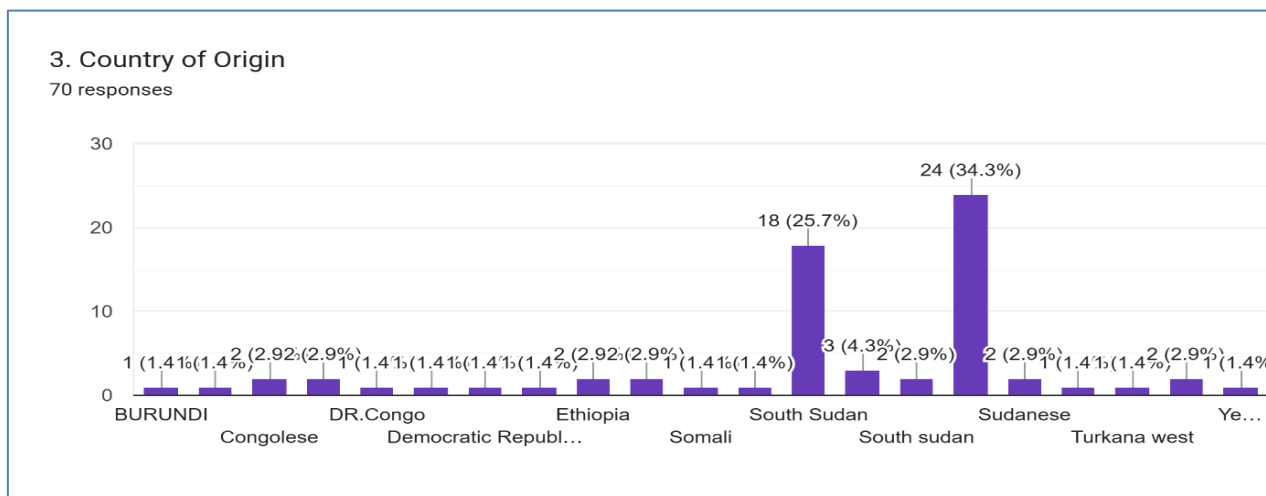




*Source: (Field Data, 2025).*

Age distribution of the respondents was as follows; 45 respondents were aged 24-34, 15 respondents were aged between the age of 18-25, and 9 respondents recorded their age as 35-44 respectively. The distribution of respondents by age highlights that most respondents were mostly young people, comprising of respondents aged between 24 and 34 years. This age distribution represented an essential demographic characteristic in Kakuma Refugee Camp, and equally to this study.

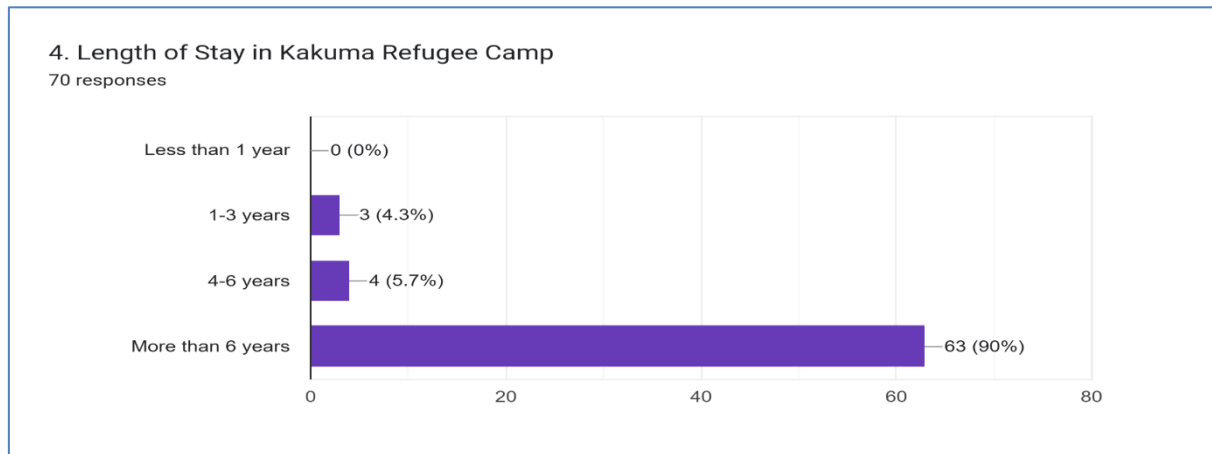
**Figure 4.3.** Distribution of Respondents by Country of Origin



*Source: (Field Data, 2025).*

The respondents were diverse in terms of their nationalities who are currently residing in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The most frequently mentioned nationalities during data collection exercise, were Sudanese refugee participants who had entries of at least 24, which roughly translated to 34.3%, 18 respondents roughly 25.7% identified themselves as South Sudanese. Other nationalities who participated in the study and who also live in Kakuma Refugee Camp, included Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, DR Congo, Somalia, Burundi, and Yemen. This is the number of nationalities that shows the diversity of the refugee population in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

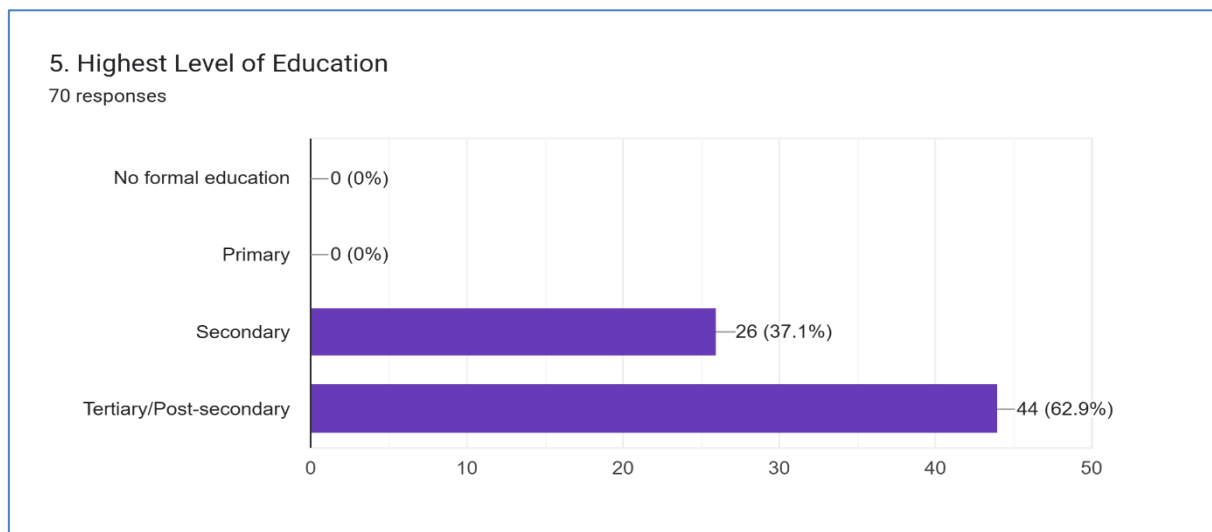
**Figure 4.4.** Distribution of Respondents by Length of Stay in Kakuma Refugee Camp



*Source: (Field Data, 2025).*

Presenting the findings for the length of stay, 63 of the respondents said that they have been in the Kakuma Refugee Camp for over 6 years. 4 of the respondents reported that they had been living in the Kakuma Refugee Camp for 4-6 years, while the other 3 responded that they have been in the camp for 1-3 years. This indicates that the majority of the respondents who participated in the study are long-term refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The length of stay for the refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp, has important implications for discussions around Durable Solutions, and how its limited accessibility creates prolonged displacement for refugees.

**Figure 4.5.** Distribution of Respondents by Highest Level of Education Attained



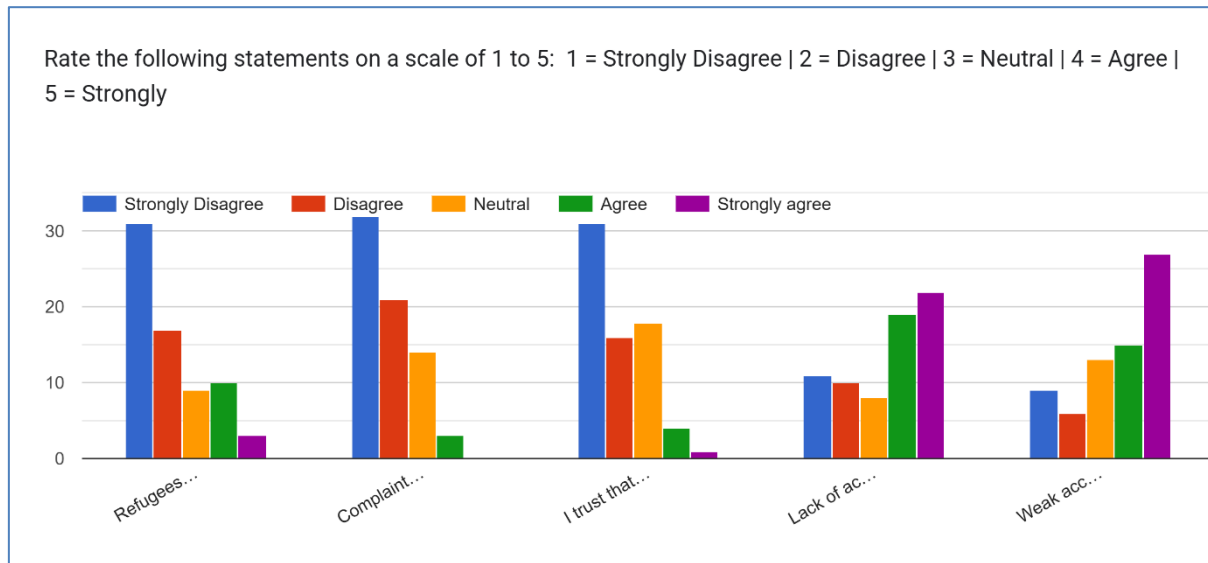
*Source: (Field Data, 2025).*

Findings regarding the highest level of education respondents have attained, the number of respondents who had higher and/or tertiary education were 44 respondents. Between the age of 44 and 25 had completed secondary education. This indicated that respondents had higher education and this has direct implications for how refugees perceive Durable Solutions and the transparency practices surrounding it.

## 4.2. Presentation of the Data Analysis

#### 4.2.1. Role of Accountability Mechanisms on Refugees' Access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp

**Figure 4.7.** Mean Scores of Refugees' Perceptions on Accountability Mechanisms on Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp



*Source: (Field Data, 2025)*

In the following section, the study participants were asked to answer the statements on a five-point Likert scale. On the scale, 1 is indicating *Strongly Disagree*, and 5 is indicating *Strongly Agree*. Findings showed different patterns of how the participants felt about trust as well as accountability around the access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

**Table 4.2.** Refugee Perceptions on Accountability Mechanisms effect on Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp

Statement	Total Responses	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Mode Score	Most Frequent Category	Frequency (Most Frequent Category)	Percentage (Most Frequent Category)
Refugees are adequately involved in decision-making processes	69	2.03	1.17	1	Strongly Disagree	29	42.03%
Complaint mechanisms are accessible and effective	71	1.87	0.94	1	Strongly Disagree	33	46.48%
I trust that feedback provided will lead to action	70	2.00	1.08	1	Strongly Disagree	32	45.71%
Lack of accountability limits access to Durable Solutions	70	3.51	1.39	5	Strongly Agree	23	32.86%
Weak accountability systems affect access to Durable Solutions	66	3.74	1.41	5	Strongly Agree	24	36.36%

*Source: (Field Data, 2025)*

The findings show that the statement “Refugees are adequately involved in decision process”, receiving lowest mean score of 2.03, standard deviation of 1.17. The most frequent “Strongly Disagree” was **at 42.03%**. **This is** suggesting that most respondents felt they did not participate in any key decisions making process affecting their lives in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Again, the respondents were asked another statement, “Compliant mechanisms are accessible and effective” for their responses. The lowest mean score received was at 1.87, standard deviation at SD = 0.94, while the “Strongly Disagree” dominated at **46.48% as a mode**. This explains that the findings show that existing complaint channels in Kakuma Refugee Camp are unknown and / or inaccessible. Findings show that the complaint channels are nonexistent, or worse, perceived as ineffective in resolving issues when refugees raised them.

Similarly, when another statement “I trust that feedback provided will lead to action” was asked for the respondents to rate it, it received a mean score at 2.00, standard deviation of 1.08. And with roughly 45.71% of respondents choosing “Strongly Disagree”, as the most repeated mode. It is obvious to see that the findings point to low confidence in the processes. These findings suggest that refugees believe their concerns are not acted upon when they bring them forward. This is a sign that refugees feel negative about the way in which services are provided to them. Such feelings can also lead to discouraging them to participate in feedback processes affecting their lives.

The statement “Lack of accountability limits access to Durable Solutions”, has received a much higher mean score of 3.51, standard deviation of 1.39. Again, respondents chose “Strongly Agree” roughly at **32.86%**, as the most frequent mode. The findings show that respondents feel or recognize that weak

accountability measures as barriers for them to access Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Much of the agreement was for the statement “Weak accountability systems affect access to Durable Solutions”, it attracted a high mean score of 3.74, standard deviation of 1.41. While the mode for “Strongly Agree” stood at **36.36%**. These findings are confirmation that there is perception of a lack of proper accountability mechanisms around access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp. These consequences can have a direct impact on refugees’ ability to access such pathways.

The findings overall indicate an agreement that accountability systems within the UNHCR systems are not effectively working. They are also believed to be weak and nonexistent to safeguard refugees’ access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The findings also show a clear and distinct pattern in perceptions of the respondents regarding UNHCR’s accountability mechanisms. This means that a trust deficit and widespread acknowledgments of the gaps in the UNHCR accountability frameworks

It appears that most study participants have information or were aware that clear accountability structures never existed within UNHCR systems in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The findings show frustration over unresponsive feedback mechanisms and the absence of transparent procedures for handling their complaints or inquiries. Study participants, in fact, many of them, noted that when grievances were raised, UNHCR does not follow up, and feedback is not provided when they raised complaints. When such deficits exist, lack of accountability can foster not only a sense of mistrust but also can create perceptions that the UNHCR is perpetuating corruption around access to Durable Solutions, creating direct consequences for refugees.

Experiences of corruption, including the solicitation of bribes in exchange for services or resettlement opportunities, were reported by substantial number of respondents. Participants also reported and described the emergences of fraudulent intermediaries who exploited the weak systems within the UNHCR Kakuma sub office. These quantitative findings are supported by qualitative findings.

- **Respondent 1:** *“The take money from refugees for essential services such as resettlement and documentations.”*
- **Respondent 2:** *“The those giving money get assistance.”*
- **Respondent 3:** *“This scenario has opened doors to scammers.”*

These accounts strongly align with and supplement the quantitative findings, which suggest low levels of trust in humanitarian agencies, especially the UNHCR. These findings point out that corruption is so much a significant structural barrier to equitable access to Durable Solutions for refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

#### 4.3. Inferential Analysis

This study used inferential analysis to examine how the study variables interacted with each other, and how accurately Transparency Practices and Durable Solutions can be predicted. Inferential analysis goes further than just description; it is also called inferential statistics in social science. As defined, it refers to the

branch of statistics that allows researchers of social sciences to draw conclusions, make predictions, or generalize findings about a target study population based on data collected from the sample (Field, 2013; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017).

Unlike inferential analysis, which allows generalization of findings from the sample to the wider study population, such as the general population of refugees in Kakuma Refugee camp, descriptive analysis summarizes the findings derived from the data. For this study, the inferential analysis was performed in two main steps.

Firstly, a correlation analysis was performed to examine the strength and direction of the relationships among the independent variables. The independent study variables included Access to Information, Accountability measures, Anti-corruption mechanisms, and UNHCR Policies/Frameworks, while the dependent variable was Durable Solutions (resettlement, repatriation, and local integration).

Secondly, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the combined and individual contributions of the independent study variables in predicting refugees' ability to access to Durable Solutions. In combination, the process of the inferential techniques provided a sound foundation. It allowed the room for testing the study variables and drawing conclusions about the effect of Transparency Practices on refugees' ability to access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

**Table 4.5.** Correlation Analysis Between Variables of Study

Variables	Access to Information	Accountability	Anti-Corruption	UNHCR Policies	Durable Solutions
Access to Information	1.000	0.542**	0.498**	0.563**	0.621**

Accountability Mechanisms	0.542**	1.000	0.563**	0.576**	0.589**
Anti-Corruption measures	0.498**	0.563**	1.000	0.532**	0.604**
UNHCR Policies	0.563**	0.576**	0.532**	1.000	0.612**
Durable Solutions	0.621**	0.589**	0.604**	0.612**	1.000

*Source: (Field Data, 2025).*

**Notes:**

- **N = 70 responses**
- **Correlation Coefficient (r):** Values range from -1 to +1. Positive values mean a direct relationship.
- **p < 0.01 () = statistically significant\*\***

The results in the table 4.5 show strong and positive, which is statistically significant correlation between the independent study variables, Access to information, Accountability, Anti-Corruption), UNHCR policies, and the dependent study variables of Durable Solutions. **Access to Information variable** is seen to be the strongest positive correlation with Durable Solutions ( $r = 0.621$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that when access to accurate and timely information are improved, refugees' chances for attaining Durable Solutions are increased significantly.

**Accountability variable** shows strong positive correlation with Durable Solutions ( $r = 0.589$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This is indicating that stronger accountability mechanisms enhance refugees to access to Durable Solutions.

**Anti-Corruption variable** shows positively correlated with Durable Solutions ( $r = 0.604$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), which means that reduced corruption can improve refugee's access to Durable Solutions.

**UNHCR Policies/Frameworks variable** ( $R = 0.612$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) is showing a strong positive correlation,

suggesting that effective frameworks and polices from UNHCR are also likely enhance refugee's chances of accessing Durable Solutions.

As shown, the independent study variables, are positively correlated among themselves. This indicates that there is interdependence between transparency practices and their factors related to them.

#### 4.3.1. Regression Analysis

In examining how transparency practices and institutional frameworks affect refugees' access to Durable Solutions, multiple regression analysis was required to be conducted. This technique was chosen because they allow for the concurrent assessment of the influences of several independent variables of the study. The variables of the study as mentioned earlier, include Access to information, accountability mechanisms, anti-Corruption measures, and UNHCR Policies. The importance of the regression analysis is that it does not only identify the strength and direction of relationship between predictors and outcomes. But it also quantifies the percentage of variance in Durable Solutions that can be explained by the independent study variables.

For these test processes, the regression analysis provided a statistical basis for assessing which factors contribute most significantly to enhancing access to Durable Solutions for Refugees who live in Kakuma Refugee Camp.



**Table 4.6.** Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
Regression	0.742	0.551	0.546	≈ 0.51	≈ 0.51

*Source: (Field Data, 2025).*

**Notes:**

**R (0.742)** represents the multiple correlation between the predictors (Access to Information, Accountability, Anti-corruption, UNHCR frameworks) and the dependent study variables (Durable Solutions). This indicates positive relationship between them.

**R Square (0.551)** suggests that about 55.1% of the variance in Durable Solutions is explained by the three predictors.

**Adjusted R Square (0.546)** is slightly lower, adjusting for the number of predictors. This indicates a strong model fit.

**Std. Error of the Estimate (≈ 0.51)** suggests that the model's predictions are reasonably precise, with only small deviations from the actual data.

**Durbin -Watson (≈ 0.51)** indicates that the model may have a specification problem, or that there is some systemic pattern in the errors that the independent variables are not fully capturing.

The model's summary indicates that transparency practices (Access to information, accountability, and anti-corruption, UNHCR Policies/Frameworks) explain over half of 60% of the variation in Durable Solutions for refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp. This reflects a

strong model, implying that improvement in transparency practices is likely to lead to significant enhancement of refugees' ability to access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

**Table 4.7.** Anova

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	45.812	3	15.271	65.432	.000b
Residual	37.268	N-4	0.233		
Total	83.080	N-1			

*Source: (Field data 2025).*

**Notes:**

**F (65.432), p < .001** shows the regression model is statistically significant, meaning that the independent study variables (Access to Information, Accountability, Anti-Corruption, UNHCR policies/frameworks) significant predict Durable Solutions.

**N = 70** respondents.

**Table 4.8.** Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	T	Sig.
Accountability Mechanisms	0.278	0.056	0.293	4.973	.000

*Source: (Field data 2025)*

**Notes:**

**Accountability** ( $\beta = 0.293$ ,  $p < .001$ ) shows significant predictor which means when there are stronger accountability mechanisms access to Durable Solutions also increase.

Summing up, the ANOVA test findings reveal the significance of the regression model is significant ( $F = 65.432$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The factors linked with transparency practices can jointly predict refugees' ability to access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The coefficients table, however, makes a conformation that all the four predictors are positive and are seen to have statistically significant effects. In the same line, access to Information is seen to emerge as the strongest contributor, followed by anti-corruption measures, accountability mechanisms, and finally, the UNHCR policies coming the last.

**4.4. Findings and Discussions**

The findings reveal strong reinforcing relationship between low trust in the systems of humanitarian agencies access to Durable Solutions. The findings confirm that weak accountability systems and limited access to information are likely to weaken the ability of refugees to access Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The study's respondents consistently disagreed with the opinion that clear reporting mechanisms, fair responses to complaints, as well as accessible and clear information channels existed in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The findings reveal that when there is weak accountability and poor access to information refugees are prevented from accessing Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

The findings of the study resonate with Slim (2002) who demands that accountability in humanitarian contexts should be expanded outside institutional performance. Slim's (2002) highlights that accountability in forced

displacement contexts depends on the perceived legitimacy of those systems in the eyes of affected populations. Evidence from this study's findings reveals perceptions of unresponsive feedback systems and the lack of follow-up on complaints. These challenges can erode refugees' trust in UNHCR and its partners providing humanitarian services in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The low trust and perception of unresponsiveness have consequences. They can potentially weaken the social contract between humanitarian agencies and refugees. This evidence is consistent with what Borton (2016) asserted. He noted that risks are perceived by refugees as symbolic rather than functional without demonstrable responsiveness and accountability.

As the findings showed, access to information emerged as both a standalone challenge and also a critical enabler of trust and accountability in humanitarian contexts like Kakuma Refugee Camp, for example. These findings are strongly supported by Omata (2017). He highlighted that timely and accurate information is essential for refugees. He emphasizes that timely and accurate information enables affected populations to make informed decisions about their futures.

When information is lacking, unclear, or inaccessible, refugees perceive the UNHCRs' systems as being exclusionary. These problems are likely to reinforce refugees' mistrust in such humanitarian systems. In fact, Bakeweel (2009) indicated that humanitarian agencies often control information as a form of gatekeeping. He argues that humanitarian actors deliberately control critical information regarding the future of those they serve, like refugees, for example. They do so, intentionally or inadvertently. And this is the exact dynamic that seems to have been reproduced in Kakuma Refugee Camp. Breaking this protracted cycle of filthy

practices within humanitarian agencies in refugee contexts requires effective, comprehensive and integrated interventions. These integrated interventions should not only focus on preventing corruption in humanitarian service delivery but should also enable refugees to rebuild their lives away from being warehoused in refugee camps.

One on hand, this can be done by strengthening accountability through transparent practices. And when these mechanisms are implemented, it will help restore refugees' trust in the humanitarian agencies operating in Kakuma Refugee Camp. On the other hand, there is a need to establish verifiable complaint handling and proactive information dissemination in languages refugees understand as well as building participatory platforms where refugees can voice their concerns. Implementing this mechanism could further help restore confidence in organizations serving refugees. Measures like these would not only address immediate operational weakness. They will also contribute to improving long term refugees' access to Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp and beyond.

## **5. Summary of KeyFindings**

The findings of the study further correlate with the trend that is alarming. It suggests that weak and poor accountability mechanisms are likely to exacerbate the access barriers. Despite UNHCR establishing formal structures for refugees to file inquiries and complaints, in practice, these services are inaccessible. Many refugees from Kakuma Refugee Camp reported that these mechanisms in most cases are ineffective. The evidence, for example, highlighted that refugees face challenges such as lack of awareness of correct contact points, delayed responses, as well as unclear communication from UNHCR regarding their cases progress.

Those systems were introduced to enhance accountability around Durable Solutions but are perceived by refugees to be more as bottlenecks. Because they hinder their access to these critical pathways. As the findings suggest, there is a paradox between these tools of accountability and trust institutional policies. Institutional policies are supposed to improve refugees' access to Durable Solutions. But these accountability mechanisms discourage refugees from initiating complaints seeking clarifications. This is further limiting their ability to access Durable Solutions in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

### **5.1. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The transparency practices including accountability mechanisms, anti-corruption measures, access to information, as well as institutional frameworks are fundamentally important in refugee contexts. They tend to influence refugees' access to Durable Solutions in refugee camps. Based on each objective of the study, the findings are summarized and reiterated in this section in the following paragraphs.

Despite UNHCR acknowledged by refugees for its role in maintaining formal structures for accountability and feedback, they still perceived these mechanisms to be weak and ineffective. The weak implementation of these accountability systems in humanitarian responses contributes to refugees' sense that complaints go unheard, when they raise them, decisions remain corrupt, and thereby limiting trust in institutional processes intended to support their access to Durable Solutions.

Finally, the study concludes that there is a need for strong and better reforms to have more accountability in humanitarian contexts. Without serious reforms to improve levels of transparency, strengthen accountability mechanisms, reinforce anti-corruption measures, as well as improving institutional

coordination, without doubt, Durable Solutions, in general, would always be hard for refugees to access in Kakuma Refugee Camp. These systemic problems should be addressed so that it becomes easy for refugees to access Durable Solutions. Addressing these structural barriers will ultimately give refugees a chance to rebuild their lives with dignity, safety, and away from being encamped or being warehoused for the rest of their lives. The study recommends the following for UNHCR and its partners to implement.

#### **5.1.1 Expand Fair and Equitable Access to Durable Solutions for Refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp**

Evidence from this study found that limited availability of Durable Solutions stimulates fraudsters to create opportunities for corruption and exploitation of refugees. Limited availability of Durable Solutions encourages some aid workers and informal brokers to exploit refugees, soliciting money in exchange for resettlement or other live saving opportunities. From the findings, the researcher recommends increasing transparent and equitable access to all Durable Solutions options could ensure leverage points exploited through bribery are eliminated. Evidence shows that improved and unrestricted access to Durable Solutions are likely to reduce manipulation and corruption with all its forms. It also ensures that resettlement, local integration, or voluntary repatriation are determined by formal criteria rather than who you know, and/or illicit networks.

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