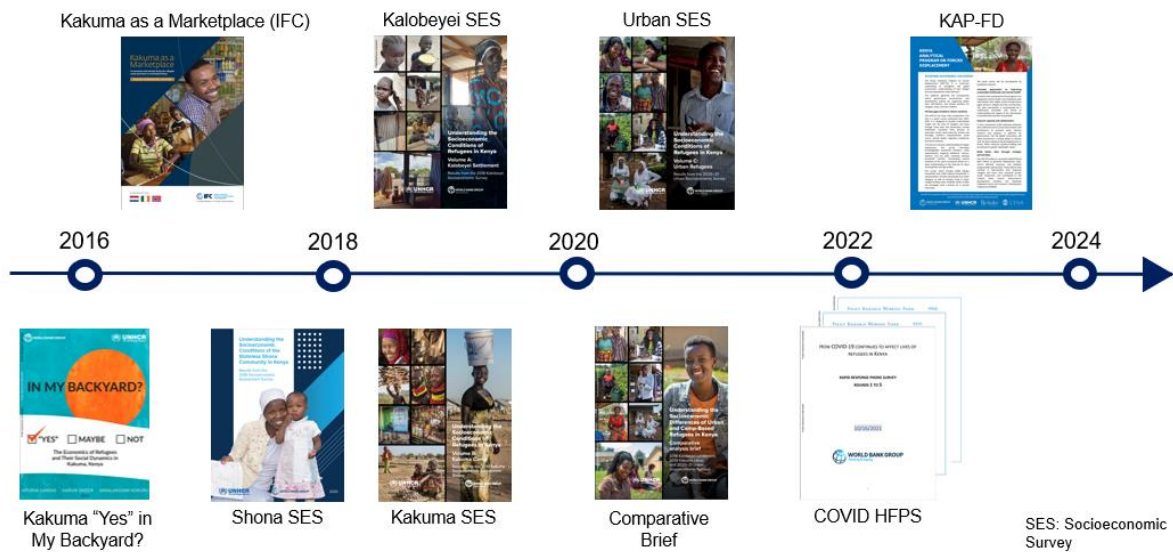


# KENYA: SUMMARY OF LEARNING FROM WORLD BANK-UNHCR DATA AND EVIDENCE COLLABORATION (2016–2023)

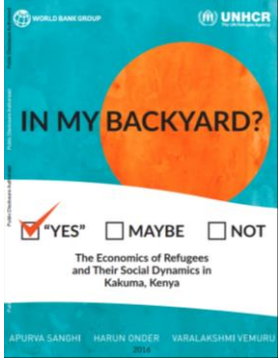
The World Bank and UNHCR have collaborated since 2016 on research, socioeconomic surveys and publications to generate evidence and develop an understanding of the living conditions of refugee, stateless and host community populations in Kenya. These activities also assess the impact on local communities arising from hosting forcibly displaced persons and identify and plan appropriate solutions. Key learnings and recommendations from this body of work are summarized below.

## Timeline of collaboration and publications (2016–2023)

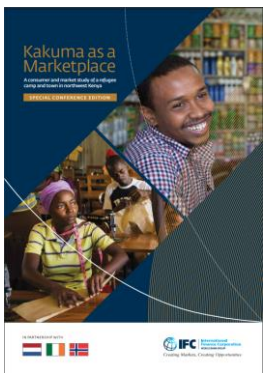


## Economic and social impacts

Publication	Objectives/research questions
<a href="#">"Yes" in My Backyard: The economics of refugees and their social dynamics in Kakuma, Kenya (2016)</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What are the economic and social impacts of the refugee presence on the host community in Turkana County and the rest of Kenya?</li> <li>➤ How can the positive impacts of hosting refugees be magnified while reducing the adverse effects?</li> <li>➤ What is the international community's appropriate role in supporting host countries?</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Key findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The refugee presence in Kakuma overall benefits Turkana's economy, boosting regional output by over 3% and increasing total employment by about 3 percent.</li> <li>➤ Compared to camps, economic integration maximizes the beneficial impact of refugees and allows for an increase in per capita host incomes by about 6%.</li> <li>➤ Addressing development challenges in Kakuma will benefit both refugees and the Turkana host community. The international community has an important role to play in this.</li> </ul>
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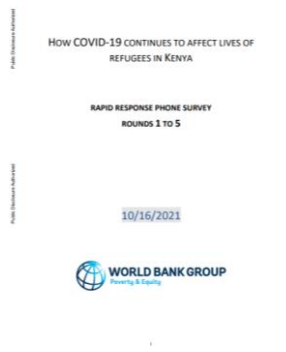
## Consumer and market demand

<p><b>Publication</b></p> <p><a href="#">Kakuma as a Marketplace (IFC) (2018)</a></p> 	<p><b>Objectives/research questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Led by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), this study sought to understand the market dynamics within Kakuma camp and Kakuma town and identify business opportunities and challenges.</li> <li>➤ It examines the camp and the town through the lens of a private firm looking to enter a new market.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Kakuma has a vibrant informal economy with more than 2,000 businesses, including 14 wholesale traders (as of 2018).</li> <li>➤ Despite facing legal and practical limitations, 12% of refugee respondents identified as business owners or self-employed, while 39% of those living in Kakuma town own businesses.</li> <li>➤ The total market size for the community was an estimated \$56 million, with the camp contributing 29% (KES 1.7 billion, or \$16.5 million). There is room to grow the market as there is high demand for access to finance and respondents are willing to pay for improved energy, housing and sanitation services. Mobile phone penetration is high in the camp (69%) and in town (85%), making it potentially attractive for mobile banking.</li> <li>➤ This report indicates opportunities to invest in new or existing businesses in Kakuma, but the path to private sector success could be limited by a comparatively unskilled local labour force, low financial literacy, and limited access to markets due to poor road connections and not having commercial airports.</li> </ul>
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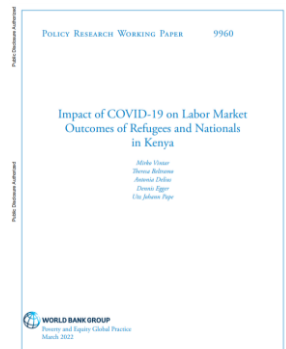
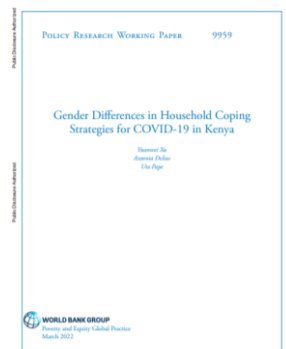
## Pandemic emergency response (COVID-19)

<p><b>High-frequency surveys</b></p> <p><a href="#">Kenya Rapid Response Survey (KRRPS)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Dashboard</a></p>	<p><b>Objectives/research questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Use high-frequency phone surveys to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on refugee and host populations and inform policy response in Kenya.</li> </ul>
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### Survey briefs



### Research working papers



- Eight rounds of surveys collected between May 2020-June 2022 cover employment, income, food security, access to services and other topics.

### Key findings analyzed in survey briefs

- **Employment.** With the pandemic's start, employment rates for refugees fell from 25% to 10%. A year into the pandemic (April–June 2021), they recovered to 24% versus 76% for the national population.
- **Food security.** A year into the pandemic, food insecurity remained high, particularly for camp-based refugees. As of June 2021, the number of refugees skipping meals at least once in 7 days was 70% in camps and 60% in urban areas. By June 2022, it had fallen to 10% in urban areas but remained high for camp refugees (50%).
- **Education.** Learning was significantly impacted due to school closures, and many households had difficulties accessing remote learning effectively.
- **Mental health.** Refugees consistently reported higher anxiety levels than Kenyan nationals. Their anxiety levels rose in Q4 2020, while that of nationals fell. In the early phases of the pandemic, the risk of infection remained the main concern for refugees. Later, however, economic worries from job loss, the recession, and restrictions on movement took precedence.

### Recommendations based on findings

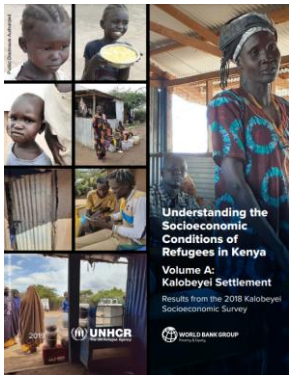

- Continue using social protection to help mitigate the impact of the pandemic.
- Increase support from schools for extracurricular activities and improve alternative measures to address future closures.
- Expand capacity to deliver health services, vaccinations and medicines.
- Simplify procedures to obtain legal documents and ease restrictions on movement.

### Key findings based on research of high-frequency surveys

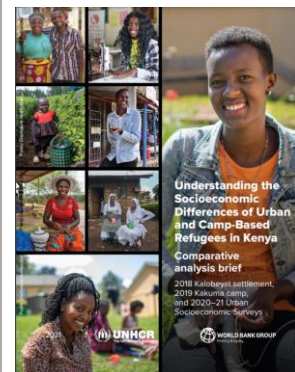
- [Gender Differences in Household Coping Strategies for COVID-19 in Kenya](#)
  - Across Kenya (including refugees), female-headed households are poorer, less likely to cope with pandemic shocks by selling assets or taking loans, and more likely to rely on social networks than male-led households.
  - Widowed and divorced women are especially in need of relief. Governments should provide easily accessible loans to avoid negative impacts in the long term from households selling assets.
- [Impact of COVID-19 on Labor Market Outcomes of Refugees and Nationals in Kenya](#)
  - Refugees were less likely to be employed than nationals pre-pandemic (32% to 63%) and slower to recover over 2020-21.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Controlling for age, gender, education and location, the analysis finds employment, hours worked, and household incomes were slower to recover and often stagnant for refugees compared with nationals.</li> <li>This suggests that an unobservable “refugee factor” inhibits refugees’ recovery after a significant shock and aggravates preexisting vulnerability.</li> </ul>
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## Socioeconomic Surveys (SES)

<p><b>Surveys</b></p> <p><a href="#">Kalobeyei SES (2018/19)</a>, <a href="#">Kakuma SES (2019/20)</a>, <a href="#">Shona SES (2019)</a>, and <a href="#">Urban SES (2020/21)</a></p> <p><b>Publications</b></p> <p><a href="#">Comparative Analysis of Urban and Camp-based Refugees</a></p>  	<p><b>Objectives/research questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Generate high-quality socioeconomic data based on national statistical tools and standards from the Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey (KIHBS) and Continuous Households Survey (KCHS).</li> <li>➤ Inform area-based strategy and planning, including <a href="#">Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan</a> (KISED P)</li> <li>➤ Facilitate comparison between key population groups, including refugee, stateless and national populations.</li> <li>➤ Promote inclusion in national surveys and statistics.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key findings on urban and camp-based refugees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Camp-based refugees are more likely to live in unimproved houses, to suffer from overcrowding, and use biomass fuels for cooking than those in urban areas (by 65, 17, and 65 percentage points, respectively).</li> <li>➤ Urban households in non-protracted situations are more likely than protracted households to live in unimproved houses, but the latter are more likely to suffer from overcrowding.</li> <li>➤ Bank account ownership is low in both locations (10%). Camp-based refugees are 40 percentage points more likely to have bank accounts, while urban refugees are more likely to use mobile banking. Access to loans in both areas is primarily informal.</li> <li>➤ Camp-based refugees are 19 percentage points less likely than urban refugees to perceive the host community with trust. However, perceptions of security and participation in decision-making are higher in camps than in urban areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Kakuma and Kalobeyei-based refugees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Refugees in Kalobeyei spend 50% more on food and non-food items compared to those in Kakuma. Differences in the types of food assistance can partly explain this. About 60% of refugees in both camps are highly food insecure.</li> <li>➤ Employment rates are very low, and refugees in Kakuma are 21 percentage points less likely to be employed than those in Kalobeyei. Literate refugees are 11 percentage points more likely to be employed than those who are illiterate. Around 52% of youth (age 15–29) in camps are not in employment, education, or training (NEET): they are more likely to be in their</li> </ul>
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[Socioeconomic Survey of the Stateless Shona Community](#)



[Kenya Analytical Program on Forced Displacement](#)



20s, have no education, and are not proficient in Kenya's official languages.

- Attendance rates, especially at the secondary level, are low in both sites (5% in Kalobeyei and 14% in Kakuma).

**Specific vulnerabilities of refugee women**

- Women refugees are more likely to live in overcrowded rooms, are less likely to receive remittances, and have lower access to loans and mobile banking. Woman-headed households have worse perceptions of safety than those headed by men.
- Camp-based women who head households with at least one child under five are less likely to be employed. Youth who are NEET are more likely to be women.

**Shona stateless community**

- Compared to Kenyan nationals, members of the Shona community are poorer, are part of larger households and live in crowded conditions. They have lower access to secondary education and are more likely to be self-employed. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on them.
- They have a 24% higher chance of being poor than the urban Kenyan population. Over half of the Shona community (53%) live below the national urban poverty line, compared to 29% of the broader urban population and 36% of all Kenyans (urban and rural).








The [Kenya Analytical Program on Forced Displacement \(KAP-FD\)](#) expands on the Socioeconomic Survey series with two waves of panel data collection from 2022–2024. Qualitative data and engagement with local scholars and practitioners help promote policy-relevant research analyses. KAP-FD is a collaboration between the World Bank, UNHCR and the University of California-Berkeley Center for Effective Global Action.






**01 A panel survey and complementary qualitative work will help understand the socioeconomic characteristics and needs of refugees and hosts over time**

- Sample**
  - ✓ 6,000 refugee households
  - ✓ 3,500 host community households
- Locations**
  - ✓ Kakuma refugee camp
  - ✓ Kalobeyei settlement
  - ✓ Dadaab refugee camp
  - ✓ Urban areas: Nairobi, Nakuru, Mombasa
- Frequency**
  - ✓ Bi-annual panel data
  - ✓ Monthly cross-sectional data

- Key themes**
- Employment, livelihoods, and mental health
  - Socioeconomic indicators: Income, housing, WASH, food security, resilience to climate and other shocks, women's empowerment
  - Education: Attainment and transition from primary to secondary school
- Administration**
- Two face-to-face interviews
  - One phone survey
  - Focus group discussions
  - In-depth interviews

### Key statistics across population groups with sectoral recommendations from Socioeconomic Survey (SES) series

POPULATION		CAMPS			URBAN		RECOMMENDATIONS
		Kalobeyei Refugees (SES2018)	Kakuma Refugees (SES2019)	Turkana Hosts (KIHBS2015)	Refugees (SES2020)	Hosts (KIHBS 2015)	
	Gender	Men (50%) Women (50%)	Men (54%) Women (46%)	Men (52%) Women (48%)	Men (51%) Women (49%)	Men (52%) Women (48%)	
	Age	Below 18: 71% Above 64: 0.6%	Below 18: 61% Above 64: 0.4%	Below 18: 60% Above 64: 0.4%	Below 18: 45% Above 64: 1.8%	Below 18: 32% Above 64: 0.7%	
	Dependency ratio	1.9	1.2	1.4	0.6	0.4	
	Women-headed households	66%	56%	47%	41%	32%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Women and girls' empowerment programmes in camps and urban areas can help alleviate barriers to accessing socioeconomic opportunities and build and maintain human capital.</li> <li>➤ Financial inclusion programmes coupled with entrepreneurship skills, business training and cash grants targeting women, especially those with young dependents, can be a starting point to unlock refugee women's socioeconomic potential.</li> </ul>
	Improved housing	5%	3%	8%	82%	78%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Scaling up permanent shelters in Kalobeyei with an extension to Kakuma through ongoing cash-based interventions as well as subsidies and vouchers can be crucial to improve refugees' living conditions.</li> <li>➤ Increasing funding for national housing programmes, such as the informal settlements upgrade schemes, to address host's needs while including refugees can also reduce overcrowding.</li> </ul>
	Improved drinking	100%	100%	71%	91%	92%	
	Improved sanitation	52% Sharing: 66%	78% Sharing: 37%	19% Sharing: --	84% Sharing: 68%	99% Sharing: --	

POPULATION		CAMPS			URBAN		RECOMMENDATIONS
		Kalobeyei Refugees (SES2018)	Kakuma Refugees (SES2019)	Turkana Hosts (KIHBS2015)	Refugees (SES2020)	Hosts (KIHBS 2015)	
	Biomass fuels	--	100%	98%	26%	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increasing access to clean cooking fuels is vital to enhancing health outcomes for women and children under age 5.</li> <li>➤ Expanding energy access, particularly moving host and refugee households up the energy ladder to non-biomass fuels, is critical to enhancing health outcomes, specifically for cooks (primarily women) and their accompanying children.</li> </ul>
	Primary Net Enrolment rate*	77%	82%	59%	69%	90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The transition to secondary school can be enhanced by investing in scholarship programmes, conditional cash transfers, and strengthening the Free Day Secondary Education programme and recognition of prior learning can be critical to support the transition.</li> <li>➤ Constructing new facilities and classrooms in existing schools and the inclusion of refugees into the National Education Management Information System (NEMIS) can also increase the transition to secondary school.</li> </ul>
	Secondary Net Enrolment rate*	5%	14%	23%	28%	61%	
	Employment Rate*	39%	20%	42%	42%	66%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Expanding access to bank accounts and mobile money, especially among urban refugees, is key to increasing access to formal loans and credit and improving savings. This can help start and grow businesses as well as smooth consumption shocks.</li> <li>➤ Collaborations with the private sector, simplifying requirements for SIM card registration and embedding refugees in government-led social protection safety nets can support these efforts.</li> <li>➤ Increasing employment opportunities through improving pathways for refugees to access work legally can be further enhanced. Kiswahili and English literacy programmes can help increase participation in the paid labour market.</li> </ul>
	LSCI Food Insecurity	61%	58%	--	61%	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Synchronizing cash transfers between agencies is essential to improve food assistance and support households' capacity to allocate resources and prioritize cash utilization. Shifting from in-kind to cash transfers will be crucial to improve food security among camp-based refugees.</li> <li>➤ Cash transfers for refugees can be a more cost-efficient way forward and can increase food consumption.</li> </ul>