

SCOPING STUDY

Examining the combined effects of a two-generation model involving childcare and financial support interventions to vulnerable businesswomen in urban refugee and host communities in Kampala.

BY

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DEC 2024

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Acronyms

APHRC	African Population and Health Research Centre
APRI	Ace Policy Research Institute
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
ILO	International Labor Organization
INGOs	International Non-Government Organizations
IRC	International Rescue Committee
KII	Key Informant Interviews
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
RLO	Refugee Led Organizations
SACCOs	Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
YARID	Young African Refugee for Integrated Development

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the dedicated team that provided technical assistance in the development of this report, including the team at APRI along with enumerators from the urban refugee communities in Uganda who diligently collected primary data, and the field supervisors who ensured the integrity of the research process.

To the respondents who participated in this study, we deeply appreciate your willingness to share insightful information, without which this report could not have been completed.

We are thankful to the Makerere University School of Social Sciences Research Ethical Committee and National Council for Science and Technology for reviewing and approving the research protocol, and to the Office of the Prime Minister for granting us permission to conduct research within the refugee communities.

We are grateful to the Hilton Foundation for supporting our childcare work in urban refugee communities, without whose support, this work would not be possible.

Finally, while the institutions and individuals significantly contributed to this study, the views expressed in this report are solely those of the authors.

Executive Summary

APRI is undertaking interventional research applying a two-generational approach to examine the combined effects of childcare and a business booster incentive in urban refugee and host communities for vulnerable businesswomen in Kampala. The focus of the intervention research is to alleviate the childcare burden on caregivers by providing childcare corners for children which we hypothesize will ultimately result in better outcomes for both the children and their caregivers.

The purpose of this scoping study was to profile urban refugee businesswomen and their households. The findings of this study will be used to inform development of two project interventions:

- a) A quasi-experimental design study to examine the effects of child and caregiver targeted interventions on child development outcomes, women productivity, business profitability and growth, as well as household welfare.
- b) A pilot study that initiates refugee and host community women into childcare as a business building on APRI's experience of running childcare corners in markets.

The objectives of the study are to understand the socio-economic status of urban refugees and their sources of livelihoods in Uganda; to document the extent of childcare burden, and social networks among urban refugee households in Uganda; and to understand the extent of participation of women in businesses, as well as key impediments to business growth.

The study reached a total of 1,528 households, comprising 7,616 individuals, of which 41.7% were male and 58.3% were female. Most of these households were headed by females (74.5%), reflecting a significant trend in household headship within the urban refugee context. On average, each refugee household consists of approximately 7.5 members, although a minority of households reported larger sizes, ranging from 16 to 37 members.

Findings revealed that the socio-economic status of urban refugees is concerning, particularly regarding educational attainment. A significant proportion of this population did not complete foundational educational stages, specifically primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels. Notably, most of this demographic has not progressed beyond primary education. Over 89.5% of urban refugees are actively participating in income-generating activities, predominantly through business endeavors.

Nearly half of the urban refugee households (49%) have children under the age of three, with mothers predominantly shouldering the responsibility of childcare. This demographic faces significant barriers in accessing childcare services, such as daycare centres, professional caregivers, or nannies. Despite a strong willingness and expressed need for childcare services near their residences, urban refugees demonstrate a limited financial capacity, indicating a readiness to invest no more than 300,000 Ugandan Shillings per term for such services.

We conclude that the socio-economic status of the urban refugee women and the key impediments to business growth underscore the pressing need for targeted interventions anchored into existing business opportunities to ensure overall improvement in the living conditions for the urban refugees. The extent of the childcare burden accentuates the urgent need for affordable, accessible childcare solutions tailored to this vulnerable population.

1.0. Introduction

This report presents the findings of a comprehensive scoping study focused on profiling urban refugee households in Kampala, Uganda. The study was undertaken by the Ace Policy Research Institute (APRI), with support from the Hilton Foundation as part of a research initiative entitled “Examining the Combined Effects of a Two-Generation Model Involving Childcare and Financial Support Interventions for Vulnerable Businesswomen in Urban Refugee and Host Communities in Kampala.”

This report is organized into sections covering the background, methodological framework, findings of the study, conclusions, and strategic recommendations.

1.1. Background

The disproportionate burden of unpaid care on women partly explains the slow progress towards women economic empowerment (UN Women, 2018). In recent years, research has shown that globally, the burden of unpaid care work falls disproportionately on women deterring their participation in the labour force and engagement in productive businesses. The burden of childcare and care for the elderly account significantly for this disproportionate distribution. Research from the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 2018 showed that at the global level, 76% of the total unpaid care work is carried out by women, working three times longer than men.

In 2014, Oxfam reported that women from low-income households who engaged in paid work experienced an increase in their overall workload, with no reduction in unpaid care responsibilities. Recent studies have documented how provision of childcare services improves female labor force participation (see for example Delecourt & Fitzpatrick, 2021; Martinnex and Peticara, 2017; Clark et al., 2019; and Nandi et al., 2020; among others). In a randomized control trial in an informal settlement in Nairobi’s Korogocho, women who were offered vouchers for subsidized childcare were on average 8.5 percentage points more likely to be employed than those without subsidized childcare (OXFAM, 2020; Nyariro et al., 2017). A recent study by Delecourt and Fitzpatrick (2021) in Uganda found that 37% of female business owners bring small children to work compared with 0% of male business owners. The study further established that businesses where children were present earned 48% lower profits than even other female owned businesses where a child was not present.

A study conducted by the African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC) and McGill University in 2017 found that women who enrolled their children in subsidized daycare services experienced increased income without changes in their working hours. Similarly, extending access to quality childcare has been shown to enhance women's labor force participation, improve health and education outcomes for children, and create decent employment opportunities in the paid care sector, which can stimulate economic growth (UN Women, 2015; ITUC, 2016).

The government of Uganda is awakening to the discussions about the burden of unpaid care work generally, and childcare specifically, and the importance of providing frameworks that support holistic early childhood development and female labor force productivity. The Uganda Constitution of 1995, the National Child Policy, 2020, the National Integrated Early Childhood Policy, 2016, The Employment (Breastfeeding and Childcare Facilities) Regulations of 2019, The Markets Act, 2024, The Children’s Act Cap 59 (as amended in 2016), and the Employment (Amendment) Bill of 2022, among others demonstrate Government commitment to addressing the burden of childcare.

The rate of underemployment remains disproportionately high among refugee women compared to other populations. Urban refugees have experienced job losses as businesses have been forced to downsize or close due to COVID-19 restrictions (UNHCR, 2020¹).

With funding from Hilton Foundation, APRI is undertaking interventional research applying a two-generational approach to examine the combined effects of childcare and a business booster incentive in urban refugee and host communities for vulnerable businesswomen in Kampala. The focus of the intervention is to alleviate the childcare burden on caregivers by providing childcare corners for children which we hypothesize will ultimately result in better outcomes for both the children and their caregivers.

APRI conducted a scoping study whose main aim was to profile urban refugee households. The purpose of the scoping study was to understand the socio-economic status of refugees in relation to host communities, the existence and depth of social networks and their implications on childcare burden, livelihood sources, extent of participation of women in businesses, as well as key impediments to business growth. The findings of this study will be used to inform development of two project interventions;

- a) A randomized control design study to examine the effects of child and caregiver targeted interventions on child development outcomes, women productivity, business profitability and growth, as well as household welfare.
- b) A pilot study that initiates refugee and host community women into childcare as a business building on APRI's experience of running childcare corners in markets.

1.2. Study Objectives

2. To understand the socio-economic status of urban refugees and their sources of livelihoods in Uganda.
3. To document the extent of childcare burden, and social networks among urban refugee households in Uganda.
4. To understand the extent of participation of women in businesses, as well as key impediments to business growth.

2.0. Methodology

The study employed mixed methods, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A structured quantitative questionnaire was applied at household level with focused intent to profile women in business and household members. In addition, key informant interviews and focus group discussions were held.

2.1. Geographical scope of the study and respondents

Geographically, the study covered all divisions of Kampala city where refugees reside, including Central, Kawempe, Lubaga, Makindye, and Nakawa. A proportional sampling methodology was employed to ascertain the number of participants from various country of origin communities, in alignment with national refugee statistics provided by UNHCR and the government of Uganda².

¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing-notes/urban-refugees-struggling-survive-economic-impact-covid-19-worsens-east-horn>

² Office of the Prime Minister, UNHCR, Government

Furthermore, the allocation of respondents was strategically determined based on the concentration of urban refugees across the different divisions as shown in Table 1. Makindye division hosts the highest number of refugees followed by Lubaga.

Country of Origin	Division					Total	Percent	National proportions ³
	Central	Kawempe	Lubaga	Makindye	Nakawa			
Congo	3	2	12	305	1	323	21%	31.2%
South Sudan	12	50	28	192	20	302	20%	54.6%
Eritrea	2	0	21	160	0	183	12%	3.2%
Somalia	156	0	22	6	0	184	12%	2.9%
Burundi	5	12	59	49	21	146	10%	2.4%
Sudan	54	46	10	51	17	178	12%	3.4%
Ethiopia	0	0	19	112	0	131	9%	0.8%
Rwanda	0	2	61	14	4	81	5%	1.4%
Total	232	112	232	889	63	1528		
Percent	15.2%	7.3%	15.2%	58.2%	4.1%			

Table 1: Number of respondents by country of origin

2.2. Sampling, Data collection and Analysis

APRI obtained data for refugees from UNHCR⁴, (2024) and conducted a proportional sampling of the total study participants across various communities and residential areas⁵. Enumerators were then selected based on established minimum criteria, including prior experience in data collection and proficiency in local refugee dialects, ensuring representation from the diverse urban refugee populations.

In the quantitative data collection phase, two distinct methodologies were implemented to engage with respondents. The first approach utilized systematic sampling, wherein every n-th individual was selected for participation. However, due to the dispersed nature of certain communities, a snowball sampling technique was adopted, allowing for referrals from previously surveyed individuals. In this instance, the enumerator solicited three referrals from a respondent and subsequently conducted an interview with one randomly chosen individual. Overall, the study successfully engaged a total of 1,529 respondents from various urban refugee communities.

Additionally, a series of eight focus group discussions (FGDs) were convened specifically for women, with one FGD conducted in each of the communities involved. The insights garnered from these discussions were utilized for triangulation purposes within this report. Furthermore, key informant interviews (KIIs) were carried out with selected refugee-led organizations (RLOs) such as YARID and One Youth One Heart, as well as international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) including International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), along with representatives from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and UNHCR. The selection of KII

³ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/uga>

⁴ [Country - Uganda \(unhcr.org\)](#)

⁵ Congolese, South Sudan, Sudanese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Burundian, and Rwandese.

participants was strategically based on the organizations' contributions to the urban refugee context, particularly concerning women's economic empowerment and childcare initiatives. A summary of the respondents from the scoping study is provided in the Table below.

Data collection tool	Data type	Number of Respondents
Structured Questionnaire	Quantitative	1528
FGD	Qualitative	8 groups
KII	Qualitative	8 institutions

Table 2: Study sample size

2.3. Data processing and analysis

Qualitative data was meticulously captured utilizing digital recording devices, with subsequent transcriptions subjected to rigorous content and thematic analysis through Atlas.ti software. For the survey instruments, data collection was collected via the Kobo Toolbox application on tablet devices, thereby minimizing potential errors in both data collection and entry processes. This data was exported to Excel and subsequently analyzed using SPSS software. The quantitative data underwent comprehensive analysis employing descriptive statistics, including percentages and means, in alignment with the established research objectives. The research outcomes are articulated both narratively and statistically, incorporating tables and graphs, and are cross validated against all data sources to enhance clarity and comprehension. The report is systematically structured around the core research objectives, facilitating ease of reading and effective dissemination.

3.0. Limitations of the scoping study

Uganda has a big population of refugees hosted in several districts across the country, and this study only draws from a small population residing in Kampala. This is one major limitation of this study. Therefore, the findings of the profiling of these urban refugee households may not be generalizable across the whole refugee community in Uganda.

4.0. Findings

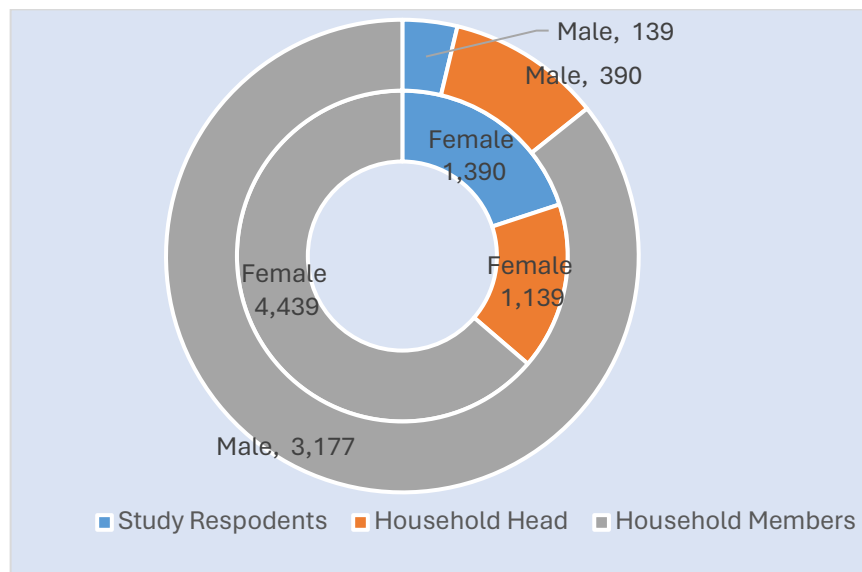
This section presents the findings and discourse surrounding the socio-economic conditions of refugees, examining the sources of livelihoods, the presence and dynamics of social networks, the burden of childcare responsibilities, and the degree of women's engagement in entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, it highlights the principal barriers to business development encountered within this context

4.1. Demographic characteristics of urban refugee households.

This section explains the household social demographic characteristics/social-economic status of Urban refugee households in Kampala City.

4.1.1. Gender and Urban household headship

This study covered a total of 1,529 households, comprising 7,616 individuals, of which 41.7% were male and 58.3% were female. Notably, 74.5% of these households were headed by females, while 25.5% were led by males, as illustrated in the Table 3. This data suggests that women predominantly fulfill the role of primary providers for themselves and their dependents within refugee households. Although the head of the household is expected to ensure economic sustainability, the disparities in access to and control over resources are not gender-neutral, thereby exacerbating the vulnerability of female refugees. This context underscores the heightened risk faced by urban refugee women. Regarding their duration of residence in Uganda, the results reveal that a significant majority (94.4%) of respondents have resided in the country for over a year, as detailed in table 4.



Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 3: Gender of the respondent

Length of stay in Uganda	Frequency	Percent
1-6 Months	41	2.7
7-11 months	45	2.9
1-2 years	352	23.0
3-5 years	217	14.2
Over 5 years	873	57.1
	1528	100

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 4: Length of stay in Uganda

4.1.2. Marital Status of the Household

The analysis reveals that, among the respondents, 53.8% are currently married, 19.7% are divorced or separated, 17.1% have never been married, 7.8% are widowed, and 1.5% are cohabiting. Further examination reveals that a significant proportion of the married households, specifically 87.5%, are led by females while 97.7% of those identifying as divorced or separated are also female, as illustrated in the table 5.

Country of origin	Married =823		Divorced/ Separated=301		Never married =262	Widow/ widower =119	Cohabiting =24
	Female headed	Male headed	Female	Male			
South Sudan	157	11	58	2	38	33	3
Somalia	70	6	70	0	20	19	0
Congo	40	76	102	2	52	42	9
Rwanda	7	20	9	0	36	8	1
Burundi	33	81	9	0	11	4	8
Eritrea	55	64	30	2	24	5	3
Ethiopia	9	27	14	1	74	6	0
Sudan	134	33	2	0	7	2	0
Total	720	103	294	7	262	119	24

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 5: Marital status of respondents

4.1.3. Housing status in urban refugee households

The data presented in figure 6 indicates that a significant majority of urban refugee households, comprising 96.3%, occupy rented accommodations consisting of at least one room. This phenomenon can be attributed to the distinct challenges encountered by refugees regarding housing, land ownership, and property rights, compounded by their transient status and the provisional nature of their stay in the host country prior to potential resettlement in their countries of origin. Furthermore, the accessibility of Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) rights is fundamentally vital for the sustenance of displaced women and their families, thereby exacerbating the vulnerabilities faced by women refugees.

House of residence status	Frequency	Percent
Permanent house tenant-renting	1472	96.3
Temporary shelter	33	2.2
No house stays at a relatives' place	12	0.8
Permanent house owned	10	0.7
Total	1528	100.0

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 6: Residential house status

4.1.4. Age of the household members and composition of the Urban households

A significant majority totaling 1,514 urban refugee households, which accounts for 99% of the sample population in this study, consists of less than 15 members, with an average household size of 7.5 individuals. Conversely, the remaining 15 households, representing a mere 1% of the respondents, comprise more than 14 members, with the largest household consisting of 37 individuals. Among these larger households, 12 are identified as originating from South Sudan, 2 from Sudan, and 1 from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The majority of the refugee households are children under 18 years of age, totaling 52% of the entire sample. Of these 12% are five years or below. The youth group 18-34 are the second largest group at 31.2% of the total population. This data is consistent with UNHCR statistics as at July 2024 which shows that across the whole refugee population in Uganda, 54.6%⁶ are children under 18 years of age and the youth are 30.3% of the population respectively. Those in the age category 35-65 are only 15.9%, while those above 65 years constitute less than one percent.

The key finding from this analysis that the dependency ration in refugee households is high given the high proportion of children.

Age (years)	Frequency	Percent
0-3	744	9.8
4-5	169	2.2
6-12	512	6.7
13-17	2,534	33.3
18-24	1,224	16.1
25-34	1,152	15.1
35-49	961	12.6
50-65	255	3.3
Above 65	66	.9
	7,617	100.0

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 7: Age for household members

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percent
18-24	117	7.7
25-34	609	39.8
35-49	670	43.8
50-65	118	7.7
Above 65	14	0.9
	1528	100

Table 8: Age of respondent

⁶ Document - Uganda - Refugee Statistics June 2024 - Active Population by Settlement

4.1.5. Education levels among the Urban Refugee- Households

The educational attainment within urban refugee households is low. As illustrated in table 10 below, a significant proportion of urban refugees have not achieved basic educational milestones, with 11.1% lacking any formal education and 51.0% of those aged above 24 years never advanced beyond secondary education, which constitutes the majority. Only 22.2% have completed a degree. Given that education is a critical determinant of human capital and a fundamental driver of economic growth, this situation places urban refugee families, particularly women, in precarious circumstances. As highlighted in table 9, an analysis of the respondents reveals that 170 individuals lack any educational qualifications, all of whom are female. Among these, 105 are from the Somali community, while 35 originate from South Sudan, as detailed in table 11.

Education level	Female	Male
None	170	0
Pre - primary	6	0
Primary /Grade 1-8	237	8
O-level/Secondary	398	38
A-level	117	10
Certificate	102	9
Diploma	123	31
Degree	236	43

Table 7: Education level of respondent

Education level for HH members	Age 6-24 years		Age 25 and above	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
None	256	6.8%	270	11.1%
Pre-primary	282	7.5%	9	0.4%
Primary/grade 1-8	1799	47.9%	315	12.9%
O-level/Secondary	967	25.7%	647	26.6%
A-level	158	4.2%	187	7.7%
Certificate	79	2.1%	201	8.3%
Diploma	55	1.5%	265	10.9%
Degree	160	4.3%	541	22.2%

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 8: Level of education for household members

Educational level	South Sudan	Somalia	Congo	Rwanda	Burundi	Eritrea	Ethiopia	Sudan	Total
None	35	105	16	4	6	3	0	1	170
Pre - primary	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	6
Primary /Grade 1-8	69	29	51	28	11	44	9	4	245
O-level/Secondary	79	25	121	17	46	71	39	38	436
A-level	8	2	40	23	2	28	15	9	127
Certificate	4	2	21	1	3	21	3	56	111
Diploma	44	2	36	0	40	9	20	3	154
Degree	61	18	36	8	38	7	45	66	279
Total	302	184	323	81	146	183	131	178	1528

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 9: Country of origin and level of education of respondents

4.1.6. Participation in income generating activities in Urban Households

Gender of respondent	Income Generating Activity		Total
	No	Yes	
Female	140	1,250	1,390
Male	20	119	139
Total	160	1,369	1,529

Table 10: Respondents income generating activities

As indicated in Table 12, the study ascertained the prevalence of income-generating activities among respondents. The results revealed that a substantial majority, 89.5% are actively engaged in such activities. Notably, among these participants, 91.3% are women, while 8.7% are men. The predominant form of income generation identified is through business ventures, with 87.8% of respondents either owning or participating in business operations.

At the household level, the findings reveal that 1,911 adults, representing 52.2%, are actively participating in income-generating activities, with a noteworthy 1,482 (81.1%) of these individuals engaged in entrepreneurial ventures. The data indicates that a substantial majority, 1,333 (89.0%), of these businesses are solely owned and operated by the proprietors themselves.

Gender of HH member	Income Generating Activity		Total
	No	Yes	
Female	995	1,461	2,456
Male	751	450	1,201
Total	1,746	1,911	3,657

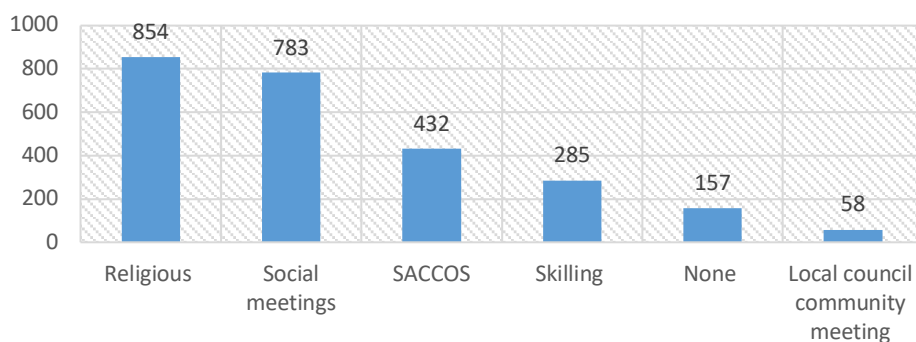
Table 11: Income generating activities for Household members

It was observed that a limited number of individuals are employed in formal positions, engaged in casual labor, or receiving remittances. The spectrum of enterprises established by refugee households encompasses a variety of informal businesses, including bakeries, production of perfumes and soaps, food sales, and hawking, among others. However, these ventures typically lack formal registration and legal protections, rendering them vulnerable to various risks.

4.1.7. Social Integration and Communication among Urban Refugee Households

The study reveals that a significant 89.7% of the refugee respondents are affiliated with at least one community group. The activities in which they engage predominantly encompass religious gatherings, social meet-ups, Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs), and skills development sessions, with minimal participation in local council community meetings. This finding suggests that while a substantial portion of the refugee population is part of various community networks, their level of active engagement remains low. Such limited participation undermines the potential benefits of social integration, which could alleviate tensions and foster harmony within host communities, consequently exacerbating their vulnerability. Additionally, when queried about their preferred communication methods, a majority of respondents indicated a preference for phone calls, with other favored options including WhatsApp and text messaging.

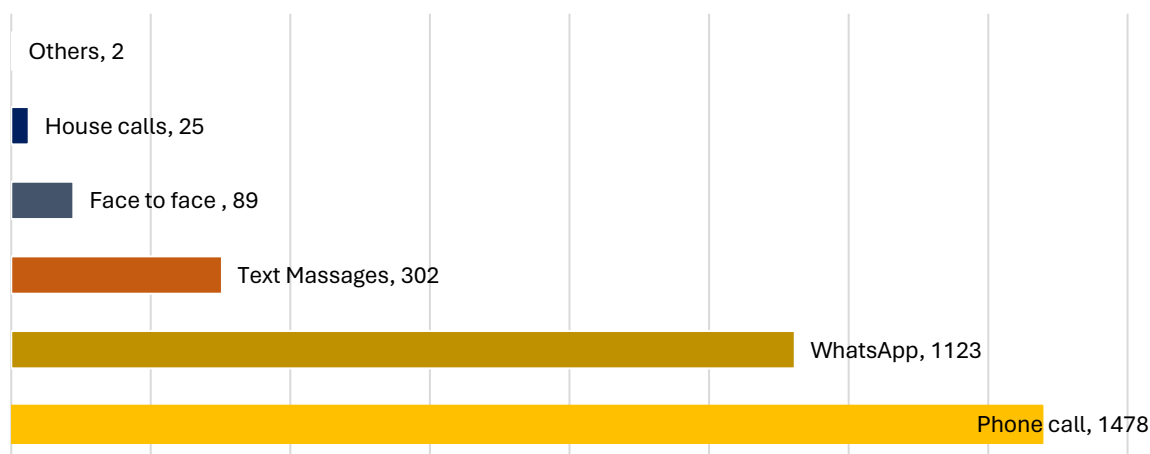
Community activities that respondents participate in



Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Figure 1: Community activities that respondents participate in. N=1528

Preferred channels of communication



Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Figure 2: Preferred channels of communication: N=1528

4.1.8. Food security in Urban Refugee Households

As an indicator of socioeconomic status, we inquired about the frequency of daily meals among respondents. The results indicate that 74% of urban refugee households consume two meals per day, inclusive of breakfast, while 15% report having only one meal daily, and a mere 11% manage to have three meals. Among those who consume fewer than three meals a day, we explored the underlying reasons, revealing that 64.9% attribute this to financial constraints, whereas 23.5% consider it a standard practice.

Number of daily meals including breakfast are taken per day in your household

Number of meals	Frequency	Percent
One	225	14.7
Two	1131	74.0
Three	170	11.1
More than three	2	.1
Total	1528	100

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 12: Number of daily meals including breakfast are taken per day in your household

4.2. Children Information, Social networks and Implications on Childcare Burden

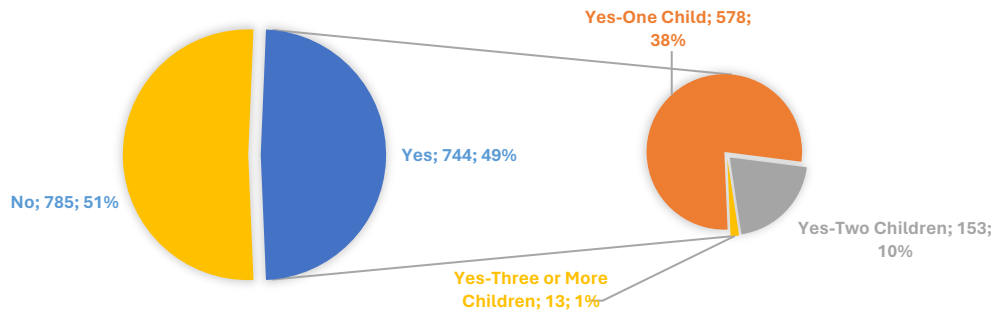
The scoping study aimed to quantify the extent of the childcare burden on primary caregivers, while also identifying the social support networks available to urban refugee women. This section describes the findings pertinent to children residing in urban refugee households, focusing on access to childcare services for those under the age of three, the amount of time allocated by family members to childcare responsibilities, and the willingness of families to enroll children below three years of age in designated care corners, among other factors

4.2.1. Children 0-3 years in urban refugee households

This sub-section concentrates on the demographic of children aged 0-3 years, as they have not yet reached the age for kindergarten, and thus predominantly spend their time with primary caregivers. Insights from the data as shown in Figure 1 reveal that 49% of the Households within the urban refugee communities have children under the age of three. Among these households, 38% report having one child within this age group, 10% have two children, and 1.7% households have three or more children under three years old. The presence of three or more children in certain households can be attributed to the prevalence of extended family living arrangements, particularly within Somali, South Sudanese, and Congolese communities.

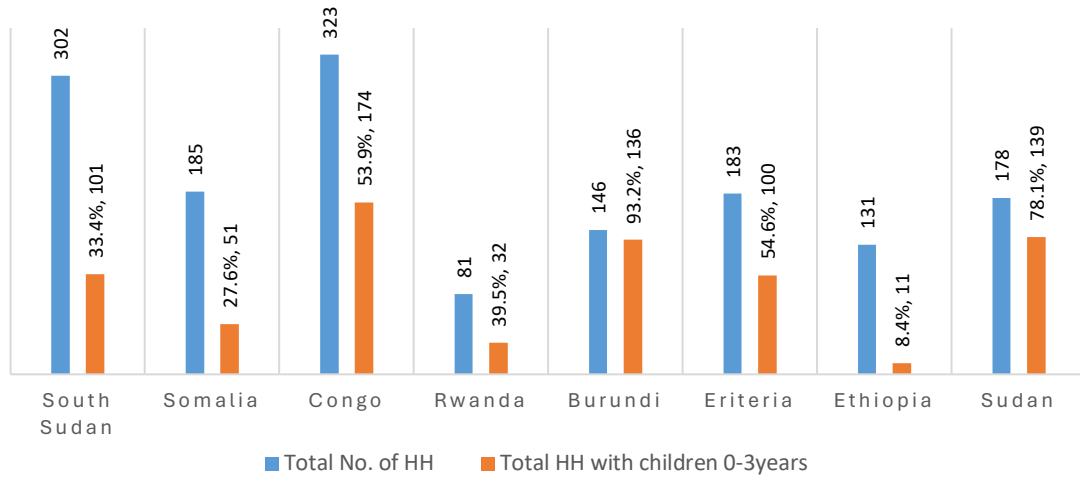
The Burundian community exhibits the highest proportion of families (93.2%) with children aged 0-3 years, followed by 78.1% of Sudanese families, 54.6% of Eritrean households, and 53.9% of Congolese households with children in this age category, as shown in Figure 2. Conversely, the findings indicate that Ethiopian families have the lowest numbers with only 8.4% of households having children aged 0-3 years, while the Somali community similarly reports a modest 27.6% of families with children in this age range.

CHILDREN 0-3 YEARS



Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Figure 3: Households with children below 3 years and number of children aged 0-3years



Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Figure 4: Households with children 0-3years and country of origin

4.2.2. Family members and time devoted to childcare

To ascertain which household member bears the greatest burden of childcare responsibilities, respondents from families with children were requested to rank family members based on the time they dedicate to caring for the child or children. The results revealed that 84% of the respondents identified the mother as the individual committing the most time to the care of children aged below three years. In contrast, only 10.5% of the respondents designated the father as the primary caregiver. The father was predominantly ranked second in caregiving, with 28.6% placing him in this position, while

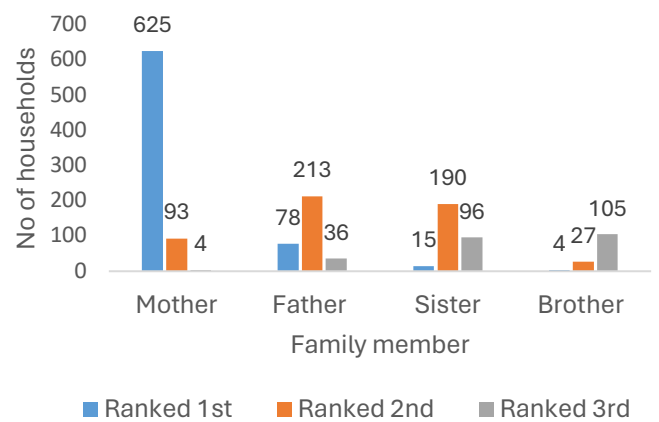


Figure 5: Rank for different family members and time devoted to childcare. N=744

4.2.3. Children 0-3 years and access to childcare service.

Access to childcare

Respondents from families with children aged 0 to 3 years were asked about access to childcare services such as whether their children attend daycare or are left with a caregiver, at home or outside the home while the mother engages in work activities. Up to 86% of households do not have access to daycare services. Only 14% have access to daycare centers. Of those that don't have access, the majority, comprising 75% of the households do not employ a nanny and do not enroll take their children in any external childcare taker. In other words, 75% of refugee households have no access at all to any childcare services. Of those without access to daycare still, only 9% employ nannies at home and only 2% have access to childcare services through external caregiving arrangements outside the home when the mother is at work, as illustrated in figure 4.

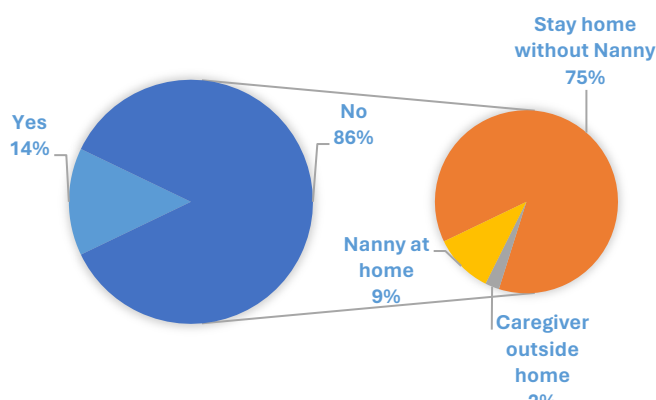


Figure 6: Access to daycare centre services

Additionally, it was observed that the compensation for some nannies varies; while some receive monetary remuneration, others are compensated through non-cash benefits such as housing and meals. Notably, among the households that provide cash remuneration to their nannies, a substantial 91.8% of these payments are made by women, with only 8.2% being disbursed by men.

As reported in refugees' communities studied such as Burundi, Congolese, South and Northern Sudanese there were no day care centre in proximity. In a few communities where there are day care centers, our respondents reported not taking their children to those child day care centres owing to barriers such as cost, lack of trust by the parents to give adequate care to their children, language barriers which affect the child language development proficiency combined with failure to understand the kids and parents. Consequently, many working refugee women leave their children with neighbors, nannies, relatives at home and individuals in the community. As some respondents had this to illustrate.



"...we don't have any day care centre. You must leave the child with neighbours, grand parent or those who can afford, leave children with someone and pay some small money for them to take care of the child."

FGD, Congolese community

“

“It’s expensive. And even when we find work, the pay doesn’t cover everything, including day care.”

FGD, Ethiopian Community

“

“Some of the factors that may deter us from using the childcare centres are financial factors, not trusting other community to take care of your small kid and our husbands sometimes want us to be with the children all the time.”

FGD Burundi Community

In addition, study findings revealed that at a community level the percentage of parents who take their children to day care centres are very low as estimated by the respondents and, in some communities none at all as some women had this to say:

“

“...daycare usage is relatively low, as childcare is often managed within the family or community network.”

FGD, Somali Community

“

“...Maybe 5%? Most of us ask friends or family to help.”

FGD, Ethiopian Community

“

“Zero percentage of parents because we don’t have this service here yet.”

FGD, Sudanese Community

For those with access to a childcare center, a significant proportion of families, specifically 74.5% and 81.6%, utilize walking as their primary mode of transportation to escort their child or children to the daycare center and caregiver, respectively. Additionally, a smaller segment of households, comprising 15.1%, opt for boda boda services to facilitate their children's transport to the daycare facility. The duration of time allocated for walking to both the daycare center and caregiver is reported to range between 1 to 15 minutes

4.2.4. Proximity with a daycare centre.

In response to inquiries regarding the availability of daycare facilities in the vicinity, 52.2% of the individuals confirmed the presence of such centers, while 47.8% indicated their absence. Among the respondents utilizing daycare services, 73.6% reported having access to facilities near their residences. Furthermore, the data reveals that 77.8% of households lacking nearby childcare centers expressed a desire for the establishment of such facilities within their community.

Presence of a nearby day care			
Day care attendance	No	Yes	Total
No	328	310	638
Yes	28	78	106
Total	356	388	

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 17: Presence of childcare centre near place of residence

Need for daycare centre in the community	Frequency
No	79 (22.2%)
Yes	277 (77.8%)

Table 18: Desire for daycare centre in the community

4.2.5. Fees for childcare services

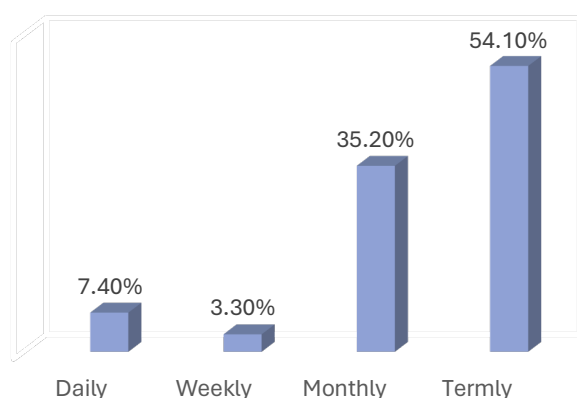
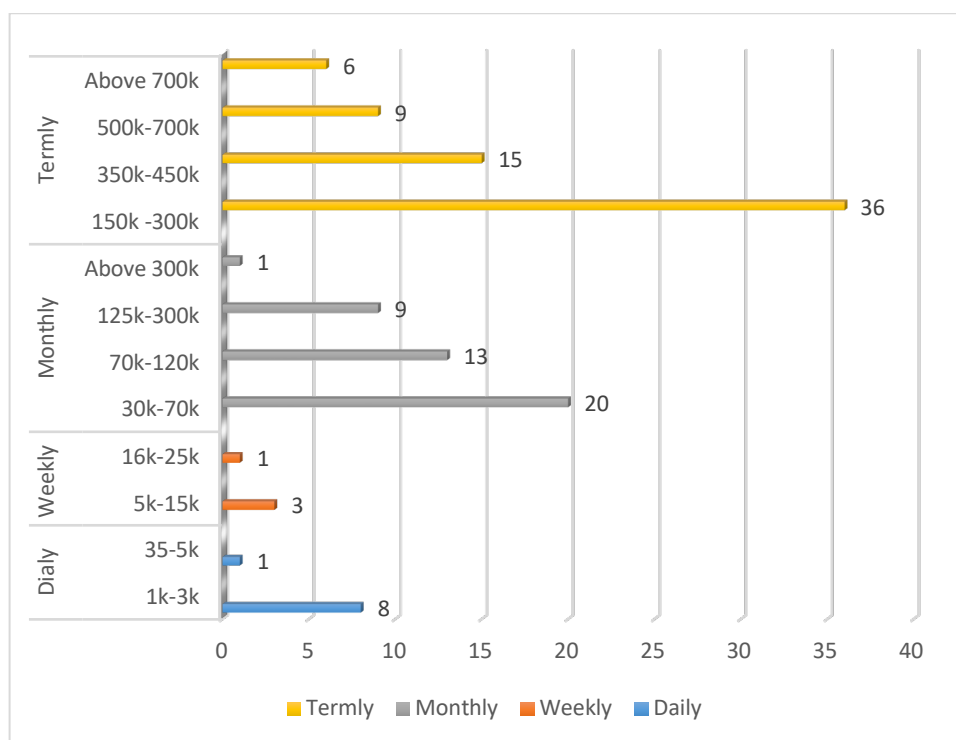


Figure 7: Frequency for paying childcare fees

The research also aimed to ascertain the payment structures associated with childcare services at daycare centers. Upon inquiry regarding the frequency of payment, a significant proportion of respondents indicated that they remit fees on a termly basis (54.1%) or monthly (35.2%). A smaller fraction reported daily (7.4%) and weekly (3.3%) payment schedules. Among those opting for termly payments, the majority (55%) indicated expenditures ranging from Ugx 150,000 to Ugx 300,000, while 23% noted payments between Ugx 350,000 and Ugx

450,000. In the monthly payment category, 46.5% of participants reported fees between Ugx 30,000 and Ugx 70,000, while 30.3% paid between Ugx 70,000 and Ugx 120,000. Furthermore, it was revealed that mothers bear the childcare fees responsibility for 56.6% of childcare costs, contrasted with 36.1% covered by fathers. Relatives contribute to the costs for 6.6% of the children surveyed.

The study also sought to gauge parental satisfaction with the daycare services utilized. Results showed that 60.4% of respondents expressed overall satisfaction, while 38.7% reported a moderate level of satisfaction. Concerns cited by dissatisfied parents included inadequate nutrition, substandard hygiene practices at care facilities, elevated fees, insufficient educational resources, and issues related to pick-up and drop-off timings, among others.



Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Figure 8: Frequency and Amount paid for childcare

4.2.6. Willingness to take children 8 months to 3 years in a care centre.

The study also sought to understand willingness to take children to a care centre for parents with children aged 8 months to 3 years, a significant majority 503 respondents, representing 67.6% expressed a willingness to enroll their children in a daycare facility. Conversely, 241 respondents, or 32.4%, indicated their reluctance to do so. The analysis reveals a notable trend among Sudanese respondents, with an overwhelming 94.2% indicating readiness to utilize daycare services. Similarly, a substantial proportion of Rwandan, Congolese, and Burundian households reported willingness rates of 87.5%, 75.3%, and 75.0%, respectively. In contrast, Eritrean respondents exhibited a markedly lower inclination, with only 28% showing willingness, while Somali households also demonstrated limited openness, with a mere 31.4% indicating readiness to enroll their children in daycare.

Willingness				
Country of origin	No	Yes	Total	Percent
Sudan	8	131	139	94.2%
Rwanda	4	28	32	87.5%
Congo	43	131	174	75.3%
Burundi	34	102	136	75.0%
South Sudan	39	62	101	61.6%
Ethiopia	6	5	11	45.5%
Somalia	35	16	51	31.4%
Eritrea	72	28	100	28.0%
Total	241	503	744	
Percent	32.4%	67.6%		

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 13: Willingness to take children 8months to 3years to a daycare centre

4.2.7. Frequency and willingness to pay for childcare services

As reflected in Figure 7 below, the analysis revealed that a significant proportion, specifically 44.5%, expressed a willingness to pay for their children in daycare facilities on a monthly payment basis while 36.2% were willing to pay termly. Additionally, 6.5% and 11.9% of respondents indicated a preference for weekly and daily payment options respectively.

Among those inclined towards monthly payments, a notable 53.2% of parents indicated their readiness to contribute between Ugx 30,000 and Ugx 70,000, while 26.3% were prepared to allocate between Ugx 70,000 and Ugx 120,000. Only 7.7% were willing to commit over Ugx 300,000.

In relation to payments, 60.3% of respondents expressed a willingness to pay between Ugx 150,000 and Ugx 300,000, whereas only 7.8% were amenable to paying amounts exceeding Ugx 700,000. Furthermore, when inquiring about the financial responsibility for childcare services, findings indicated that in 84.5% of the households, the mother would assume the payment responsibility, contrasting with only 8.2% households indicating that the father would cover these costs.



Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Figure 9: Frequency and willingness to pay for children aged 8 months-3 years

In conformity with focus group discussions, the preferred payment frequency for the day care centre ranged from paying daily which ranged from Ug sh2000-5000 daily to termly payments which ranged from Ug shs 100,000-300,000 with a provision of paying in instalments.

There are a few inferences from this analysis on access to childcare services. First, a majority of refugees have no access at all to childcare services, and therefore the burden of childcare is significant. Secondly, women not only bear the burden of childcare, they also significantly bear the cost of childcare among those who have access or are willing to pay for the services. Third, there is a willingness to pay for childcare services within affordable limits which illuminates the level of demand for childcare in these refugee communities.

Period of running business	Number	Percent
Less than 3 months	101	9%
3-6months	184	16%
7months -1 year	299	26%
Above one year	552	49%
Total	1136	100

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 15: Age of the business

Business Ownership	Number	Percent
Sole proprietor/Business owner	972	85.6%
Partnership	112	9.9%
Family business	52	4.6%
Total	1136	100

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 16: Ownership of the business

4.3.3. Business training for women in business.

The research also found that although numerous women own businesses, a significant majority, 71.0%, have never participated in any business-related training, while only 29.0% have received some form of training. Among those who did obtain business training, 63.8% received skills training, 29.8% learned about bookkeeping, 29.5% trained in financial management, 27.7% in marketing, and 26.4% trained in customer care. This indicates that there remains a gap in knowledge and skills regarding business and entrepreneurship that hampers the economic advancement of urban refugee women.

**Table 17: Business training attained
N=329**

Business training	Number	Percent
Skills training	210	63.8%
Bookkeeping	98	29.8%
Financial management	97	29.5%
Marketing	91	27.7%
Customer care	87	26.4%

4.3.4. Access and utilization of business loans.

The survey results reveal that a substantial 786 respondents, representing 69.2% of the business participants, have never secured a loan, while 350 respondents, or 30.8%, reported borrowing money for business purposes within the past year. Among those who have accessed loans, 34.3% obtained financing from village savings groups, 30.3% from friends or relatives, and 15.4% from money lenders. Notably, of the individuals who accessed these loans, 74.6% utilized the funds to enhance capital cash flow, 47.1% for the acquisition of business equipment, and 25.1% for business expansion, with others allocating funds to cover essential needs such as educational expenses, medical bills, and food purchases (as illustrated in table 25). These findings underscore that access to financial services is pivotal in enabling urban women refugees to transition from vulnerability to self-reliance and economic independence.

Source of loan	Number	Percent
Village savings group	120	34.3%
Friends/Relatives	106	30.3%
Money lender	55	15.7%
SACCO	31	8.9%
Microfinance	18	5.1%
Mobile money	12	3.4%
Commercial Bank	7	2.0%
My spouse	1	0.3%
Total	350	

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 18: Source of the loan. N=350

Loan use	Number	Percent
Increase on Capital cash flow	261	74.6%
Buying business equipment	165	47.1%
Expand business	88	25.1%
Buying food	61	17.4%
School fees	63	18.0%
Paying medical bills	30	8.6%
Others	1	0.3%

Table 19: Loan Utilization, N=350

4.3.5. Transport and time taken to reach workplaces.

Survey results indicate that 38.3% of urban refugee women commute to their jobs on foot, while 25.8% utilize boda-bodas for transportation. Furthermore, 24.6% of respondents work from home, and 9.4% travel by vehicle. Among the urban refugee women surveyed, 42.5% reported that they reach their workplaces in under 10 minutes, 40% indicated a commute time of 11-30 minutes, and 11.9% reported taking between 31-59 minutes to arrive at work

4.3.6. Challenges faced in Business.

Study findings indicate that the refugee women in business face a wide range of challenges in the bid to realize economic growth. Key challenges identified encompass insufficient capital, a lack of access to markets for their goods and services, competitive pressures, elevated rental costs, the burdens of childcare responsibilities, and a deficiency in essential knowledge and skills which intensifies their vulnerability, yet they are the breadwinners in their families. As some respondents had this to say:



“Capital is another problem but if you get it, you can do your business without issues. On those days, I would buy shoes from here and send them to Juba but during the time of COVID-19, even the little capital, which was there, we ate it all.”

FGD-South Sudan Community



“...we don’t have any money to expand. No one will give us loans or support.”

FGD, Ethiopian Community



“...Language barrier, when you are not good in English and Luganda your customers may divert to your neighbors.”

FGD, Burundi Community

Business challenges	Number	Percent
Capital	943	83.0%
Lack of market	772	68.0%
Competitors	403	35.5%
High rent	395	34.8%
Childcare activities	264	23.2%
Law enforcement/high taxes	220	19.4%
Poor location	177	15.6%
Language barrier	142	12.5%
Domestic work	134	11.8%
Limited knowledge and skills	108	9.5%
Inflation/price fluctuations	56	4.9%
Social Cultural norms	23	2.0%
Others	2	0.2%

Source: APRI scoping study data, 2024

Table 20: Challenges faced in business N=1136

More still, study findings indicate that in most of the refugee communities there are no cultural and social practices that limit women from working except in very few communities such as the Somali communities traditionally women are not allowed to interact with men outside the families and they are the primary care giver to children as one respondent had this to say:



“Women are often expected to care for children, making it difficult to go to work and in our culture, women are restricted from interacting with men outside their family, limiting their work opportunities.”

FGD, Somali Community

In addition, other factors that limit refugee women from working are; some husbands don’t allow their wives to work, some women don’t have any skill and knowledge and cannot know what they can do better for a living, lack of startup capital, long processes of getting work permits and language barrier all deter refugee women from working. As some refugee women lamented:



“Getting documents is tough. Without the right papers, no one wants to give you a real job and we don’t all speak English well, so that closes even more doors.”

FGD, Ethiopian Community

no more than 300,000 Ugandan Shillings per term for such services. This accentuates the urgent need for affordable, accessible childcare solutions tailored to this vulnerable population.

The findings underscore that urban refugee women are actively involved in diverse micro business ventures. However, the nature of these enterprises highlights the significant challenges they face, rendering them particularly vulnerable, as they frequently serve as the primary financial providers for their households. A predominant portion of urban refugee women operate as sole proprietors, with many having sustained their businesses for over a year. Notably, a considerable segment of this population has not received any formal business training or access to financial resources such as loans. These compounding factors contribute to a range of obstacles that severely impede their economic advancement.

6.0. Recommendations

This section presents the recommendations based on the findings of the study. The recommendations shall guide the next steps of this interventional research.

1. Implement focused training programs for women entrepreneurs that emphasize financial management, bookkeeping, and access to credit facilities, thereby equipping them with the necessary skills to sustain and grow their businesses effectively.
2. Strategically establish childcare centers within a walkable distance from target households, ensuring accessibility within a 30-minute walking radius to enhance convenience for caregivers and parents.
3. Enroll all children within the designated age range (8 months to 3 years) from each participating household in childcare programs to considerably alleviate the childcare responsibilities faced by mothers.
4. Develop multiple childcare centers that are not only accessible and convenient but also incorporate culturally relevant practices to promote holistic child growth and development.
5. Identify and provide training for community members to serve as childcare providers within these centers, fostering local engagement and ownership in the childcare initiative.

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