Fear in Everyday Life

- A Qualitative Study on the Everyday Routines of Burundian and Congolese Women Residing in Tanzanian Refugee Camps

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Abstract

This master thesis is based on a field study, conducted in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 refugee camps in Kigoma, western Tanzania, where we held twenty-eight interviews with Congolese and Burundian refugee women. The Congolese and Burundian refugees have fled to Tanzania due to long-lasting conflicts in Congo and Burundi respectively; most arrived in mid-1990s. Thereby, the camps are no longer in phases of emergency and refugees have, since long, established everyday routines and habits that shape their everyday lives; our main interests lie in these. Accordingly, our aim with this study has been to attain a deepened understanding of how these refugee women experience their everyday lives with regards to safety. Since the women themselves were the narrators, security-related problems connected to firewood collection were, inevitably, frequently brought up and are therefore given much space throughout the study. Of great importance for the study is the Sphere Project, in particular the three Cross-Cutting issues - Gender, Environment, and Security – which are all, we believe, intimately related to Feminist Geography. Moreover, our purpose has been to interpret the answers given by these refugee women through arguments and concepts included in Feminist Geography and thereby enable new ways of understanding how, for example, the physical environment affects the everyday routines of refugee women. Furthermore, as several feminist geographers (who, to this date, mainly have focused on western, urban areas) approach women’s fear by looking at the prevailing social and power structures, such structures have also been given much space in our study. Consequently, our study sheds light on security-related issues, which refugee women face in their everyday lives. From the results found in our study, we believe, that if feminist geographers were to include refugee women residing in a non-western, rural context, they would stand to gain a broadened knowledge of how different women experience and are affected by fear and safety.

Keywords: Refugees, Women, Safety, Firewood Collection, The Sphere Project, Feminist Geography, Refugee Camps, Tanzania, Gender, Environment, Protection.
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To all of you, a very big Asante Sana!
List of Abbreviations

AIDS Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CSB Corn-Soya Blend
CSI Coping Strategies Index
DRC Democratic Republic of Congo
ECHO European Community Humanitarian Office
HIV Human Immune Deficiency Virus
HRW Human Rights Watch
ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross
IRC International Rescue Committee
MHA Ministry of Home Affairs
NGO Non-Governmental Organization
PMTCT Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
SGBV Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SRC Spanish Red Cross
TRCS Tanzanian Red Cross Society
UN United Nations
UNHCR United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees
USCRI United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
WFP World Food Programme
WHO World Health Organization
Map of the Refugee Camps in Tanzania

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Introduction

“[…] I have no choice, I’m obliged to go” – How would it affect your everyday life if the places you fear the most, are the same places you are forced to enter for your own survival? We would like to claim that in the city Malmö in Sweden, where our everyday lives are set, dark alleys or city parks are the places where we feel most unsafe. Therefore we choose, to the extent possible, to avoid such areas at late hours. Even if this avoidance constraints our mobility, it still implies that we have a choice; this choice, we believe, exists to a higher extent in a non-refugee context in a western society. Illustratively, the introductory statement, which was made by a Congolese refugee woman when talking about the place she fears the most – the forest – shows that there is no such choice involved in her everyday life. In Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 camps in Tanzania, refugees are dependent on firewood from the surrounding forests to satisfy their fuel needs and as women are the main gatherers of firewood, they are the ones forced to spend a considerable amount of time in areas where they feel unsafe. So, how does Feminist Geography approach women who do not have the choice of avoiding areas where they feel unsafe? Moreover, how do United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’ (UNHCR) Guidelines and the Sphere Project’s standards approach safety- and security-related issues in refugee women’s everyday lives? This will be examined in our study where we will analyze the interviews held with Congolese and Burundian refugee women through such standards, guidelines and also through arguments and concepts included in Feminist Geography.

After a short presentation of our aim, purpose and research questions, we will provide the reader with summaries of our methodology, theoretical framework and previous studies. Subsequently, we will discuss some of the delimitations we have faced during the course of the study. Thereafter, we will present the disposition and, before embarking on the study, we will provide definitions we find important for the reader to bear in mind, throughout the study, in order to trace our lines of arguments.
Aim

We conducted our Minor Field Study (MFS) in the refugee camps Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 in Kigoma sub-region, Tanzania. The people residing in Lugufu 1 – i.e. Congolese refugees – and Mtabila 1 – i.e. Burundian refugees – have fled to Tanzania due to long-lasting conflicts in Congo and Burundi respectively; most arrived in mid-1990s.\(^1\) Thereby, the camps are no longer in phases of emergency and refugees have, since long, established everyday routines and habits that shape their everyday lives; our main interests lie in these.

Our aim is to attain a deepened understanding of how refugee women experience their everyday lives with regards to safety. The most just way to reach this aim, we believe, is by giving voice to the refugee women themselves, hence presenting their ‘version of the truth’. Furthermore, our purpose is to approach refugee women’s everyday lives from a feminist geographical perspective and to look more closely into various guidelines and standards that draw on the issues gender, protection and environment when giving protection through assistance. Since no equivalent research – where security-related problems in refugee women’s everyday lives are approached from a feminist geographical perspective – have been found, we believe our study to be of great importance.

Research Questions

In order to reach our aim, which, as stated, is to attain a deepened understanding of how refugee women experience their everyday lives with regards to safety, we believe that the following questions need to be researched:

\(^1\) In Mtabila 1 there are refugees who arrived to Tanzania as early as the 1970s. To Lugufu 1 refugees are still arriving.
How do everyday routines affect the everyday lives of refugee women in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1?  
-Can changes of the physical environment increase the perceived feeling of safety among refugee women in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1? 
-Can changes of the physical environment affect (or perhaps lessen) the exposure of refugee women in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1? 

Do the Cross-Cutting issues Gender, Protection and Environment, included in Sphere, matter for refugee women’s perceived feeling of safety in their everyday lives in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1?

**Methodology**

Our choice to use qualitative methods is based on the aim of the study. By conducting a qualitative research on a micro level, we were able to attain the perspective of a refugee woman and through the semi-structured in-depth interviews, we were able to listen to the individuals whose experiences we were interested in. In the methodology chapter, we will, in detail, discuss the structure of the interviews and present method-related issues we find relevant for our study. Since there are many aspects to take into consideration when aiming to mirror a source, the methodology part has been given a great deal of space in this study.

**Theoretical Framework**

In the theory chapter, we will present the interdisciplinary field of Feminist Geography from which we have used arguments and concepts; together forming the theoretical framework of our study. This theoretical framework will be used as a tool when analyzing our collected data. However, since feminist geographers, to date, mainly have
focused on western urban societies, we have chosen to include both those fragments of Feminist Geography that we find to be applicable on a rural, non-western, refugee context but also those concepts and arguments that we find non-applicable on such context; the latter in order to illuminate why Feminist Geography has to be developed further – to include also refugee women residing in non-western areas.

Previous Research

Since no equivalent research – which links feminist geography to a rural, non-western, refugee context – have yet been conducted, we have chosen to present, in the chapter “Humanitarian Guidelines and Previous Research”, authors who, from various lines of angles, have approached security-related problems faced by women. Each research focuses either on aspects of Feminist Geography, the complexity of refugee relief aid or issues concerning Tanzanian refugee camps. Hence, they all bring up various aspects important for the aim of our study.

Delimitations

Since this is a C/D-level essay, time and space have limited our possibilities to conduct a more extensive research on the everyday lives of refugee women. Furthermore, as this is a qualitative study and as ‘only’ twenty-eight refugee women have been interviewed in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 refugee camps in Tanzania, we cannot speak in general about how refugee women experience their everyday lives. Instead we are only able to speak about the women interviewed.

As will be shown in the “Methodology” chapter, our target group is pregnant and/or lactating women; this choice of target group was made due to safety precautions taken by the Red Cross, which restricted us to conducting the interviews within the dispensary area
(where pregnant and lactating women were moving on a daily basis). Since we did not interview any women who were not pregnant or lactating, we cannot tell if the fact that the participants were pregnant or lactating affected their answers in any way.

Outline of the Study

Before embarking on the study, we will present how we have chosen to define a few concepts; this, we believe, will help the reader to understand what we mean by certain concepts that are perennial throughout the study. Thereafter, in the “Methodology” chapter we will present how we retrieved and dealt with our empirical material. We find methodological aspects to be important for the reader to bear in mind as it reflects the reliability and validity of the study. The subsequent chapter “Humanitarian Guidelines and Previous Research” consists of background information. We will here present UNHCR guidelines and Sphere standards, which both bring up gender-, security- and environmental-related aspects that should be considered in refugee relief work. Furthermore, the arguments and concepts, included in Feminist Geography, which will function as our analytical tools, will be brought up in the chapter “Theory”. Subsequently, Tanzania’s role as host country will be illuminated in the chapter “Refugee Context in Tanzania”; historical facts, camp management and the design of Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 refugee camps will also be presented in this chapter. Thereafter, we will, through our theoretical framework and all background material (i.e. method, guidelines, previous research and contextual facts), analyze the interviews in the chapter “Analyzing the Results”. Lastly, we will, in the chapter “Discussion and Conclusion”, discuss the presented results. Subsequently, our study will come to an end by some conclusive remarks.
**Definitions**

We believe *Safety*, *Fear* and *a Non-Western Rural Area* to be concepts, imperative for our study and due to their complex nature they can be interpreted in many different ways. Therefore, we find it important to illustrate how we have chosen to define these concepts; through such illustrations, we believe the reader will find it easier to trace our line of arguments.

In this study, *Safety* refers to freedom of movement; a person should be able to enter all places (at any time) of his/her preference without feeling afraid or threatened. Likewise, safety implies that people never have to avoid any places (at any times) due to such *fear*. We view *Fear* as being a multifaceted emotion; even if fear is subjective, it still belongs to a larger discourse of fear.\(^2\) It is subjective since individuals perceive it differently and are affected by it in different ways. However, in order to fully comprehend the complexity of fear, we believe it is important to take discourse into consideration as fear changes over time and space. In other words, we consider fear to be both contextually and culturally bound.\(^3\)

We consider areas, such as the refugee camps Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1, and the forests outside these camps, to be *non-western rural areas*. Such areas we have defined as lacking a fully developed infrastructure; having a population, which is dependent on the nearby physical environment for its survival; having limited accessibility to technical agricultural tools or equipment. To distinguish a western rural area from a non-western rural area, we believe, is necessary since Tanzania’s countryside largely diverges from,

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\(^2\) See Listerborn below, pp. 48-49 and 61.

\(^3\) For more information on the complexity of fear, see for example, Listerborn, Carina (2002b), “Understanding the Geography of Women’s Fear: Toward a Reconceptualization of Fear and Space”. For information on fear as being a culturally bounded phenomenon see, for example, BenEzer (2002) *The Ethiopian Jewish Exodus*. 
for example, England’s countryside, where research has been conducted by several feminist geographers⁴

⁴ See, for example, various literature in Nelson, Lise & Seager, Joni (eds.) (2005), *A Companion to Feminist Geography*.
Methodology

This qualitative research is based on a field study conducted in Tanzania February to May 2005. Apart from having gathered information through interviews, we have also used a variety of secondary material from disciplines such as feminism, feminist geography and sociology; hence, our approach is interdisciplinary. In the following chapter we will, in detail, discuss the structure of the interviews and present method-related issues we find relevant for our study.

A Qualitative Study

Our choice to use qualitative and not quantitative methods is based on the aim of the study, which is to attain a deepened understanding of how refugee women experience their everyday lives with regards to safety. To do qualitative research on a micro level would give us the perspective of a refugee woman. The most just way to reach the aim, we believed, was through in-depth interviews, which enabled us to listen to the individuals whose experiences we were interested in. Filstead, who explains the differences between qualitative and quantitative methods vividly in the following quote, supports our arguments for the choice of method as he states that qualitative methods refers to

\[\text{those strategies, such as participant observation, in-depth interviewing, total participation in the activity being investigated, field work etc., which allows the researcher to obtain first-hand knowledge about the empirical social world in question. Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to ‘get close to the data’, thereby developing the analytical, conceptual and categorical components of explanation from the data itself – rather than from the preconceived, rigidly structured, and highly quantitative techniques that pigeonhole the empirical social world into the operational definition that the researcher has constructed.}^{5}\]

When conducting a micro-level study with the intention of attaining the participants’ ‘versions of the truth’, we found quantitative techniques, such as using questionnaires in

\[5\] Quoted in BenEzer, Gadi (2002), p 22.
which there are no, or limited, spaces to elaborate on feelings or experiences about the issues emphasized, unsuitable. Furthermore, a questionnaire, with a fixed set of alternatives, would mirror our view on what safety is and would therefore, we believe, force our definitions onto the participant who might relate to and/or recognize safety in a different manner. Conversely, a qualitative study enabled us to attain views that we, in our social context, would perhaps never have associated with safety. Therefore, it seems clear that, in order to attain the participants’ version of the truth, a qualitative method was more suitable for our study.

Validity and Reliability

Regardless of the chosen method, Lantz argues, research should always be valid and reliable in order to enable others to critically examine the results. When dealing with, what Essed has termed “subjective reality constructions”, in our case listening to refugee women who share their experiences regarding safety in the camps, Lantz further argues that validity is to be understood in a different manner; instead of drawing a general conclusion from the statements of a small number of participants, validity in this case refers to how accurately the researcher retells what the participant has said during the interview. In short, research from which no general conclusions can be drawn is no less useful; the demand for validity is just as high and the results can be used to create awareness about what is being investigated. Lantz’s argument, that the result should “mirror the source”, becomes, we believe, even more important when aiming to spread knowledge, and create awareness, about the issues investigated.

As stated, the method used when conducting the interview should also aim at producing reliable results. Since we, in our research, are dealing with human beings who exist

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within different social structures and have different attitudes, resources, feelings etc. we do not believe that it is possible to measure the gathered information. According to Listerborn, however, using a variety of sources increases the reliability of the information gathered.\textsuperscript{10} Therefore, we consider our study to be reliable since we are using various sources such as previous studies, meetings with personnel working in the field and interviews with the women whose everyday lives we are investigating. Also, we believe that the reliability of the information gathered increases since we, as researchers, were present in the social reality which was being studied and were therefore able to view the everyday lives of the women first-hand. This way of ‘backing up’ the information gathered, but also the distinct similarity in the arguments used by several participants gives, we believe, the information its reliability.

\textit{Personal Narrative}

The qualitative methods offer a number of instruments and, according to Powles, personal narrative\textsuperscript{11} is a relevant instrument when researching within a refugee context.\textsuperscript{12} We believe that the interviews we conducted can, to a certain extent, be characterized as being in the form of personal narratives since the retrospective became visible during the interviews; even if we focused on how the participants experienced their present situation, they sometimes brought up experiences from their past and how these have affected their present. Moreover, to consider narratives and personal experiences to be of relevance for human science is shown in Brockmeier’s and Harré’s statement: “As far as human affairs are concerned, it is above all through narrative that we make sense of the

\textsuperscript{10} Listerborn, Carina (2002), \textit{Trygg Stad}, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{11} “Personal narrative […] refers to any retrospective account, but does not imply the broad chronology of a life history, nor need it be elicited or prompted by another person. Thus personal narratives would include autobiographical stories, written down in private by the individual him or herself, shared during the flow of everyday conversation, or recorded during an interview section”, Powles, Julia (2004), \textit{Life History and Personal Narrative}, p. 1. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/research/opendoc.pdf?tbl=RESEARCH&id=4147fe764>.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
wider, more differentiated, and more complex texts of our experiences.”

We agree with Brockmeier and Harré, who state that by using this methodological instrument the researcher stands to gain a more extensive and broadened understanding. Furthermore we believe that by interviewing several refugee women with different personal experiences we attained a multiplicity of perspectives and approaches regarding safety in the camps.

The fact that personal narratives deal with subjective reality constructions is important to take into consideration. What the participants consider to be true might therefore be difficult to either prove or to refute as being the truth *per se*. We have chosen to interpret the results from our narrative interviews on BenEzer’s terms, that is to say, by looking at the relation between *Historical Truth*, *Psychological Truth* and *Narrative Truth*. According to BenEzer, *Historical Truth* refers to “contextual facts” that are mentioned by the participants during the interviews. BenEzer further argues that *Historical Truth* can be seen as objective since such facts can be investigated. In our case, for example, these are facts such as the existence of certain villages, various camps and the forest outside the camp. *Psychological Truth* is the perceived reality of the participant. This information, regardless of its accuracy in terms of what ‘really’ happened, is also useful information when investigating how the participants experience their situation in the camps. Moreover, BenEzer states that for an individual there is no difference between the historical and psychological truth since they both seem as real. Therefore, we have not disregarded any piece of information given by the refugee women but instead investigated and interpreted the narratives from both aspects. Lastly, *Narrative Truth* is what should be considered during the interview and refers to how the participants, at the request of the interviewer, choose to narrate a specific life-event. The researcher should bear in mind aspects such as what the participant chooses to tell/leave out and also the body language used by the participant. We did not, however, investigate a specific life-event but, as stated, wanted to get a deepened understanding of the participants’ experiences of safety in the camp, i.e. their version of the truth. Therefore we asked

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questions such as if there were specific times or places in the camp where the participants felt unsafe\(^{16}\), through such questions, different historical and biographical events were brought up and therefore narrative truth too is relevant in our study.

**Interview Structure**

At the initial stage of finding a suitable interview structure we took our aim into consideration. After reading various literatures on different interview techniques, amongst others Lantz and Mikkelsen who describe the pros and cons of various interview structures,\(^{17}\) we found that by conducting the interviews in a semi-structured manner, our aim would be attainable. Furthermore, we looked into feminist research methods where semi-structured interviews are used extensively, according to Graham, in order to “achieve the active involvement of their respondents in the construction of data about their lives.”\(^{18}\) We found this approach to be of relevance for us since the gender perspective is an important component in our essay. Also, since we wanted the participants to have a prominent role and the possibility to, to a certain extent, choose the direction of the interview, we found, as in feminist research, the semi-structured interview to be a preferable method.

According to Mikkelsen, the semi-structured method helps to make the interview adjustable,\(^{19}\) which we believed to be an important prerequisite in order for the participant to have the possibility to affect the course of the interview. Moreover, this participatory method also benefited us as researchers; the semi-structured interview allows predetermined questions, which we believed to be necessary since we wanted to, within the broad topic of security, include specific areas and aspects such as the Cross-Cutting

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\(^{16}\) For interview questions see appendix 1.


issues. Also, according to Mikkelsen, the researcher is allowed, in the semi-structured interview, to formulate/drop questions while conducting the interview. Due to the fact that we, as researchers, had the power to decide what topics the questions should evolve around, these predetermined questions were often broad in character. Hence, the participants had the possibility to define and subjectively describe their experiences of the topics. Consequently, we believe that our study was given a broad perspective of safety since it was discussed from many lines of angles.

Focus Groups

Another method, which was also confirmed as being suitable and acceptable within these cultures, was to arrange focus groups. A focus group, according to Mikkelsen, usually consists of six to eight individuals who discuss a predetermined topic under the direction of a moderator and thereby enabling the researcher’s absence. Mikkelsen states that in order for this method to be considered useful, the moderator is required to be familiar with and have knowledge about the topic, have experience in conducting focus groups and be fluent in the language spoken by the participants. Moreover, in a focus group the participants are able to exchange experiences by discussing issues and problems with each other and therefore, in turn, give each other new ideas and perspectives.

The idea to arrange focus groups first arose from a conversation with Yasuo Tanaka who had great experience in using this method. He believed, for example, that the women who participated in his study would be more comfortable to have a woman as a moderator rather than Tanaka himself. We were influenced by Tanaka’s positive experiences of using focus groups and since we, in our study, also were focusing on

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20 See below pp. 26-29 for a discussion on the Cross-Cutting issues.
22 Ibid, pp. 104-106.
23 Tanaka is a researcher of the University of Tokyo, Japan. At that particular time of our field study, Tanaka was conducting a research in Nyarugusu refugee camp in Kigoma region, regarding the behaviours and practices associated with the spread of HIV/AIDS in the camp. This research was conducted in cooperation with UNHCR and the Tanzanian Red Cross Society.
issues of sensitive character, conducting focus groups would be a suitable method also for us. This method functioned as a good complement to the interviews for three reasons; firstly, it enabled us to attain more in-depth knowledge on issues that were continuously brought up during the interview sessions; secondly, by being a group of people with presumably similar experiences, the participants might feel more comfortable when discussing these issues; thirdly, by having a moderator, we, as researchers, would not be influencing the answers. The moderator for our two focus groups in Mtabila 1 refugee camp was Yvonne Mpawe, a Burundian refugee woman, who had previous experience in facilitating focus groups and had, due to for instance the historical and cultural context in which she resided, great knowledge about the topic discussed. Therefore we believe that she had less effect on the results than we would have had. Furthermore, in a semi-structured interview, the confidentiality might help the participant to share personal experiences that she does not want other participants to know. Alternatively, in a focus group, Morgan argues, the researcher attains “data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group”. To be flexible and be able to vary between methods is something which is supported by several authors, amongst them Essed and Listerborn, who agree that flexibility and creativity are components beneficial to research.

**Interview Preparations**

Powles argues that, when conducting interviews, it is significant that the researcher has basic knowledge about the context in which s/he is researching. In our case, that is knowledge about existing cultural and social codes and knowledge about the conflict which has forced the refugees to leave their native country. We became aware of contextually-related issues by reading various background literatures and by spending

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24 Focus groups, with six to eight Burundian women participating, were held on two occasions in Mtabila 1.
time with, for example, Spanish and Tanzanian Red Cross staff working in the field. Even though we were aware of existing cultural codes, the interviews were still set in, what BenEzer refers to as, a “cross-cultural context”.28 We were, for example, white Swedish women, while our participants were black Burundian or Congolese women, and yet the interviews were held in a refugee context in Tanzania. We believe that by using a local interpreter and therefore having the assistance of someone who was used to moving in-between cultures and who, therefore, could better understand culturally bound words and expressions, we were able to, to a certain extent, avoid potential cultural misunderstandings. Also, before the interviews, the interpreters went through our questions thoroughly and, after some consequential modifications, the questions were confirmed by the interpreters as being culturally suitable and translatable.

BenEzer also discusses the importance of familiarizing the participants, at the beginning of each interview session, with the “rules of the game”.29 Whatever rules applied outside, we found it important that each woman interviewed felt that she, in the interview space, was central and that it was her thoughts and experiences that were of our interest.

Powles brings up the importance of noting that it is often time-consuming to participate in an interview and, consequently, participants might have to absent themselves from, for instance, important household work.30 We tried to avoid this, to the extent possible, by letting the participants themselves choose the time for the interview. However, since we worked within a time frame and had to complete the interviews before a certain date, they were unfortunately only able to choose an interview time from a prepared schedule.

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29 Ibid, p. 49.
The Field Study

In March 2005, we spent approximately three weeks in the Congolese refugee camp Lugufu 1 in Kigoma region, Tanzania. During this period, we held fifteen interviews with pregnant and/or lactating Congolese refugee women. The interviews were held in Swahili in the dispensary area and due to our insufficient knowledge of the language, we were assisted by Stella Mtera, an English-speaking Tanzanian woman. Later on, in April 2005, we continued our field study by spending approximately two weeks in the Burundian refugee camp Mtabila 1, also situated in Kigoma region, Tanzania. In Mtabila 1, we held thirteen interviews, this time with Burundian pregnant and/or lactating refugee women. The interviews were carried out in the dispensary area and Yvonne Mpawe who led the focus groups, also assisted us by translating between English and Kirundi during the interviews.

In order to broaden our understanding of the context in which the participants resided, we tried to spend as much time as possible inside the camps with refugees and also with people working within this area. This way, we were able to view many aspects of the situation in the camp. For example, people living inside the camp took us around to places which are only used by refugees: the distribution centre, the public latrines and the water collection points to mention a few. We also had the opportunity to discuss issues we found relevant for our study with, amongst others, a camp manager from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), several doctors and other staff working in the dispensaries. Furthermore, in April we interviewed one of the UNHCR-appointed Protection Officers based in Kasulu and later on, we had a meeting with a group of Zone Leaders in Mtabila 1. On both occasions we discussed protection-related issues in the camps.
Choosing Target Group

The choice of target group was, to a large extent, based on various literature, material and documents, such as Jennifer Hyndman’s book *Managing Displacement*, Marc Sommers’s report *A Child’s Nightmare. Burundian Children at Risk* and the Sphere Project’s handbook *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response* - all bringing up refugee women’s vulnerability in refugee camps.\(^{31}\) We strongly agree with the authors, who emphasize the need to bring refugee women’s everyday life experiences to the surface. The issues brought up by, for example, Hyndman, increased our interest in the situation of women in refugee contexts. The decision to focus on and interview refugee women regarding safety issues also emerged from our studying of the Cross-Cutting issues in the Sphere Project’s handbook.

Interviewing only women about their everyday life was a conscious choice. Mikkelsen argues that researchers often make the mistake of interviewing only one gender group. She believes that even if the researcher focuses on women, men also need to be interviewed in order to get a more comprehensive understanding on women’s everyday life.\(^{32}\) We believe, in our case, that we would not reach our aim by interviewing both men and women. We did not set out to investigate how refugee men perceived refugee women’s situation in the camps or how women’s situation is generally perceived. Instead, we wanted to attain a deepened understanding of how women *themselves* experienced their everyday lives with regards to safety.

Interviewing refugee women who were pregnant and/or lactating was a choice made because we were restricted, due to safety precautions taken by the Red Cross, to conducting the interviews within the dispensary area. Furthermore, a large amount of lactating and/or pregnant mothers were daily moving within the dispensary area, and finding participants would therefore not take too much of the short amount of time we

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\(^{31}\) For summaries of these, see below in the chapter “Humanitarian Guidelines and Previous Research”.

had to conduct the interviews. With the help of the interpreters, we therefore gathered a group of lactating and/or pregnant women in the dispensary area, introduced ourselves and informed them about our intentions with the study. Those interested in participating in an interview were asked to choose a suitable time from a prepared schedule.

**The Relationship between the Interviewer and the Participant**

When discussing the researcher’s role, we found feminist perspectives on interviewing to be of relevance since we aimed at achieving a “non-hierarchical research relationship”\(^{33}\) between the participant and us. According to Punsch, feminist research strives to equalize the relationship in order to create a trust relationship and consequently a more relaxed interview atmosphere.\(^{34}\)

Salner’s argument, that there is always a human being behind the researcher,\(^ {35}\) is worth keeping in mind, not only when discussing objectivity, but also when discussing the relationship between the interviewer and the participant. We do not believe that it is possible for someone in an interview situation to be entirely objective since, as stated by Lantz, interpretation is individual and subjective and both the interviewer and the participant interpret things through “expectations”, “wants” and “previous experiences”. According to Lantz, these three variables form an inner reference system and it is through this system that we “orientate” ourselves in life and relate to others.\(^ {36}\) We tried, to the best of our abilities, to take this into consideration during the course of the study. Moreover, Gorden states that some issues might be easier for the participant to discuss with an interviewer of the same sex.\(^ {37}\) Hence, we believe that interviewing women helped to create a comfortable interview atmosphere, and the distance, which might exist

\(^{34}\) Ibid. (Note: we do not mean to claim that feminist research is the only form of research that strives for equality.)
\(^{36}\) Lantz (1993), p. 103.
between the researcher and the participant, was reduced somewhat. However, factors such as skin colour, social class, age and clothing also need to be taken into consideration, since these are factors that might influence the interaction and also the results. For example, as stated, the fact that we were white and came from a western country might have influenced the interaction between the participants and us. Consequently, it is possible that these factors affected the answers given by the participants and therefore also the results. However, we find it important not only to focus on the differences between “us” and “them”, because even though we were visibly different, it should not be disregarded that we, at many times, saw things in the same way.

Ruth Finnegan argues that one “dominant duty for social scientists is often held to be to discover and reveal the facts – even where participants would prefer these to remain concealed”. We found this moral issue worth considering when conducting the interviews since we, through our interviews, wanted to discover facts (such as women's perception of their everyday lives with regards to safety). We would like to stress, however, that we never forced the participants to reveal issues, experience etc; we always respected the participants’ wish not to answer or talk about certain issues. Hence, the answers gathered were given by the participants of their own free will.

**Using Interpreters**

As stated in the previous section, we agree with Gorden and his discussion regarding the sex of the interviewer and its influence on the interaction between the participant and interviewer. We would, however, like to draw this argument further by including the relevance of the sex of the interpreter into the discussion. Accordingly, we found it relevant to have a female interpreter since she functioned as a representative for both the participants and us, all of whom were female. We believe that in this particular case the

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participants would feel more comfortable with a female interpreter since at times we touched upon, what we believed to be, questions of a sensitive nature.

Our initial aim was to find English-speaking refugee women who were willing to assist us as interpreters throughout the interviews. The idea of using a refugee as an interpreter when interviewing refugees was partly based on a recommendation from Tanaka. He advocated the use of a refugee woman as an interpreter, since this approach would, to a certain extent, equalize the power relation between the participant and the interpreter, as the participant herself is a refugee woman. We believed that this approach would create an atmosphere in which the participant would probably feel more familiar and comfortable and, hopefully, in turn, express herself more spontaneously. BenEzer states that in order to enable the participants to feel more “powerful” and “integrated”, the interviewer has to use the cultural codes recognized by the participant.\footnote{BenEzer (2002), p. 50.} This approach is used, according to BenEzer, to “dislodge”\footnote{Ibid.} the participants from the stressful situation that one might be in when living in a refugee camp. We believe that by using a refugee woman who shares similar cultural codes as the participant and who works as a reminder of their history before the time in the camp, BenEzer’s theory can be applied also here. In other words, we believe that by using a refugee woman as an interpreter, the participants feel more “powerful”, “integrated” and more “at one with themselves”\footnote{Ibid.}, which again would hopefully lead to a more comfortable interview situation.

In Mtabila 1, Yvonne matched the requirements of being a woman, a refugee and a Burundian and therefore knew the cultural codes well enough to be able to help create a familiar atmosphere in the interview situation. It is worth considering, however, that even though refugees at times can be identified as a group, they are still individuals who belong to different social classes, have different histories and origin as well as economic pre-conditions.
In Lugufu 1 we were not able to locate any English-speaking refugee woman. However, Stella Mtera, a Tanzanian woman with previous experience of interpreting between English and Swahili, was willing to help us. Stella was working within the Tanzanian Red Cross in the dispensary area as a clinical officer, which we believe should be taken into account since her occupation and/or nationality might have had an effect on the power- and trust relationship between her and the participant. That is, during the interviews, we had to take into consideration whether Stella’s nationality and/or occupation seemed to inhibit the participants from sharing their opinion on, for example, Red Cross-related questions. It should not be disregarded, however, that the presence of Stella might also have had the opposite effect; in the belief that Stella, by representing an organization, might be able to improve the participant’s life situation in one way or another, the participant perhaps shared more with her as an interpreter than they would have done with a refugee woman as an interpreter.

Nonetheless, in our view, Stella had an informal way of approaching people, irrespective of her role as a clinical officer, private person or interpreter, and seemed to be trusted upon by the refugee women with whom she interacted continuously in her work. Furthermore, Stella met people from Congo daily and was therefore used to the Congolese culture and seemed, in our view, to recognize the cultural codes well enough to make the participant feel familiar and comfortable in the interview situation.

The interview

The interviews were, in both camps, held in an examination room in the dispensary area. Present during each, approximately one hour-long, interview was a participant, an interpreter and the both of us. One of us was posing the questions and the other was typing the interviews onto a laptop computer. All participants agreed to our use of both a laptop and a tape recorder. Using a tape recorder seemed to be the best way to record the interviews. We agree with Essed who states that this method enables better concentration
on the interview and enables one to “react adequately” to the statements made by the participants. Also, in order to ensure that the participant fully understood the aim of the interview before the actual questioning started, we prepared a consent form which stated our aim with the interview, the participant’s right to stop the interview at any time, anonymity issues and more. When the interpreter went through the consent form, it was important for us that they emphasized the fact that neither they nor us were representing an organization or the like.

After finishing the interview we, as suggested by Lantz, summarized what had been said in order to measure whether the participants felt that they had been quoted correctly. This, moreover, gives the participant the chance to develop certain issues and/or correct miss-interpretations.

We want to note that during the first interviews in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 respectively, we reminded the interpreters, on several occasions, to translate in first person. This, however, was not consistently pursued. Therefore, in order to help the reader to follow the arguments in the analysis, and in order to give a more accurate picture of what the participants said (as the participants assumingly spoke in first person to the interpreter), we have chosen to modify the answers in the analysis by presenting them in first person.

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43 Essed (1991), p. 64.
Humanitarian Guidelines and Previous Research

In this chapter, we will present background material such as humanitarian guidelines and previous research, which discuss, from various lines of angles, the key issues of our study – protection, gender and environment – all important when addressing refugee women’s everyday lives. Although many guidelines address issues concerning refugee women, we will only present those (including the Sphere Project) who take all three key issues into consideration. Regarding previous research, no similar studies have yet been conducted. We will, however, summarize various research, which bring up aspects important when discussing women and security.

The Sphere Project

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRC) formed the Sphere Project in 1997 together with other NGOs working with disaster relief. The initial aim was to improve the efficiency and liability of humanitarian assistance given to those affected by disaster. This collaboration between several NGOs resulted in a handbook\footnote{The Sphere Project – Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (2000) (Hereafter referred to as The Sphere Handbook). A revised edition was published in July 2004.}, containing Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards, which was developed in order to reach the two main aims of Sphere: namely “that all possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering arising out of calamity and conflict, and […] that those affected by disaster have a right to life with dignity and therefore a right to assistance.”\footnote{The Sphere Handbook (2004), p. 5.} The Humanitarian Charter and the Minimum Standards thus function as tools for humanitarian agencies working toward these aims in disaster response.
Sphere’s descriptive handbook functions as a practical support to the conventions of the International Human Rights. Furthermore, additional international humanitarian instruments, such as international Refugee Law and the principles of the Red Cross and NGO Code of Conduct, lay the foundation for the Humanitarian Charter in the *Sphere Handbook*. The three main principles in the humanitarian charter are: the right to life with dignity, the distinction between combatants and non-combatants and the principle of non-refoulement, all covering fundamental principles of international humanitarian law.

The Minimum Standards have been developed through the experiences of practitioners working with humanitarian assistance in various fields. Over 400 organizations in 80 countries all over the world have been consolidated; hence the standards are built on a wide range of perspectives. The Minimum Standards describe through Key Indicators, in detail, what standard of living a refugee should be assisted with. These standards are divided into six sectors, namely Water, Sanitation, Food and Food Security, Shelter and Health Care, and Nutrition. While the Minimum Standards state, overarching, what a refugee should be assisted with, the Key Indicators formulate concrete requirements in order to facilitate the implementation of the standards. To illustrate:

Minimum Standard 1 included in chapter 3 “Excreta Disposal” states: “People have adequate numbers of toilets, sufficiently close to their dwellings, to allow them rapid, safe and acceptable access at all times of the day and night.” Furthermore, Key Indicators related to this standard state: “A maximum of 20 people use each toilet” and “Toilets are no more than 50 meters from dwellings”. In a sense, the Key Indicators thus function as a way of measuring the implementation of the Minimum Standards.

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51 Ibid.
The handbook also presents Guidance Notes after the Key Indicators. The two are interrelated and should be read in relation to each other. The Guidance Notes include further aspects, related to the Minimum Standards and Key Indicators, which need special consideration. To illustrate:

Guidance Note 5, also taken from standard 1 in Chapter 3, states: “[…] Efforts should be made to provide people living with HIV (Human Immune Deficiency Virus)/AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) with easy access to a toilet as they frequently suffer from chronic diarrhoea and reduced mobility.”

Hence, while the Minimum Standards describe the rights of a disaster-affected population, the Key Indicators, as stated, offer a way of measuring the implementation of these rights. Finally, the Guidance Notes offers practical approaches to plausible difficulties that might arise when implementing these standards.

**Vulnerable groups**

According to the Sphere handbook, the groups most commonly identified as “vulnerable” are women, children, older people, disabled people, ethnic minorities and people living with HIV/AIDS. Individuals included in these groups might, according to the handbook, face cultural, physical and/or social problems when trying to access their rightful support. Therefore, Sphere emphasizes the importance of providing these groups with information of what assistance they are entitled to. Also, according to Sphere, it is important that their needs and capabilities are recognized in order to ensure that they are not being marginalized further. Indeed, it is imperative to keep in mind that people affected by disaster have strategies and capabilities of their own to cope with different situations. These should be considered when working with refugee relief, and the refugees themselves, whether vulnerable or not, should never be seen as helpless victims.

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53 Ibid, pp. 9-10.
Cross-Cutting Issues

In 2001, the implementation of the Minimum Standards was evaluated in several refugee camps by a number of pilot agencies. The assessments showed that additional issues, which, due to their relation to vulnerability, were considered necessary to be included in the handbook. The revised 2004 edition therefore incorporated these issues, which are intended to cut across the six existing sectors and, in effect, permeate every part of the Minimum Standards. These so-called Cross-Cutting issues are: Children, Older People, Disabled People, Gender, people living with HIV/AIDS, Protection and Environment. Thus, when implementing the Minimum Standards, the Cross-Cutting issues should, if contextually possible, always be considered.

Since our aim is to get a deepened understanding of how refugee women experience their everyday lives with regards to safety, we will mainly focus on Gender, Environment and Security, all relating to our aim. The subsequent section will provide a more detailed description of these three Cross-Cutting issues.

Gender – the main objective of Sphere, to alleviate human suffering and ensure a life with dignity to those affected by disaster, naturally includes both women and men and girls and boys. The handbook thus stresses, by including Gender as a crosscutting issue, the importance of everyone’s equal right to humanitarian assistance. Sphere’s Minimum Standards function as tools to enable humanitarian assistance to reach all groups affected by disaster; everyone, irrespective of gender, should have the same opportunity to Sphere’s standards. This is shown in the following Guidance Notes:

54 See for example, Maina Wamuyu, Gakenia et al (2003), Sphere Project Evaluation Case Study Tanzania. Available at <http://www.sphereproject.org/about/ext_eva/an7.pdf>
• “Registration: […]” Lists developed by local authorities and community-generated family lists may be useful, and the involvement of women from the affected population in this process is to be encouraged. Women should have the right to be registered in their own names if they wish. Care should be taken to ensure that female or adolescent-headed households and other vulnerable individuals are not omitted from distribution lists.”\textsuperscript{57}

• “Minimising security risks: […]” When food is in short supply, tensions can run high when deliveries are made. Women, children, elderly people and people with disabilities may be unable to obtain their entitlement, or may have it taken from them by force. The risks must be assessed in advance and steps taken to minimize them […]”\textsuperscript{58}

The handbook further stresses that a prerequisite to make humanitarian assistance efficient is to understand that a disaster affects people in different ways and is thereby individual. Hence, individual circumstances (vulnerabilities, abilities, interests etc.) need to be taken into consideration when dealing with disaster relief. Moreover, in order to maximize human capacity, women’s and men’s (assumed) different roles and abilities need to be recognized and analyzed. That is, issues such as physical abilities and cultural restraints need to be acknowledged when implementing the Minimum Standards. In view of that, Sphere is recognizing gender differences in order to reach fairness and equality between men and women. Finally, Gender slightly diverges from the other Cross-Cutting issues as it is intended not only to permeate the Minimum Standards but also all other Cross-Cutting issues.\textsuperscript{59}

Protection – when providing assistance, agencies are encouraged to take protection-related issues or aspects - such as hindrance of sexual abuse and exploitation - into consideration. The Sphere handbook does not provide precise instructions on how to protect disaster-affected populations, but rather, since Protection is a Cross-Cutting issue,

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, p. 170.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid, p. 12.
it is intended to permeate the Minimum Standards and thereby include protection in the implementation of the rights.\textsuperscript{60} This is illustrated in the following Key Indicator:

- “Fuel is obtained in a safe and secure manner, and there are no reports of incidents of harm to people in the routine collection of fuel”.\textsuperscript{61}

The indicator shows that refugees not only should have the right to obtain fuel, but that fuel should be provided in a safe and secure manner. Also in the following Guidance Note, safety is acknowledged:

- \textit{Safe facilities}: inappropriate siting of toilets may make women and girls more vulnerable to attack, especially during the night, and ways must be found to ensure that women feel, and are, safe using the toilets provided. Where possible, communal toilets should be provided with lighting or families provided with torches. The input of the community should be sought with regard to ways of enhancing the safety of users.”\textsuperscript{62}

The preceding Guidance Note shows that when establishing facilities, protection is important; safety should be considered, preferably from a gender perspective because, as stated, gender itself permeates all Cross-Cutting issues.

\textit{Environment} – the concept environment is referred to by Sphere as being the physical, chemical and biological areas in which disaster-affected populations reside. These areas (e.g. forests) provide refugees and local population, living close to the refugee camps, with natural resources that are necessary in order to satisfy basic needs and therefore these areas need protection. Thus, through a maintenance perspective, the environment cuts across the Minimum Standards, as Sphere strives to prevent over-exploitation and deforestation respectively.\textsuperscript{63} This is illustrated in the subsequent Guidance Notes:

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{The Sphere Handbook} (2004), p. 12.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid, p. 235. “Non-food standard 4: stoves, fuel and lightning”.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid, p. 75. “Excreta disposal standard 2: design, construction and use of toilets”.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid, p. 13.
• “Environmental impact: […] people living in camps require cooking fuel, which may lead rapidly to local deforestation. The distribution of foodstuffs which have long cooking times, such as certain beans, will require more cooking fuel, thus also potentially affecting the environment […]”\textsuperscript{64}.

• “Fuel requirements: […] When necessary, appropriate fuel should be provided or a wood harvesting programme established that is supervised for the safety of women and children, who are the main gatherers of firewood. In general, items should be provided that do not require long cooking times or the use of large quantities of water. The provision of milled grain or of grain mills will reduce cooking times and the amount of fuel required.”\textsuperscript{65}

The latter quote shows how interconnected the three chosen Cross-Cutting issues are. It is difficult, in a refugee context, to discuss environment without involving the issues gender and protection. Firewood collection not only implies risks for over-exploitation and deforestation but also of assault (especially for women, as they are the main collectors of firewood). Even so, refugees are still dependent on the environment for fuel and are, hence, forced into areas where they are not protected.

\textit{UNHCR Guidelines}

We will, in this section, present Guidelines adopted by UNHCR that are of relevance for our study. These are \textit{Cooking Options in Refugee Situations}, \textit{Environmental Guidelines} and \textit{Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women}. We will also present an assessment on UNHCR’s \textit{Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women} conducted by Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

\textsuperscript{64} \textit{The Sphere Handbook} (2004), p. 123.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid, p. 159.
Environmental Guidelines

UNHCR provides general environmental-related guidelines, which incorporate all phases of refugee relief work - from the planning stage of camp formations, up to issues concerning eventual environmental impacts of repatriation in the country of origin. The guidelines are intended to serve two main purposes; firstly to prevent and allay the negative effects the establishment, and maintenance, of refugee camps might pose to the environment and, secondly, to secure the well-being of the refugees and the local population living in the surrounding areas of refugee camps.66

The guidelines are divided into three parts: the Emergency Phase, the Care and Maintenance Phase and the Durable Solutions Phase. The latter will not be elaborated on as it brings up environmental issues related to the aftermath of a refugee relief operation, and therefore has little relevance for our study. The Emergency Phase and the Care and Maintenance Phase, however, are of more relevance for our study and, according to UNHCR, the Emergency Phase is the most critical phase since the decisions taken at this stage most likely will have “refugee-related environmental impacts in subsequent operational phases”.67

Emergency Phase – in the emergency phase, UNHCR stresses the importance of taking preventive measures in order to protect refugees and minimize the environmental effects caused by the establishment of refugee camps. To illustrate: refugees need instantaneous access to basic necessities, e.g. food, water and shelter, in order to survive. If these necessities are not provided, refugees are forced to find what they need in areas surrounding the camps – often at the expense of the environment, as extensive extraction of wood in all probability results in environmental degradation.68

66 UNHCR (2005), Environmental Guidelines, p. 5
67 Ibid, p. 16.
The preventive measures also include guidelines, which are intended to create a consensus between the local population, refugees, NGOs and other agencies working in, and around, the camps. UNHCR states that efforts should be made to encourage local population, as well as the refugee population, to take part of environment-related information, with the objective that the “[…] environmental measures taken during this phase can be better structured and socially more acceptable.”

The environmental guidelines also offer more direct suggestions of measures that should be taken, in the emergency phase, to benefit all affected actors; if the availability of fuel wood in the surrounding areas of the camps decreases, for example, tension is likely to arise between the local population and the refugees. Therefore, UNHCR argues that refugees should be encouraged to harvest fuel wood themselves. This should, however, according to UNHCR, be a controlled effort where experts on forestry and species are involved from the initial stage, in order to minimize the environmental impacts.

A further issue, related not only to the Emergency Phase but to all phases, is the safety of the refugees themselves. For example, overcrowded camps and inadequate sanitation facilities might result in polluted ground water. Also, insufficient supply of firewood might force refugees to minimize their fuel consumption by reducing the cooking period and thereby food is not being properly cooked. Consequently, diseases might spread to a group of people whose immune system often already has been weakened.

Care and Maintenance Phase – when there is a clear reduction, or a full stop, of new arrivals seeking refuge in a camp, UNHCR moves from taking measures related to the Emergency Phase to taking measures related to the Care and Maintenance Phase. The measures taken in this phase tend to be long-term – costs and benefits are thus taken into account to a larger extent. Also in this phase, participation of local and refugee communities are important and preferable. Moreover, UNHCR declares that participation

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69 UNHCR (2005), *Environmental Guidelines*, p. 16.
70 Ibid, p. 28.
with NGOs and co-ordination with other UN agencies and local authorities are also imperative in order to successfully implement the environmental measures.72

One measure presented in the Care and Maintenance Phase concerns environmental-friendly income-generating activities; the support of various employment opportunities by agencies is, according to UNHCR, an essential tool in encouraging and assisting refugees to become more self-sufficient. However, the guidelines oppose supporting income-generating activities that harm the environment (such as production of charcoal or burning of bricks). Instead, the guidelines suggest supporting activities that have positive effects on the environment, for example, “production of fuel-efficient stoves”, “nurseries and reforestation” and “manufacturing concrete latrine slabs”.73 In order to endorse such activities, refugees need to be able to take part of information of how these activities are less physically demanding and more income generating than the activities that are harmful to the environment.74

Cooking Options in Refugee Situations

UNHCR has produced a handbook – *Cooking Options in Refugee Situations*  – which is based on practitioners’ experiences in energy conservations and alternative fuels. According to UNHCR, firewood and charcoal are the two most common energy sources used by refugees, particularly in developing countries. Extensive consumption of the two will, however, eventually cause environmental degradation, which, in turn, might trigger conflicts with the host government as well as the local population (as both groups watch their forests being degraded). Furthermore, the collection of firewood has been shown to jeopardize the physical security of refugees75 (again, this concerns especially women, as they are the main collectors of firewood).

73 Ibid, p. 36.
74 Ibid, p. 34.
These reasons lay the foundation for the production of the handbook, which discusses, from various perspectives (environmental, social, economic and protection-related), the problem of refugees’ energy consumption. It also presents guidelines to assist field staff in addressing questions of energy-use and environmental impacts in refugee camps.\textsuperscript{76}

The handbook is divided into three main parts: Energy Conservation, Alternative Energy and Energy Supply. In the first part, Energy Conservation, UNHCR presents energy-saving measures that can be taken in a refugee situation where firewood and charcoal are the two most common energy sources. These measures are, in fact, alternative ways to use firewood and charcoal in order to maximize the energy source and minimize the health risks it implies. In this first part, UNHCR also presents a number of ideas on how to save energy by using improved stoves and by taking simple energy-saving measures. Moreover, throughout the Energy Conservation part, emphasis is put on participation. For example, UNHCR states that field staff should encourage refugees to be involved when experimenting with the construction of the stoves. The reason for this is firstly, to create an awareness of energy-saving techniques, and, secondly, if having participated in the construction, refugees might feel more comfortable in using the stoves.\textsuperscript{77}

However, regardless of how well constructed the stoves are, simple energy-saving measures still need to be taken in order to utilize the fuel source to its maximum. If such measures are not taken, refugees are not using the full capacity of the stoves and will, consequently, still need to obtain an equal amount of woodfuel.\textsuperscript{78} Therefore, UNHCR presents clear and concrete guidelines or, rather, suggestions on simple fuel-saving techniques. Examples include:

\textsuperscript{76} UNHCR (2002), \textit{Cooking Options in Refugee Situations}, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid, pp.11-12.
\textsuperscript{78} “Woodfuel - Any fuel based on wood. Normally taken to mean firewood and charcoal.”, ibid, p.5.
“Wood which is air dried for two months has about twice the heat value of freshly cut wood. This means that fuel savings of 20-25% can be achieved using air-dried firewood instead of freshly cut pieces.”\textsuperscript{79}

“A tight-fitting lid can save 20% of fuel.”\textsuperscript{80}

“[…] families may be obliged to keep fires burning for long periods simply to keep warm. For the sake of both energy conservation and as a humanitarian obligation, it is important to ensure that refugees have access to sufficient clothing and blankets to keep themselves warm at night, without having to light fires in their homes.”\textsuperscript{81}

In the second part, Alternative Energy, UNHCR focuses on environmental-friendly energy source alternatives to firewood and charcoal, such as: grass, peat, kerosene and solar energy. Most of these alternatives have been tested in refugee camps in various parts of the world. Peat\textsuperscript{82}, for example, was tested in 1995-1996, in the Rwandan refugee camps in the Kagera region, Tanzania. The Rwandan refugees were involved in cutting peat for a small amount of daily incentives. An evaluation later showed that by mid-1996, approximately 98% of the refugee families in Kagenyi and Rubwera camps were using peat as their main cooking fuel. The incentives were, however, supposed to have been withdrawn in late 1996, as it eventually would be too expensive to provide financial compensation for the peat-cutting. Since all Rwandan refugees were repatriated in late 1996\textsuperscript{83} though, it was never established whether some refugees would continue cutting peat despite the withdrawal of financial compensation.\textsuperscript{84} Similar experiments have been

\textsuperscript{79} UNHCR (2002), \textit{Cooking Options in Refugee Situations}, p. 18.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{82} "Organic matter that develops as a result of incomplete decomposition of wetland vegetation under conditions of excess moisture and oxygen deficiency." Ibid, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{83} For more information on the repatriation of the Rwandans, see below in the section: “Tanzania’s Refugee History” p. 63.
\textsuperscript{84} UNHCR (2002), \textit{Cooking Options in Refugee Situations}, pp. 29-30.
made with solar energy, kerosene and other fuel alternatives in Afghanistan, Uganda, Kenya, Bangladesh and other countries with various responses and outcomes.\textsuperscript{85}

In the last part, Energy Supply, UNHCR discusses, in detail, \textit{when} and \textit{how} to provide external fuel. Four occasions on \textit{when} it is found suitable to supply refugees with fuel are presented; firstly, when there is a shortage of available fuel; secondly, when there is a security risk linked to fuel collection; thirdly, when there is governmental pressure to do so and; fourthly, when the collection of woodfuel appears to be posing a threat to the environment.\textsuperscript{86}

The other discussion brought up in this part is, as stated, \textit{how} to supply fuel. The handbook presents six guidelines which are intended to help make fuel supply become more efficient and cost-effective:

\begin{itemize}
\item The selected fuel should be culturally acceptable and easy to use.
\item The selected fuel should be unattractive for re-sale.
\item Fuel distribution should be targeted.
\item Fuel should not, in principle, be given freely.
\item Refugees should distribute the fuel themselves.
\item Impacts of fuel supply should be closely monitored.\textsuperscript{87}
\end{itemize}

Each guideline has adjoined advice on how implementation is best achieved. For example, under the guideline: \textit{“[t]he selected fuel should be unattractive for re-sale”}, UNHCR advises field staff to ensure that the fuel supplied is unattractive on the market, in order to ascertain that the refugees are using the distributed fuel themselves, rather than selling it on and continuing to collect firewood. Furthermore, UNHCR states that the refugees themselves should distribute fuel. UNHCR believes that this would be cost effective; to pay NGO workers to distribute the fuel would severely increase the costs.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid, pp. 38-39.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid, pp. 39-40.
Moreover, it would benefit the refugees involved in the distribution, since it would be an opportunity for them to develop organisational skills. Under the last guideline “Impacts of fuel supply should be closely monitored”, UNHCR states that assessments should be conducted continuously to ensure that the initial aims of the fuel supply programme are still in focus.\footnote{UNHCR (2002) \textit{Cooking Options in Refugee Situations}, p. 39}

\textit{Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women}

UNHCR adopted, in 1991, the \textit{Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women}, which were developed with the purpose of improving the situation for the female refugee population. The guidelines are intended to help the staff identifying the security- and protection-related problems faced by refugee women.\footnote{UNHCR (1991), \textit{Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women}, p. 4.} The guidelines are divided into five large sections but we will only elaborate on protection-related aspects, included in these sections, which we find to be relevant for our study.

Section one describes the background of the guidelines, which, to a certain extent, are based on international legal instruments.\footnote{For example, the 1951 UN Conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1949 Geneva Convention and its two protocols of 1977 and the 1966 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.} In order to prioritize the support of refugee women’s safety, the guidelines go beyond the legal principals by including the physical and social reality faced by refugee women.\footnote{UNHCR (1991), \textit{Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women}, pp. 1-3.} For example, UNHCR states: “Refugee women who are unable to feed, cloth and shelter themselves and their children will be more vulnerable to manipulation and to physical and sexual abuse in order to obtain such necessities.”\footnote{Ibid, pp. 2-3.} In other words, protection will be lost if refugee women are not provided with such items. This strongly interrelated relationship between protection and assistance...
is brought up throughout the guidelines by UNHCR, who further states that “[p]rotection concerns can often be best addressed through assistance-related measures.”

The second section consists of guidelines, which are to be used when conducting assessments on the security situation for refugee women. These guidelines are divided into the following ten themes:

- Circumstances of the movement
- Characteristics of the refugee population
- Local reception and attitudes
- Physical organization and location of camps
- Social organization
- Physical safety
- Access to assistance and services
- Legal status and access to legal systems
- Durable solutions
- How and where to get information
- Evaluating and using information

The guidelines, presented in these ten themes, give suggestions on questions to ask when identifying what eventual problems, related to protection and security, refugee women are facing throughout all phases of refuge; from the emergency phase to the long-term phase of a refugee situation. UNHCR states that it is crucial to gather this sort of information in the initial phase of a refugee situation since the rules and policies implemented at an early stage, most likely will have long-lasting effects on the security situation for refugee women. Extracted from the guidelines and relevant for our study, are questions such as:

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94 Ibid, pp. 5-11.
95 Ibid, p. 10.
“Is the camp lit at night? If so, by what means? Are all parts of the camp lit?”

“Where do people collect water and firewood relative to the living quarters? Do they need passes or permission to go to where the water and firewood is located? Do they need to exit the boundaries of the camp to collect water and firewood? Are the means of exit safe? Is there safe access for women to collect these items, given that women in many societies have primary responsibility for these tasks?”

“Can people move freely into and out of the camp? If there are restrictions on free movements, what are they? Are men and women affected equally by these restrictions?”

In section three, physical and legal protection needs for refugee women are presented. Also specific areas and situations where refugee women may be particularly exposed are being identified. For example, the design of camps is brought up in this section, as it might lead to a security problem for refugee women. If latrines and other facilities are situated far from the living area in a camp, which is seldom well-lit, women are forced to walk in dark areas and thereby they become potential victims of various forms of assault, e.g. physical and sexual attacks.

In section four, the relationship between assistance and protection is, again, emphasized; UNHCR states that the assistance given should be advantageous for women, otherwise the prospect of protection is lost. UNHCR develops further how the security situation for refugee women can be improved; recommended interventions by UNHCR are, to name a few: to increase refugee women’s participation in decision-making regarding their protection and security, to increase the number of trained female staff (there among the protection officers) working in the camp, to improve the lighting around the camps and to consult women on issues related to water and firewood collection.

97 Ibid, p. 7.
98 Ibid.
100 Ibid, pp. 21-23.
In section five, UNHCR presents ways of dealing with a situation after a specific security problem has been recognized and identified. In individual protection cases, when a refugee woman have, for example, been abused or mistreated in any way:

“[…] the aim of UNHCR activities should be to ensure that the individual obtains protection in the future, that adequate actions are taken to prevent similar cases from occurring, that her medical and other needs resulting from the protection problem are met, and that actions be taken to institute legal proceedings if sufficient evidence can be obtained.”

More concrete measures, related to this quote, that should be taken in an individual protection case include: creating possibilities for a refugee woman to confidentially report an assault, preferably to an experienced female staff member and to ensure that the woman receives accurate medical support or, if required, even relocation.

Apart from individual protection cases, UNHCR also includes, in the fifth section, situations where a repeated pattern of violence is recognized. In such situations, the measures taken in response should be the same as referred to above. However, since these cases concern continuous protection problems, UNHCR states that the aim also ought to be to identify systematic reasons for these patterns. This aim can be reached by, for example, evaluating whether or not the implemented practices and policies in the camps are, in any way, contributing to the systematic violence and the deteriorating protection situation for refugee women. If so, measures should be taken to change those policies and practices by, for example, presenting the results to the policy-makers, NGOs and other influential agencies.

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102 Ibid.
103 Ibid, pp. 29-30.
A Ten-Year Assessment on the Protection of Refugee Women

Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children (hereby referred to as Women’s Commission) evaluated, in 2001, the implementation of UNHCR’s *Guidelines on the Protection on Refugee Women*, which were, as stated, adopted in 1991. The assessment is based on visits to five field sites (in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Zambia, Pakistan and Turkey), evaluations of several UNHCR reports and interviews with people working at UNHCR Headquarter in Geneva.104

Women’s Commission states that the increased knowledge, among UNHCR staff, regarding women’s needs, the response from NGOs, who are increasingly emphasizing the needs of women, and the progress in spreading information internationally on the rights of refugee women, are all examples of areas where the Guidelines have been successfully implemented. Furthermore, the assessment team found examples of assistance, which, in accordance with the Guidelines, incorporates the protection of refugee women. Efforts have, for example, been made to encourage refugee women to participate in food distribution, to involve refugee women in camp management and to provide relevant services to refugee women who have been exposed to assaults.105

Such activities, which emphasize the protection of refugee women, have not, however, been frequently implemented. By contrast, Women’s Commission actually found the general picture of the implementation to be poor and far from complete. According to the assessment, implementation-related difficulties partly depend on external factors; dangerous and insecure working situations, physical environmental factors and host countries who do not follow international law. All these factors affect the possibility to intervene and take measures to improve the protection for refugees. Moreover,

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programmes, which were intended to reinforce refugee women’s positions and enhance their protection, have been withdrawn due to decreasing budgets.106

External factors and budget restraints are, however, not the only factors that have negatively influenced the implementation. The report brings up further constraints, there among:

• Lack of female staff
The lack of female staff contributes to difficulties in obtaining information from refugee women and thereby difficulties in identifying their specific protection needs. Women’s Commission demonstrates this issue by bringing up the following example: “[...] in Ethiopia and Zambia, some refugee women said they would not seek medical help because there was no female physician. They requested female staff.”107 The assessment further states that women who have been exposed to, for example, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) will probably not report the accident/s to a male staff. Consequently, as assaults remain unreported, the impunity of the perpetrators continues to exist, thereby allowing abuses to continue.108

• Lack of refugee women participating in decision-making
Women’s Commission emphasizes the importance of refugee women’s involvement in decision-making and believes that their participation is crucial for achieving full implementation of the Guidelines. They argue, for example, that refugee women’s presence at meetings concerning camp management and governance would imply that protection issues - related specifically to women - would be discussed and taken into consideration to a larger extent.109

According to Women’s Commission, the Guidelines emphasize, as previously discussed, the importance of addressing protection through assistance. Therefore, the assessment

107 Ibid, p. 3.
109 Ibid, pp. 3-4 and 22.
examines whether this interplay is implemented in the field. The following quote thus illustrates a situation where Women’s Commission has found implementing partners to have failed in recognizing this linkage between protection and assistance:

“Marie, a Congolese refugee, was living in Lusaka with her children. [As] [t]he head of her household, she was struggling to provide her family with food and shelter, and went to an NGO and asked for assistance. The NGO staff said she was getting pregnant often and she confessed that she had had to trade sex in order to survive. Some NGO and UNHCR staff discussed her case and determined that her problem was that she had too many children and she should stop having children.”

In this situation, Women’s Commission argues, the protection-risks associated with insufficient food and shelter were not addressed thoroughly, hence the implementing partners have not managed to see to the protection needs of the woman seeking assistance.

Regarding firewood collection, also Women’s Commission describes the interplay between protection and assistance as they state “[a]lternatives to firewood for fuel, repair or purchase of grinding mills, and improvement of water posts not only would enhance women’s quality of life, but would remove some of their protection concerns as well.”

When visiting Ethiopia, the assessment team found refugee women to be in great risk of assault when collecting firewood, as, for example, limited fuel sources had created hostility among the local population towards refugees. The assessment team identified similar problems in Zambia, where measures subsequently were taken, for example, fuel alternatives to firewood were introduced, and refugee women were susceptible to an implementation of these. In a UNHCR-study conducted in Dadaab camp, Kenya, firewood collection was found to be causing protection-related problems for refugee women. Therefore, UNHCR began supplying firewood to refugees and, as a result,

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111 Ibid.
112 Ibid, p. 28.
113 This measure was, however, regarded too costly in Ethiopia. Ibid.
instances of rape decreased. Hence, supplying firewood can be seen as a successful preventive measure when addressing protection through assistance.\textsuperscript{114}

\textbf{Previous Research}

To date, we have not found any literature linking Feminist Geography to refugee women. However, Jennifer Hyndman’s \textit{Managing Displacement} (2000), Marc Sommers’s \textit{A Child’s Nightmare. Burundian Children at Risk} (1998), Bonaventure Rutinwa \textit{Identifying Gaps in Protection Capacity – Tanzania} (2005) and Carina Listerborn’s \textit{Tryggare Stad} (2000), \textit{Om Rätten att Slippa Skyddas} (2000) and \textit{Trygg Stad} (2002) present issues we find relevant for the purpose of our study. Hyndman’s comprehensive study shows that feminist geography and its theories are relevant when discussing women and security. Sommers and Rutinwa both confirm, through their studies in Tanzanian refugee camps, that there is a need for the Cross-Cutting issues included in Sphere’s Handbook. Listerborn brings up relevant aspects when analyzing women’s experiences of moving in public space.

\textbf{Jennifer Hyndman}

Gender and power relations in a context of displacement is discussed in the book \textit{Managing Displacement} by Hyndman, who approaches the unequal power relations in Kenyan and Somali refugee relief work respectively, through post-colonial, post-structural, feminist and geographical perspectives. She explores the historical and political refugee context in these areas, highlighting the Eurocentric geography of relief aid through history.

\textsuperscript{114} Nonetheless, according to Women’s Commission, UNHCR found in their reports (Conducted in Dadaab camp, in 1997 and 2000) that the instances of rape merely decreased for a while and later on actually increased in other settings. Women’s Commission (2002), p. 28.
Hyndman endorses approaching gender and power relations through a feminist geographical perspective by stating: “[…] feminist geography is a post-disciplinary orientation of critical engagement open to those who take seriously all the kinds of material and discursive constellations of power that produce and reproduce social and spatial hierarchies and inequalities at a multitude of scales.”\textsuperscript{115} Hyndman’s book is permeated by this critical engagement, which is shown through her arguments presented in the subsequent sections.

Hyndman presents, in the introduction, her work and research-related experiences, which lay the foundation for the empirical part of the book; she was employed by an NGO in Kenya and by a UN agency in Somalia. Later on, she returned to the refugee camps in Kenya as a researcher based in a UNHCR field office.\textsuperscript{116} Hyndman’s analysis is thereby developed through two lines of approaches: “[her] positioning both inside and outside the humanitarian project, [making her] at once a participant and a critic.”\textsuperscript{117}

Hyndman discusses how gender inequality manifested itself in the refugee camps; when onsite, she often recognized refugee women’s everyday lives to be “[…] invisible, inaudible and secondary to other issues and actors in the camps.”\textsuperscript{118} Hyndman found, for example, women to have less of a chance to participate in decision-making regarding camp organization and the like. In addition, Hyndman states that she, as an employee, never received any training in refugee women-related policies.\textsuperscript{119}

In Chapter four, “In the Field: Camps, Compounds and Other Spaces”, Hyndman analyses the face-to-face interviews she conducted with Somali refugee women regarding their everyday routines and how these are affected by, for example, variables such as: food ration sufficiency, camp design, power relations and resource accessibility.\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{115} Hyndman, (2000), p. 90.
\textsuperscript{116} This office was serving Libio, Hagadera and Dagahaley refugee camps, all situated in Dadaab area along the Kenyan and Somali border.
\textsuperscript{117} Hyndman (2000), p.xvii.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid, p. 90.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid, p. 109.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid, pp, 100-102.
Hyndman concludes, from the interviews, that the everyday routines of the refugee women are strongly affected by these variables as the women are forced to spend considerable amount of time (in areas where they are not physically secure) on tasks vital for their survival.

Hyndman critically examines humanitarian assistance from various lines of angles as she states that there is a need for critical reflections regarding, for example, the physical security inside a refugee camp. She states that the physical security inside a camp is mainly constructed to benefit the staff but not the refugees. More specifically, Hyndman asks how a camp can be considered safe for refugees (its residents) when it is not considered safe enough for non-refugees (working in the camp). She discusses this unequal power relation in terms of physical organization throughout the book.

### Marc Sommers

Sommers focuses in his report *A Child’s Nightmare. Burundian Children At Risk* on Burundian adolescents and children’s exposed situation in various refugee camps in Kigoma and Kibondo sub-regions, western Tanzania. The report is based on a three-week field study in the refugee camps Mtabila, Muyovosi and Lukole.

According to the report, UNHCR pays special attention to refugees defined as “vulnerables”, they include: unaccompanied minors, attached minors, physically handicapped, mentally handicapped, chronically ill, victims of violence, single-parent

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121 Many offices are located in areas which are easily accessible by vehicle, however not by foot. Also staff are required to leave the camp after a certain hour since the camp is not considered safe after sunset. Hyndman (2000), p. 95.
122 Specifically in chapter four: “In the Field: Camps, Compounds and Other Spaces” Hyndman (2000).
124 Note, UNHCR’s definition of “vulnerables” is not the same as Sphere’s. See above in the section “Vulnerable Groups” p. 25.
families (male), single parent families (female), single (adult) females and unaccompanied elders. Sommers questions UNHCR’s category of “vulnerables” for various reasons. For example, he states that children, who constitute more than half of the refugee population, are only primarily represented in two categories of “vulnerables”. Furthermore, Sommers criticizes UNHCR for disregarding a large number of what he claims to be obvious cases of “vulnerables”; adolescent girls, children exposed to a great deal of physical and psychological violence are examples of these. Sommers also criticizes the very act of labeling as he argues that the labeling itself might create or enhance the vulnerability of a group of people already vulnerable. For example, Sommers notes that tensions can arise when “vulnerables” are provided with supplies not dispensed to the remaining refugee population. This might put the “vulnerables” at greater risk of, for instance, being robbed by a “non-vulnerable”. Hence the vulnerability is reinforced. Furthermore, Sommers notes that three particular groups of refugees at risk are omitted in UNHCR’s definition of “vulnerables”: the group of children (primarily girls) who are not attending primary school (for reasons such as domestic duties, e.g. collecting firewood); the group of adolescents who lack opportunities to attend special programs and activities such as sports, peace education and discussion groups; and refugees exposed to sexual violence.

According to Sommers, UNHCR and International Rescue Committee (IRC), both represented in the camps, use different methods when gathering data on sexual violence. For example, UNHCR uses Zone Leaders\textsuperscript{125} as sources of information when investigating the commonality of sexual violence. Consequently, according to Sommers, only women and children that report cases of sexual violence to the zone leaders are included in UNHCR’s statistics. IRC presupposes that there ought to be a number of unrecorded cases apart from UNHCR’s statistics, since many female refugees might be reluctant to approach Zone Leaders with issues concerning sexual violence. Therefore, IRC has established “safe environments” in the refugee camps, where victims of sexual violence have the possibility to, confidentially, report the incidents. The different ways of

\textsuperscript{125} The refugee camps are divided into smaller areas, each with a refugee representative referred to as a “zone leader”. Sommers (1998). See also below in the chapter “Refugee Context in Tanzania”, pp. 62-73.
gathering data becomes visible in the statistical findings. For example, among Burundian refugee girls between the age of 12 and 18, IRC’s report *Pain to Deep for Tears*\(^{126}\) shows that 27 per cent had experienced sexual abuse. An UNHCR official claimed, however, that the number of reported cases was merely 1.4 to 2.5 per cent.

According to Sommers, the report from IRC, *Pain Too Deep for Tears*, has contributed to UNHCR’s enhanced emphasis on issues concerning sexual violence in the Burundian camps in Tanzania. For example, UNHCR has employed experts, such as a “sexual violence consultant” and a “female junior protection officer” in order to deal with these issues.

**Bonaventure Rutinwa**

As the title reveals, Rutinwa assesses in *Identifying Gaps in Protection Capacity Tanzania* Tanzania’s capacity of protecting refugees. More specifically, Rutinwa illuminates how the refugees residing in Tanzania are affected by insufficient protection. Even if Rutinwa states that Tanzania’s long history of hosting refugees shows its success in refugee matters, the purpose of the report is mainly to identify security-related problems faced by refugees. Rutinwa discusses the consequences of the gaps in the protection of refugees (some of which will be presented below) by approaching issues such as: restrictions of movement, lack of non-food items, food-distribution, registration, firewood collection, participation of refugee women and primary and secondary education.\(^{127}\)

Refugees should be able to move within a 4-kilometre radius of the camps in Tanzania, but Rutinwa has found that there is an inconsistency in the implementation of this law. On that note, Rutinwa brings up the Kasulu refugee camps (including Mtabila 1). The report shows that the District Commissioner of Kasulu did not interpret the Refugee

\(^{126}\) Nduna, Sydia & Goodyear, Lorelei (1997), *Pain Too Deep For Tears*.

Fear in Everyday Life…

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Act\(^\text{128}\) to allow refugees the right to move within 4-kilometre radius of the camp and, thereby, the refugees were banned to move outside of the Kasulu camps and would risk punishment if doing so. Rutinwa also states, however, that settlement officers differed in their strictness; many simply did not take notice of refugees who left the camp for the purpose of, for example, collecting firewood.\(^\text{129}\)

Another security-related problem, brought up by Rutinwa, is linked to firewood collection as women who collect firewood in the forests outside the camp are at great risk of being physically assaulted, particularly of being raped. According to Rutinwa, assailants were often reported to carry weapons and, therefore, it was assumed that they were bandits. One measure that had been taken in order to reduce the attacks on women in the forest was to encourage men to join their wives while collecting firewood. A large number of men were reluctant to such intervention, however, and Rutinwa states that in many cases, this reluctance seemed to be grounded in cultural constraints. Moreover, in some cases, Rutinwa found that men, who accompanied their wives when collecting firewood, were not always able to prevent their wives from being sexually assaulted. Cases were also found where the men were victims of sexual assault themselves.\(^\text{130}\)

Carina Listerborn

In Tryggare Stad Listerborn looks more closely into the construction of a city and of the everyday habits of men and women, to see if a pattern can be detected and subsequently changed, in order to increase the feeling of safety among women. More specifically, she notes, for example, that women in Sweden are more likely to use public transport, while men are more likely to use the car.\(^\text{131}\) With this in mind, also public transport needs to be


\(^{129}\) Rutinwa, Bonaventure (2005), pp.41-42.

\(^{130}\) Ibid, p. 32.

integrated when implementing a feminist safety perspective onto the construction of a city. One concrete measure that can be taken is to increase the number of bus stops and place them in well-lit areas where there is high movement of people even at late hours.\textsuperscript{132}

In \textit{Trygg Stad}, Listerborn discusses lightness and darkness and how these affect the way people perceive certain spaces in a city; a person can perceive a specific physical space as being both safe and unsafe depending on whether it is light or dark at that particular time.\textsuperscript{133} She develops this argument further also in \textit{Om Rätten att Slippa Skyddas}, where she argues that even though light, for example, would help alleviate women's feeling of being unsafe in certain spaces, it would not solve the problem entirely. To illustrate: from a project implemented in Toronto, which was a part of the international programme ”Safe City”\textsuperscript{134}, a conclusion was drawn that women's fear in public spaces lies in the existing power relations between men and women. In view of that, Listerborn argues that a power perspective needs to be considered in order to achieve a full understanding of the problem of women's fear.\textsuperscript{135} “[...] fear among women can only be lessened by the empowerment of women and not by increased protection”\textsuperscript{136} Listerborn concludes in her books that a comprehensive approach is imperative, and that a combination of measures needs to be taken, in order to increase the feeling of safety among women in an urban area.

\textsuperscript{132} As a result of the ”Safe City” project in Toronto, people are now able to request stop when using public transport at night. Listerborn (2000a), p. 50.
\textsuperscript{133} Listerborn (2002a), pp. 3 and 196-199.
\textsuperscript{134} ”Safe City” was initiated by United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT) in 1996. Listerborn has looked more into the implementation of this programme in Copenhagen, Toronto and Vienna.
\textsuperscript{135} Listerborn (2000b), pp. 191-195.
\textsuperscript{136} Listerborn (2002a) p. 273.
Theory

In this section we will present the interdisciplinary field of Feminist Geography\textsuperscript{137}, from which we have used arguments and concepts that will form the theoretical framework of our study. This theoretical framework will be used as a tool when analyzing our collected data. However, since feminist geographers, to date, mainly have focused on western urban societies, we have chosen to include both those fragments of Feminist Geography that we find to be applicable on a rural, non-western, refugee context but also those concepts and arguments that we find non-applicable on such context; the latter in order to illuminate why Feminist Geography has to be developed further – to include also refugee women residing in non-western areas.

Following is a brief presentation of the history of Feminist Geography and its central concerns. Thereafter, the concepts and arguments that form our theoretical framework will be discussed.

\textit{Feminist Geography}

Feminist geographers examine how gender relations affect the formation of space and place, and reciprocally how space and place shape gender relations.\textsuperscript{138} Feminist Geography can be seen as a tool for illuminating the spatial mobility and its relation to gender, space and place. Thereby, the physical environment becomes central; several feminist geographers explore how the physical environment affects the mobility of men and women alike (also variables such as class, ethnicity and sexuality, and their respective relation to space and place constitute imperative elements within feminist

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{137} In the process of becoming an area of study, “feminist geographers drew inspiration from, and contributed to, work in fields far beyond the domain of conventional social sciences – particularly engaging with post structural, psychoanalytic, critical race, postcolonial, and queer theory.” Nelson and Seager (2005), p. 6.
\textsuperscript{138} See, for example, McDowell, Linda (1999), \textit{Gender, Identity and Place}.
\end{footnotesize}
Moreover, in Feminist Geography the relationship between gender, space, place and the physical environment are largely analyzed through feminist theories and methods. Through such theories and methods, feminist geographers critically examine how geography is generally constructed. More specifically, as McDowell states: “[t]he specific aim of a feminist geography […] is to investigate, make visible and challenge the relationships between gender divisions and spatial divisions, to uncover their mutual constitution and problematize their apparent naturalness.”

Feminist Geography, which first appeared in literature in mid-1970s, stems from Human Geography. Rose states that it emerged as a critique to the discipline of Geography, which was considered to marginalize women. This critique was not only based on the predominance of male researchers within the discipline, but also on its neglect of invoking a gender perspective into the field of Geography. She states: “[f]eminist geographers have long argued that the domination of the discipline by men has serious consequences both for what counts as legitimate geographical knowledge and who can produce such knowledge.” During the 1980’s, Feminist Geography was growing rapidly and owing to the extensive empirical work produced by feminist geographers, new perspectives and concerns to take into account when studying various geographical issues have developed.

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142 Feminist geography stems from Human geography, which “is a branch of geography that focuses on the systematic study of patterns and processes that shape human interaction with the environment, with particular reference to the causes and consequences of the spatial distribution of human activity on the Earth's surface.” Available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_geography>
143 Rose, Gillian (1993), Feminism and Geography, p. 2.
144 Ibid, pp. 2-3.
**Theoretical Framework**

As stated, we will in this section present key concepts and arguments that are included in the field of Feminist Geography and are of importance when analyzing refugee women’s everyday lives. The chosen key concepts *Spatial Planning, Constructing Bodies, Space and Place, Public/Private Space,* and *Fear and Safety* will together form our theoretical framework and thereby function as tools when we analyze the interviews. Moreover, *Social Structures, Gender* and *Patriarchal Structures* are three further concepts that will be defined, as they are essential for the discussion of Feminist Geography. Since they permeate all key concepts that constitute our theoretical framework, an understanding of the constructed nature of the three is a prerequisite in order to trace our line of argument.

In order to understand how, for example, gendered spatial mobility/immobility is maintained in societies, it is useful to consider *Social Structures* as being constantly reproduced. This reproductive nature of social structures is illustrated in the subsequent quote: “[t]hrough their everyday interactions with people and objects, individuals develop certain kinds of knowledge – conscious, subconscious and ideological – and their subsequent actions based on these kinds of knowledge reproduce a social structure.”\(^{145}\)

Discourse and everyday interactions affect how we view *Gender*; hence gender is socially constructed. Accordingly, gender is not a fixed category; it changes over time and space and can therefore be seen as being contextually bound. McDowell explains: “[w]hat it means to be a woman or a man is […] context-dependent, relational and variable, albeit constrained by the rules and regulations of the time which define permitted and transgressive acts.”\(^{146}\)

According to McDowell, *Patriarchy* is defined as a structure where men – as a group – predominately uphold the power positions over women – as a group – and men are

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\(^{146}\) McDowell (1999), p. 23.
thereby viewed as having authority over women (this authority is evident in various
systems; from tax and security systems to systems of everyday behaviours). Furthermore, that patriarchy changes over time and space is evident in feminist geographical research where factors such as age, class, ‘race’, ethnicity and sexuality have been shown to have impact on the shapes patriarchy take in different societies and at different times. Such variables also matter for understanding why women might perceive a patriarchal society differently.

Spatial Planning

The diverse consequences of spatial planning for men and women constitute a central part of feminist geography. Laws argues that “geography matters to the construction of difference.” That is, in certain spatial arrangements, differences are created between people who in other spatial arrangements consider themselves as being indifferent from each other. Areas where racism or homophobia exist (or, more physically, high buildings without elevators) are examples of spatial arrangements that construct difference between social groups and consequently exclude particular groups of people. Collectives (various social groups) and individuals experience places differently as a consequence of the power of spatial planning to construct difference and to exclude people. Also, the human body constitutes an important element for obtaining an understanding of why social groups and individuals experience spatial arrangements differently.

147 McDowell (1999), p. 16.
150 Laws, Glenda (1997), p. 49
Constructing Bodies

Several feminist geographers view the body as being socially constructed; it is viewed differently at different times and in different spaces and places, often depending on what is assumed as being “normal” or “natural” in that particular context. The body is also, indeed, viewed as being a material, biological object with multiplex characteristics, sizes and shapes that takes up and uses space. Grosz refers to a system of “social tattooing” when explaining how bodies are socially constructed; in order to give material bodies meaning they are marked by social codes, which indicate to the bodies their capabilities and obligations.

Another aspect to draw into the discussion of bodies is culture. According to Bourdieu, the body itself is the central mean through which culture is produced and reproduced. It carries social and cultural meanings that are communicated unconsciously at all times (for example through ways of walking, eating and drinking). These cultural habits are always played out in a space, where social structures determine if a body (with its cultural habits) ‘belongs’ to that particular space. Bourdieu has termed the social structures’ effect on bodies “Habitus”. He focuses mainly on class when discussing habitus, but feminist geographers have developed his arguments further by including the gender groups. For example, within feminist geography, the debate on the boundaries between (and its association with the two gender groups) public (male) and private (female), aims to show how women foremost, because of various social structures and habitus, are excluded from the public sphere. Their bodies are an effect of a discourse, which claims that they do not belong in the public space.

152 McDowell (1999), pp. 34-36.
154 Fenster, Tovi, (2005), “Gender and the City”, p. 246.
155 Ibid.
When analyzing women’s mobility in public space, another factor worth considering is collective constructions of bodies.\textsuperscript{156} How various social groups view the body and bodily differences might affect the spatial mobility and thereby the possibilities to access different environments. A woman’s body can be considered as being “sexed female and thereby subject to the threat of violence”.\textsuperscript{157} For women to be aware of their bodies as (generally, but not always) being viewed as intimately related to sexuality delimits their spatial mobility; some women might avoid certain areas at night and some might be afraid to enter certain public spaces (regardless of the time of day).\textsuperscript{158} Sexual attacks on women are examples of acts that create this awareness; such attacks warn women that their bodies should not enter certain areas. Not only women, as a social group, are constrained by collective constructions of their bodies. Other causes to spatial constraints can be attacks on bodies on the basis of racism and homophobia.\textsuperscript{159}

Within Feminist Geography, social and spatial processes are, as stated, interrelated and, according to Laws, this approach is useful when discussing the construction of the body. She argues that “(male and female) bodies are constructed in space, bodies build spaces and spaces imbue bodies with meaning.”\textsuperscript{160} In a segregated urban area, for example, bodies are imbued with different identities depending on which area of the city they reside in. In other words, space helps to construct a body’s identity and identity can, therefore, to a certain extent, be considered to be dynamic. Laws further argues that the body also is a contributing factor for the way in which an identity is developed, as discussed in the previous sections.\textsuperscript{161}

McDowell states that the mind, in Western thought, has been associated with (rational, working, dependable) men and the body with (childbearing, menstruating, irrational) women. Like many feminists before her, McDowell argues that this assumed binary

\textsuperscript{156} “This is not to say that in any one instance people will or will not treat someone in a particular way on the basis of their bodily appearance”, Laws (1997), p. 49.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{159} Rose (1993), p. 34.
\textsuperscript{160} Laws (1997), p.52.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid, pp.52-53.
division between body and mind has played a significant role in the construction and upholding of unequal power relations between men and women.\textsuperscript{162} This division therefore needs to be deconstructed. The association itself – women with bodies and men with minds – is illogical; the body cannot function without the mind and the mind cannot function without the body, they are interdependent.\textsuperscript{163}

As declared in preceding sections, many feminist geographers are recognizing bodies to be intertwined with power relations and Longhurst believes that feminist geographers will, in future research, use the body as a key concept when discussing space and place.\textsuperscript{164} Similarly, McDowell states “The placing of the body right at the center of social theory has perhaps been one of the most exciting moves in contemporary theoretical endeavours…[Q]uestions of the sexed body – its differential construction, regulation and representation – are absolutely central to an understanding of gender relations at every spatial scale.”\textsuperscript{165}

\textbf{Space/Place}

Massey states that space and place are both mobile concepts; they are dynamic in nature, they can change over time and they are interpreted and experienced differently by different people.\textsuperscript{166}

Högdahl explains place as social interactions and ideas that take physical forms. Space is also created through such social interactions and is fluid and (re)productive in its nature. Therefore, the meaning of a place is never fixed since space (which is arbitrary) gives meaning to place.\textsuperscript{167} Högdahl draws inspiration from de Certeau who argues that “space is

\textsuperscript{162} McDowell (1999), pp. 44-47.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid, p. 343.
\textsuperscript{165} McDowell (1999), p. 68.
\textsuperscript{167} Högdahl, Elisabeth (2003), Göra Gata, pp. 34-35.
a practiced place”\textsuperscript{168}; a street in an urban setting can be seen as a place and the walkers on that street transform it into a space.\textsuperscript{169}

The previous geographical notion that place has a fixed set of defined boundaries has been disputed by feminist geographers who now acknowledge places as “contested”, “fluid”, and “uncertain”.\textsuperscript{170} Feminist geographers have, in other words, drawn de Certeau’s arguments further by viewing also place as being socially constructed and contextually defined. According to McDowell, Massey, for example, states that places are never stable, fixed or given as she understands social relations to shape places and the practices in these relations change boundaries by exclusion and power inequality.\textsuperscript{171} If white, middle-class men are the main constructors (planners, architects etc.) of an urban park, for example, issues that are of great importance for other social groups might not be considered to a large extent. Hence, constrained spatial mobility can be seen as a result of the unequal power relations that lie behind the construction of a place. McDowell concurs with Massey as she states that “Places are made through power relations which construct the rules which define boundaries, these boundaries are both social and spatial”.\textsuperscript{172}

Space is understood by feminist geographers as being produced in the encounters of everyday life. Every interaction in a place creates space, whether it is gender relations or interaction between individuals, different social groups, ethnic groups etc. When discussing space in relation to gender, Massey illustrates feminist geographic thinking by arguing that “[s]pace shapes the way in which gender identities are formed and, reciprocally, gender identities and gendered social relations shape space.”\textsuperscript{173} In other words, the power structures and the construction of gender confine women to certain spaces, and thereby, certain spaces become gendered.\textsuperscript{174}

\textsuperscript{168} de Certeau, Michel (1984), \textit{The Practice of Everyday Life}, p. 117.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{170} McDowell (1999), p. 4.
\textsuperscript{171} Ibid, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{173} Koskela, Hille (2005), “Urban Space in Plural”, p. 257
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid.
Public/Private Space

Rose argues that everyday activities performed by women, are central within feminist research since everyday routines can be viewed as being a consequence of the prevailing gender and power structures. She states: "The everyday is the arena through which patriarch is (re)created – and contested." Thus, power structures confine women, and consequently, “[t]he limits of women’s everyday activities are structured by what society expects women to be and therefore to do.” When discussing women’s everyday lives, women’s role in public and private space respectively, inevitably needs to be taken into account.

As stated in preceding sections, men have often been associated with the public space and women with the private space. According to Hubbard, this association is, and remains, a priority for feminist geographers when doing research on public space and its gendered nature. We will bring up arguments from a selected group of feminist geographers to demonstrate Hubbard’s statement.

McDowell, for example, states that men traditionally have been expected to earn a living while women have been expected to take care of the home, the house. Massey concurs by stating that the home often has been constructed to be a woman’s place where the woman has been depicted as being the stable care-giver. Therefore, the home has often been viewed as a stable and safe haven and the woman as “a stable symbolic centre – functioning as an anchor for others.”, hence the association of women – private. The man (according to amongst others Massey and Fenster: the heterosexual, white middle-class man), however, has often been considered to belong to the public space. It has traditionally been accepted (and expected) that men use public space for both leisure and

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176 Ibid.
178 McDowell (1999), p. 73.
work. Contrarily, according to Massey, the signal sent to women was (and, to some extent, still is) that they should not enter public space at ‘inappropriate’ times – i.e. at night – or during certain circumstances – i.e. walking alone in deserted areas. Furthermore, while women have, in fact, been viewed upon as disturbing the order in society (by using public space, for example, at ‘inappropriate’ times), they have continuously been described as being in need of protection by society.\footnote{Skogheim, Ragnhild (1995), “Review on Massey, Doreen (1994) Space, Place and Gender”, pp. 279-280.}

McDowell also argues that the construction of women as being in need of protection or as being dependent on men constrains their spatial mobility. This construction depicts women as fragile and it confines them to the safe haven of home, which they are seen (as stated) as belonging to. It is often argued (for example in rape cases), that women should stay indoors for their own protection.\footnote{McDowell (1999), p. 150.} Women, according to Koskela, have an internal negotiation in everyday life. She divides this negotiation into three dimensions: “a spatial dimension – i.e. where to go – a temporal dimension – when to go – and a social dimension – with whom to go.”\footnote{Koskela (2005), p. 261.} Wilson concurs by stating that women must always, as opposed to men, claim their right as “streetwalkers”, that is, defending their right to use public space.\footnote{Wilson, Elisabeth (2001), The Contradictions of Culture: Cities, Culture, Women, p. 139.} In other words, women’s fear of, for example, being attacked in public space makes them dependent on people (most likely men) who can protect them from potential perpetrators. Consequently, limited opportunities to spatial mobility can be viewed as both controlling and oppressive.\footnote{Laws (1997), p. 60.}

\textit{Fear/Safety}

Valentine draws parallels between the physical environment and social aspects and how they affect women’s perceived fear. She argues that women’s fear in public space is
related to the patriarchal structures in society. Moreover, she states that women not only have to defend their right to use public space, they might also avoid visiting “‘dangerous places’ at ‘dangerous times’” due to their fear of male violence.

Koskela, in a similar manner to Valentine, argues that feelings of insecurity are rooted in the structurally subordinate position of women. She states that women’s fear of violence restricts their access to public space and limits their mobility. She understands this fear of violence as not only being a consequence of committed crimes, but also a consequence of the gendered power relations from which society and space are built and constructed. Therefore, she states, “it is not an inborn quality of women to be fearful”, the fearfulness rather reveals the power structures that produce public space. Koskela discusses the danger of seeing women’s fearfulness as something which is normal; if fearfulness is normal and boldness therefore risky, the construction of women as victims will constantly be reproduced.

Valentine brings up the phenomenon that people develop so-called mental maps in order to be able to locate ‘threatening’ places. These mental maps are, according to Valentine, based on, for example, women’s own experiences of public space; a person who has been exposed to danger in a certain place, will associate similar places to danger in the future. Apart from women’s own experiences, also secondary sources, such as media or advice from others, help shape women’s preconceived notions of what constitutes a dangerous place, hence shaping their mental maps.

Regarding women’s mobility and sense of belonging in public spaces, Koskela argues that in order to demystify public spaces and erase the ‘danger’ from them, women ought to make use of public spaces on a daily or regular basis; “by routinizing space, women

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188 Note, it is of course not an inborn quality of men to be perpetrators either. Also, experiences of fearfulness are personal and vary between individuals.
are *taming* it for themselves.” By daring to use public space, women are producing space, which, consequently, becomes available for other women.

Listerborn also emphasizes the need of including *both* physical and social aspects when discussing the geography of women's fear in urban areas. Even if fear is subjective, Listerborn brings up the importance of seeing this personal fear as being a part of a larger discourse of fear, which, she states, shapes our way of thinking. Her argument is that “fear always occurs *somewhere*, in a certain *situation* and *location*.” and can therefore be considered to be situation-bound. Hence, physical aspects cannot be considered without the social aspects and vice versa.

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191 Koskela (2005), p. 263.
192 Ibid.
194 See, for example, Listerborn (2002a) and Listerborn (2002b), “Understanding the Geography of Women's Fear”.

Refugee Context in Tanzania

In the Great Lakes Region, Tanzania has hosted most refugees over the past three decades. The majority of refugees live in camps located in the North West part of Tanzania, namely in the Kagera and Kigoma sub-regions, which are bordering Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In January 2005, approximately 400,000 refugees resided in the camps in Tanzania.

Tanzania’s Refugee History

Tanzania has a long history of being a host country for refugees; Rwandan refugees, for example, arrived in Tanzania as early as the 1930s. However, the first major influx of refugees into Tanzania occurred in 1993-1996 due to conflicts between the Hutu and Tutsi groups in Rwanda as well as in Burundi. The genocide in Rwanda generated an exodus of approximately two million Rwandans who fled to neighbouring countries in 1994. Consequently, Tanzania received over 500,000 Rwandans at a time when the local population in the Kigoma region was little over 100,000. Later on, in the late 1990s and in early 2000, Tanzania, particularly Kigoma and Kagera camps, continued to receive refugees from Burundi and DRC, many of whom have remained in Tanzania to this day. The majority of the Rwandan refugees, however, were forcibly repatriated in late 1996.

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195 Tanzania, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Burundi together form the Great Lakes Region.
198 Interview with Tawakal Kibari at the Tanzanian Red Cross Society (TRCS) on the 28 of February 2005, Dar es Salaam.
200 Interview with Tawakal Kibari at TRCS.
Burundian Refugees in Tanzania

Since 1962, when Burundi gained independence, civil conflicts have forced many Burundians to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. Consequently, Tanzania has received sporadic influxes of Burundian refugees for more than four decades.\textsuperscript{202}

The first major influx of Burundian Hutu refugees arrived in Tanzania in 1993, due to the political instability in Burundi, prompted by the murder of the President, Melchior N’dandaye, in October 1993. N’dandaye, who belonged to the Hutu group, was the first president in Burundi to be elected on democratic bases and his death triggered a conflict in which thousands of Burundians were executed.\textsuperscript{203} The civil war in Burundi continued and the political instability worsened in July 1996 when the ex-President of Burundi, Maj Pierre Buyoya, through a coup, removed the civilian-ruled government and seized power. This coup spurred more violence between the Burundian army and the Tutsi rebels and the crimes committed by these two groups against civilian Burundian Hutus violated human rights in extreme ways.\textsuperscript{204} Many civilians were affected by the conflict; according to Human Rights Watch (HRW), rape and torture were not uncommon and many homes were burnt down. The conflict also resulted in a massive amount of casualties among the civilian Hutu population. Moreover, armed Burundian forces established regroupment camps\textsuperscript{205} in which civilian Burundians were incarcerated. The terrible conditions inside the regroupment camps caused death and disease among the civilian Hutu population.\textsuperscript{206}

Due to the persecution and regroupment policy of civilians, many Burundians fled their native country and sought refuge in Tanzania. Inflows of Burundian Hutu refugees into the Kigoma- and Kagera sub-regions in western Tanzania continued sporadically

\textsuperscript{202} According to Tawakal Kibari at TRCS, some of these refugees are still remaining in Tanzania.


\textsuperscript{205} Regroupment camps are, according to HRW, controlled camps in which civilians are forcibly incarcerated, in this case by the Buyoya Regime.

throughout the years of 1999 and 2000 due to the continuing political instability in Burundi.207

Today, the situation in Burundi has stabilized somewhat and voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees is actively being executed. Since the initiation of the repatriation in March 2002, approximately 149,000 Burundians have returned to their home country. However, Burundi suffers from extreme food shortages and according to UNHCR, thousands of people are threatened with starvation in Burundi. This is probably the reason as to why there was a decrease in numbers of refugees taking the decision to return to Burundi at the end of 2004 compared to the beginning of the year. All in all, in 2004, more than 80,000 Burundians returned voluntarily to their home country from Tanzania.208

**Congolese Refugees in Tanzania**

Like Burundi and Rwanda, DRC has a long history of violent conflicts, there amongst between the Hutu and Tutsi groups, and consequently a large group of Congolese people have long been forced to leave their native country. For example, in 1996, Rwandan Hutu extremists, who were supported by Congolese Hutus, attacked the Tutsi minority – Banyamulenge – living in the Kivu Province in the eastern part of DRC.209 This armed conflict caused a civil war, which forced thousands of Congolese people to leave their homes to seek protection outside DRC. Consequently, between November 1996 and March 1997, Tanzania received a huge influx of Congolese refugees. Later on, in 2001, instability and hostility in DRC again forced Congolese people to leave their native country and many sought refuge in Tanzania.210

207 HRW (2000). Note: according to the report, Buyoya’s coup also triggered persecution of civilian Tutsis living in Burundi, who nationwide were attacked by Hutu rebels who were members of opposition groups.
According to UNHCR, approximately 154,000 Congolese refugees are currently living in various refugee camps in the Kigoma sub-regions in Tanzania. The prevailing situation in DRC is considered, by UNHCR, as being very unsafe, particularly in the eastern part of DRC – the Kivu Provinces – from which a majority of the Congolese refugees in Tanzania originate. Therefore, repatriation of Congolese refugees is not on UNHCR’s current agenda.

The Refugee Camps

The refugee camps in Tanzania are assisted by a large group of actors: the Tanzanian Government, UNHCR, other UN agencies and various national and international NGOs. The Tanzanian Ministry of Home Affairs’s (MHA) Refugee Department in Dar es Salaam is responsible for all refugee matters, such as camp administration and security related issues. Furthermore, on site in the camps are also MHA representatives (e.g. police, magistrates and camp commanders), whose responsibilities are to supervise the camps and to ensure that Tanzanian law is applied and pursued. Furthermore, the Tanzanian Government has set the borders of the camps; refugees need to apply for permission to leave these restricted areas. Also, all camps have, on site, an appointed UNHCR protection officer, whose main responsibility is to oversee all issues concerning protection and security. The UN agency – World Food Programme (WFP) – is responsible for the food distribution in the camps. The food distribution takes place at a particular distribution centre in each camp once every other week. Ration cards, which are a form of identity cards, are distributed to refugees who are required to bring them on the distribution day in order to receive their entitled food ration.

212 Ibid.
213 According to the Refugee Act of 1998, all refugees are allowed to walk within 4 kilometres outside the borders of the camps. For extracts of the Refugee Act, see appendix 2.
214 HRW (2000), under section “Refugee Camps”. 
National and international NGOs present in the camps, such as the Tanzanian Red Cross Society (TRCS), the Spanish Red Cross (SRC), CARE International, Africare, World Vision and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), are responsible for assisting refugees with various humanitarian services (e.g. social, community and health services) in different camps. The main donor is, since 1993, the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO). ECHO is sponsored by the European Union and works through the national and international NGOs as well as through the UN agencies mentioned above to carry out specific services for refugees in the camps.\footnote{ECHO (2001)}

**Lugufu 1 & Mtabila 1 Refugee Camps**

There are approximately 60,000\footnote{UNHCR monthly statistics from January 2005.} Congolese refugees living in Lugufu 1 refugee camp, which was established in 1996 and is situated in a highly remote area south east of Kigoma town. Lugufu is a rural area with a small local population and the majority of people living in this area are the Congolese refugees in the camps Lugufu 1 and Lugufu 2.\footnote{According to UNHCR’s monthly statistics from January 2005, there are approximately 93,000 Congolese refugees residing in Lugufu 1 and 2. The two camps are interconnected, but we conducted our study in Lugufu 1 only.} Apart from the compounds in which the NGO and UN workers reside, the camp neighbours forests and other uninhabited areas. In order to facilitate the management and the administration of the camp, UNHCR and MHA camp commanders have divided the camp into villages, blocks and plots. Each family is, upon arrival, given a plot to build on.\footnote{Since the camps are no longer in an establishing phase, the plots given to new arrivals usually include pre-built houses.} Furthermore, a number of plots together form a block, which in turn creates a village. Each year a refugee is appointed, by members of the village, to act as a Village Leader, whose responsibility is to, for example, handle the communication between the refugees and UNHCR. There are also UNHCR-appointed groups, so-called ‘Sungu-}
sungus’, which consist of refugees, mostly men but also of a few women, patrolling the camp for security reasons.\textsuperscript{219}

The Tanzanian and Spanish Red Cross, are the NGOs, present in the camp, that are responsible for providing the refugees with water and sanitation services, as well as the maintenance of the dispensary. They are also responsible for other health services, such as spreading information on HIV and HIV-preventive measures. They have, for example, established so-called Youth Centres where they educate and support adolescents on HIV-related issues. They also run a programme – Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) – where they educate mothers with HIV on how to prevent transmission to their children. Another NGO present in Lugufu 1 is World Vision, which is dealing with education, sports activities and community services. These services include information dispersal on security-related issues; for example, women are encouraged to walk in groups when collecting firewood due to the risk of assault.

Mtabila 1 refugee camp, in Kasulu area, hosts approximately 16,500\textsuperscript{220} Burundian refugees and is situated North East of Kigoma Town. Mtabila 1 is interconnected with Mtabila 2 and Muyovosi refugee camps and together the three camps host approximately 96,000 Burundian refugees.\textsuperscript{221} Mtabila 1 is, like Lugufu 1, situated in a rural area. However, due to its close distance to Kasulu Town, the area hosts a much larger local population than does Lugufu. Kasulu Town has a hospital, a football ground, banks, hotels, markets and more, none of which exists in Lugufu. There is also a much larger number of NGO and UN workers in the Kasulu area.

Mtabila 1 was established in 1995 and the area is divided into zones, streets and plots. Equivalent to the Village Leaders in Lugufu 1, are the Zone Leaders in Mtabila 1. Their assignments are also often evolving around security aspects within the camp. Also in Mtabila 1, the Tanzanian and Spanish Red Cross are the NGOs that supply refugees with

\textsuperscript{219} HRW (2000), under section “The Refugee Camps”.
\textsuperscript{220} UNHCR monthly statistics from January 2005.
\textsuperscript{221} Ibid.
water, sanitation and health services in the same manner as in Lugufu 1. Present in Mtabila 1 is CARE International, an NGO which provides, for example, education on how to collect firewood without harming the vegetation. They are also promoting burden sharing between men and women when collecting firewood. Furthermore, unlike Lugufu 1, Mtabila 1 is not surrounded by forest. Instead, the forest where the refugees are allowed to collect firewood is situated in a far distance from Mtabila 1.

The Political Context

As stated, Tanzania has, for a long period of time, hosted a large number of refugees; thereby ‘the refugee question’ has been included in the political debate as large influxes of refugees inevitably affect the development of the country. The political debate has been changing over time; from offering refugees integration into the Tanzanian society, Tanzania has followed the international trend, thus nowadays granting fewer refugees protection and restricting those refugees who are granted protection to controlled camp areas. Furthermore, the Tanzanian Government promotes voluntary repatriation if the situation in the sending country is considered to be safe and stabilized.

The refugee inflows and the existence of refugee camps consequently affect, either positively or negatively, the receiving country’s economy, environment and native population. For example, due to the rapid population growth, the same quantity of natural resources has to be shared by a much larger population. This has had several consequences on the refugee policies in Tanzania. In 1995, according to Black, Tanzania

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222 Information retrieved on site, but for further information on CARE International’s work see http://www.care-international.org
223 We have not been able to retrieve information on the exact distance.
224 As was the case, in 1972, when many Burundian refugees lived among Tanzanians in Kigoma town. See Malkki, Lisa (1992), “National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees.”
225 See, for example, Whitaker (2002), for a further discussion on restrictive refugee policies around the world.
226 Ibid, pp. 6-12.
rejected up to 70,000 Rwandans who fled a conflict in Burundi, with the reason given that the refugees, already residing in Tanzania at the time, were too much of a burden on natural resources. Furthermore, the fact that ecology is often cited in the refugee-political context, is shown in the following quote by Black: “In a very real sense, in refugee situations, ecology has become politics, and the losers are some of the most vulnerable of the world’s population”.  

As stated, refugees, the native population and the environment are often being interconnected. This was evident in Tanzania when Lugufu 1 refugee camp was established in a highly remote area. The location of the camp was a deliberate political decision based on its proximity to forests and its far distance from local villages. By placing Lugufu 1 in such an area, the Tanzanian Government hoped to avoid any potential disputes between the local population and the refugees, which has been the case in Kasulu where Mtabila 1 is situated. The presence of refugees in the Kasulu area has affected the local population as they today, for example, need to walk further in order to find firewood. This can be considered an unavoidable dilemma since the refugees are in as much need of fuel as the local population. The Government has attempted to solve this dilemma by restricting refugees, living in the camps in Kasulu, to collect firewood only within a specific area of the forest. In another attempt to balance the relationship between refugees and the local population, the Tanzanian Government granted Tanzanians living close to the refugee camp the right to use some of the facilities inside the camps, such as medical services provided in the dispensaries.

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228 Note: this information is retrieved through formal meetings and informal conservations with NGO staff working on site. However, official information regarding these issues has, so far, been difficult to locate.
Restrictions Affecting Refugees Living in Tanzania

Recently the rights of refugees residing in Tanzania have been restricted. This has affected, for example, the refugees’ standard of living, their mobility and their security. The effects of these restrictions will be discussed below.

The 4-Kilometre Rule – the refugees residing in Tanzania are, according to the Tanzanian Refugee Act of 1998\(^229\), not allowed to live outside of designated camps; they are only allowed to move within a 4-kilometre radius of the camps. However, since most camps are situated far from any major town, the refugees have little or no possibility to access markets or employment opportunities. Consequently, most refugees have become exclusively dependent on aid, which do not typically include non-food items such as clothing, fuel or soap. Moreover, this 4-Kilometre Rule has not been implemented in all Tanzanian camps. Hence the refugees’ freedom of movement has been restricted further since they are not allowed, without a legitimate permit, even to move within a 4-kilometre radius of the camps.\(^230\) Furthermore, the great need for non-food items, especially firewood, thus often forces refugees to commit a criminal offence by leaving the camps without a permit in order to, for example, find wage earning opportunities, and subsequently to risk punishment.\(^231\)

Food – the World Health Organization (WHO) declares, in line with their standard rations, that each person should obtain 2100 kilocalories (kcal) every day. According to UNHCR statistics, each refugee in Tanzania was during 2004 given food that constituted a value of approximately 1800 kcal per day. However, in October 2004, the kcal ration

\(^{229}\) See extracts in appendix 2.
\(^{230}\) Amnesty International (2005), under section “Restrictions on Refugees’ Freedom of Movement”.
\(^{231}\) These punishments can include detention, or even imprisonment. See Amnesty International (2005), Burundi Refugee Rights at Risk. Under section “Restrictions on Refugees’ Freedom of Movement”. Available at <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAFR160062005>
was reduced even further to 1400 kcal per day and per person. These reductions were, according to UNHCR, due to, among other things, problems with supplies and funding.  

Apart from this restricted ration of kcal, the refugees are, according to Amnesty International, receiving a non-varied diet, and this diet is not always culturally suitable. Moreover, provisions such as Corn-Soya Blend (CSB), maize and pulses, all included in a general WFP food distribution, require daily cooking and take a long time to prepare; consequently, these food supplies require a large amount of firewood.

*Firewood* – the majority of refugees in Tanzania commonly collect firewood in forests situated at a far distance from the camps. The firewood inside the camp has, due to the high population and their long-term stay, long since been consumed. As a consequence of the scarcity of resources, refugees often need to walk as far as 15-30 kilometres in order to reach the forests. In order to minimize the deforestation around Tanzanian camps, refugees are only allowed to collect firewood, which has naturally fallen from a tree. Furthermore, since women are usually the ones responsible for firewood collection, and as the risk of assault is high in the forest area, women become the group most vulnerable to physical violence.

*Work* – the 4-Kilometre Rule and the requirement of permission to leave the camps have made it more difficult for refugees to apply for jobs outside the camps. According to Amnesty International, the refugees living in camps around Western Tanzania are expected, by UN agencies, to take initiatives to increase their diets by, for example, working outside the refugee camps and thereby be able to buy supplementary food. (This is cited, by UN agencies, to be the reason as to why refugees are given less than the WHO-recommended 2100 kcal per day.) However, as the movement restrictions have

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232 UNHCR *Tanzania – Highlights 2004*.
233 Amnesty International (2005), under section “Restrictions on Refugees’ Freedom of Movement”.
234 Ibid, under section “Firewood”.

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negatively affected many refugees’ economy, the possibility for refugees to increase their diets is limited.235

One further work-related issue that has restricted many refugees’ ability to carry out various business activities is, according to U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), the closure of several markets. These markets were situated in areas close to the refugee camps and were run by refugees and the local population who both economically benefited from this cooperation. USCRI further states that Tanzanian authorities based their decision to close markets on insufficient security. However, WFP states in a report “that restrictions on movement and the closure of markets […] have lead to a deteriorating food security situation.”236 Consequently, refugees are, according to USCRI, sometimes forced to take measures such as prostitution, stealing, reducing the daily intake of food, and/or repatriating in order to survive. 237

Political and Public Issues Retrieved on Site

There are currently various opinions in Tanzania on whether or not the country itself is dependent on hosting refugees. The debate can be seen as having two differing arguments; regarding the development in Tanzania, should the refugees exclusively be considered as being a burden to the country (as discussed in several of the sections above) or should Tanzania’s role as a host country for refugees be seen as being beneficial to the country’s economy, infrastructure and more?

For example, when the refugees were previously allowed to settle in local villages, the opportunities for employment were better and they, like Tanzanians, paid taxes to the state. Therefore, refugees can be seen as contributing to the development of the country,

235 Amnesty International (2005), under section “Access to food and nutrition”.
rather than burdening the state. Also, as shown throughout this essay, many actors are involved in the management of Tanzania’s refugee camps. This involvement from various national and international NGOs, UN agencies and governmental actors has, for instance, created employment opportunities for Tanzanians with various professional backgrounds: medical staff, drivers, engineers, logisticians, administrative staff and more.

Since many of the Tanzanians employed in the field originate from places other than the Kigoma region, these employment opportunities have been beneficial to people from all over the country. Furthermore, the international involvement has increased the number of international workers in the country. Their presence can also be seen as being beneficial to the country’s economy since the demands for, and supplies of, various services and goods have increased. For example, in the growing towns of Kigoma and Kasulu, where a lot of national and international organisations have their field offices, the population growth has encouraged many locals to start various income-generating activities. These activities include shops of all kinds, Internet cafés, tailors, markets and restaurants. Moreover, the refugee relief operation in Kigoma region has led to an increased movement of people. Consequently, the infrastructure has been improved in order for rural areas, previously unreachable, to become accessible.
Analyzing the Results

The analysis is divided into three parts, namely *Everyday Routines*, *Place and Fear* and *Gender and Power*. In order to thoroughly analyze the answers, we have chosen only to use six out of the fifteen questions we posed that directly include the key concepts of our study, that is, Gender, Environment and Protection. Furthermore, we will present answers from most of the twenty-eight interviews plus the two focus groups, and analyze them through our theoretical framework and by bringing in aspects from the background material presented throughout the study. Hence, the theoretical framework and the background material will function as analytical tools, which will help us to understand the refugee women’s experienced everyday life on a deeper level.

We find it important to mention that our intention never has been to conduct a comparative study; however, as we found some obvious differences between the answers given by the participants living in Lugufu 1 and the participants living in Mtabila 1, we find it important to analyze what possible reasons lay behind these differences. Moreover, since we, in Mtabila 1, had a meeting with Zone Leaders and interviewed a Protection Officer at UNHCR, (based in Kasulu), Mtabila 1 has been given more space than Lugufu 1 in the analysis.

Before embarking on the analysis, we want to attract attention to a few practical details; all answers given by the participants will be presented in *italics*, the use of [...] implies that we have chosen to leave out non-relevant information made by the participants, the interpreters or ourselves. Moreover, when quoting the participants, their nationality and age will be presented for the simple purpose that these variables might be interesting for the reader to know. Furthermore, Finnegan states, “spoken forms transcribed into writing can look ‘illiterate’ and consequently be both offensive to the speakers and give a

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238 See appendix 1.

239 Before quoting the participants, we will present which camp they reside in.
misleading impression of their intelligence or verbal skills”. On that note, we would like the reader to bear in mind that the answers given by the participants are direct quotes; thereby it is the spoken language, not the written, which will be presented in the analysis.

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**Part 1 – Everyday Routines**

In order to get an insight into the participants’ everyday lives, routines and activities, we asked them *Can you describe, in detail, what a regular day currently looks like for you?* We will here present four participants’ description of what a regular day might look like; two of these are from Lugufu 1 and two are from Mtabila 1.

A 39-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 described her ordinary day:

“I wake up early in the morning […] around 7, so I start sweeping and then washing the dishes. If there is no firewood in the house I wake up very early […] I go to collect firewood early in the morning and I used to come back during the midday, during at 3 […] if there is firewood I carry on with my daily activities […] after sweeping the house and washing the dishes, I start cooking […] if there is some little water in the house I cook porridge for morning breakfast before going to collect water. But if there is no water I go collecting water before cooking porridge for breakfast. Then when we finished drinking porridge I start cooking for afternoon, cooking beans, ugali or whatever. Then after eating the afternoon meal, if there is food in the house we can cook again for night food. Ok, after taking the supper we stay together, we just chat from one and another, then after that if it’s around 9, then we go to sleep. (Interviewer – How many days per week do you collect firewood, approximately?) *Approximately 3 times per week because the beans acquired needs a lot of firewood.* (Interviewer – And how about the water, how often do you collect water?) *Several times a day, sometimes two or three times per day.*”

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A 25-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 described her everyday routines:

“Around 7 I wake up […] when I wake up I start sweeping and start cleaning the house, dishes, washes clothes. If there is no firewood I go to the forest […] If my younger sister is in school I have to bring the baby on the back, otherwise I leave the baby with the sister. When I come home, I take a bath and after bath I start cooking. Then we eat, then wash dishes then I go to collect water. […] after then is when I rest. Then during the evening I wake up and start cooking evening meal, then we eat the meal and then I sleep.”

A 22-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said:

“I wake up at 8, go to fetch water, cook food, sweep. After, I have goats at home, I have to take them in the morning to, to grasses. […] I tie them on trees […] After finding a place where I can leave my goats I go home and I wait for my husband who sells alcohol […] I prepare food for my husband and I give him water to bath. After taking lunch he goes back to sell the alcohol. And in the afternoon I stay again at home. Cooking, fetching water. I never go to fetch for firewood, we buy […] We go to sleep at 8 pm.”

A 25-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 stated:

“I wake up at 7am, sweep, fetch water, at 11am I cook. I have a rest because I have no strength. […] I have to cook beans, I put them on the fire in the morning because they take the whole day to cook. But when it is not beans I start to cook at 4pm. At 7 or 8pm, we take supper […] I fetch water or collecting firewood and I can collect firewood not very far away from the camp because I am pregnant (Interviewer – So approximately, how often do you collect firewood now when you are pregnant?) 3 times per week […] I can finish to cook early at 7pm, or 8pm, and after cooking I have already taken bath. And I, I prepare my food, I eat together with my family. And after eating I can have a short conversation with my child or my husband. And after the conversation, I go to sleep around 9pm.”
These four accounts show that women mainly spend their days performing domestic duties, thereby spending a considerable amount of time in the private space. Such everyday routines and activities can be related to, as McDowell states, the traditional society where the private is constructed to be a woman’s space. These women, as demonstrated in the quotes, also use the public space on many occasions but are still doing so for the reason of performing domestic duties (e.g. collecting firewood and water). Furthermore, the answers illustrate that women have the responsibilities of providing the family with water, prepared food, clean clothes and a clean house. Consequently, this makes the whole family dependent on the woman, who becomes, as discussed by McDowell, the stable caregiver. To be responsible for the domestic duties is, according to Rose, a consequence of the existing power structures in a specific cultural/social context. They are expected, by society, to fulfill the role of what it means to be a woman.

When we posed the question: **What does a regular day look like for your husband?** the answers were not as exhaustive; most husbands were, reportedly, out of work and where therefore, as many women put it, doing nothing. For example, one 20-year-old Congolese women living in Lugufu 1 said: “my husband does not work nowadays, previous he was a security guard, now he is doing nothing, he is just sitting”. A 21-year-old Congolese women living in Lugufu 1 similarly expressed: “my husband’s regular activities is just taking bathing and then eating […] there is no work there at home, but sometimes he goes to fish in Lake Tanganyika […] some fish he sell, some we are using at home”. This seemingly unequal division of labour might be rooted in the social structure where men’s cultural habits, traditionally, have not included domestic duties; their main duties have been to provide the family with financial support. In other words, in a traditional society, the man was expected to earn a living, while the woman was expected to care for the home and the family. The constructed nature of a man’s role (i.e. not only to financially support the family but also to be the head of the household) became visible during our meeting with Zone Leaders in Mtabila 1; one male Zone Leader explained, from his point of view, what it takes to become a Zone Leader:
“Normally he is married, leadership starts within the family”. In other words, if a man manages to govern his family, he has proven that he would be able to govern a larger group of people. Furthermore, if defining a traditional society as McDowell, it becomes evident that Burundian and Congolese cultures are still very traditional in their nature; men are the ones upholding the power by having the authority in the family.

The answers clearly reveal a patriarchal structure; men are viewed as having authority over women in the everyday arena. This division of labour seems, from our point of view, to be both unequal and unfair since, for example, women primarily perform the physically demanding duties, despite the fact that the participants often expressed that they consider men as being physically stronger than women. At times, we asked the participants whether or not their husbands assisted them with any of the domestic duties and the responses were, on many occasions, hesitant. To illustrate, taken from an interview with a 42-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1, (Interviewer – does he help you with your household work?) “Yes, for example, if I am in hospital, my husband can buy bread and bring food to me in the hospital.” It became visible that many participants seemed content with the (what we believe to be) limited assistance they were receiving from their husbands. More specifically, a 28-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 answered: “a few times and by now he does not help me because he […] was having an operation last year, on July so he does not feel very well. But before when he was well, he used to cook beans for the family, he put them in fire. (Interviewer – did he ever collect water or firewood when you were unable to do so?) No”. A patriarchal society can, according to McDowell, be revealed through the system of everyday behaviors; the participants’ description of their everyday routines clearly reveal that on an ordinary day, they are expected to perform more duties than what a man is expected to. As some of the participants seemed to view their expected labour responsibilities as ‘normal’, and hence, did not reflect upon the unequal division, we apparently viewed patriarchy in different ways. McDowell states that factors such as class, ‘race’ and ethnicity matter for understanding why women might perceive a patriarchal society differently. We would like to add onto McDowell’s factors that we are
from Sweden, a country in which the social structure, culture and history are different from those of the participants – hence the different views on patriarchy.

At some interviews we did not ask directly if it was the husband that assisted the participant and through the answers given, it appeared to us that the participants associated women with the private space. For example, a 20-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 stated, “Now I’m going to collect firewood, even if I am eight months pregnant I still have to go because life is tough (Interviewer – is there no one to help you?) I only get assistance when I’m sick, if I can’t because of my pregnancy. The sister in-laws are student so they can’t help”. This quote shows that when not asked about the husband specifically, the participant automatically associated domestic duties with the women in the household. On that note, some interviews showed that when the participants were unable (due to, for example, pregnancy) to perform all domestic duties, daughters or sisters were primarily the ones assisting them. A 28-year-old woman said: “since I was seven months of pregnant I don’t go, I was too tired […] my young sister from Lugufu 2 is the one that come with the firewood to me. As stated by Sommers, there is high absence of girls in primary school due to domestic duties, e.g. firewood collection. This was found in some interviews as well. A 42-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1, for example, said “I collect firewood twice a week” (Interviewer – Do you go there by yourself?) I have young children that accompany me, two are from primary school. In other words, the children, who were supposed to be attending school, assisted their mother with domestic duties when she was unable to perform them by herself.

According to BenEzer, the researcher should stay attentive to the way a participant choose to narrate a specific life-event; in our case the narrative truth241 is important to take into consideration as the participants might have chosen, for various reasons, to leave certain facts out. Concerning the division of labour, women might have chosen to leave out information which states that their husbands were, in fact, assisting them with some of their domestic duties. As stated by Bourdieu, cultural habits are always played

241 See above in the chapter “Methodology” for discussion on Narrative Truth, pp. 11-12.
out in a space where social structures determine if a body belongs to that particular space, in this case, spaces that are gendered female (e.g. the water collection point). Therefore, men who assist their women with domestic duties, such as fetching water might be viewed as ‘misplaced’, hence the participants might have been too embarrassed to reveal this information during the interviews. This perception stems from one occasion when our interpreter (who is a Burundian refugee woman, thus sharing the culture of the participants) in Mtabila 1 commented on a participant whose husband were assisting her with some domestic duties: “I said that she consider her husband as her father”. It became clear to us that women and men often seem to be expected to have very distinct roles (which should not be intersected). We will, however, further on show that these socially and culturally constructed roles were not evident in all families. It seems as if the pattern is undergoing a change.

As shown so far, the man’s role, in a traditional society, is to financially support his family. This has proven to be difficult, mainly because of the restrictions of movement, including the implementation of the Refugee Act. According to Rutinwa, the 4-Kilometre Rule is not implemented in the Kasulu camps, including Mtabila 1. This decision, Rutinwa states, was made by the District Commissioner of Kasulu who did not interpret the Refugee Act to allow refugees the right to move within 4-kilometre radius of the camp. Thereby, the refugees are banned to move outside of the Kasulu camps and would risk punishment if doing so. The answers we retrieved regarding which rules applied, differed widely depending on whom we asked. For example, a Zone Leader said: “Although there is a restriction from the Government not to leave the area, we are only allowed to leave the camp for collecting firewood not for looking for jobs”. Several participants living in Mtabila 1 told us, however, that their husbands occasionally still went out of the camp to look for work. Accordingly, a 42-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said that her husband “works for Tanzanian villagers, he digs maize and beans and cassava and he brings one part home [...]”. Hence, refugees are forced to

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242 See above in the section “Restrictions Affecting Refugees Living in Tanzania”, pp. 70-72.
243 The 4-Kilometre Rule seemed to be implemented in Lugufu since, for example, no participant ever mentioned any difficulties in moving outside of the camp. No inhabited area could, however, be reached within a 4-kilometre radius of the camp due to the remote area the camp is situated in.
commit a criminal offence in order to satisfy basic needs. Furthermore, it was revealed through several interviews that refugees, upon returning to the camp after having worked or collected firewood, at times were caught by police or even thieves who stole their salary or firewood. This was brought up during one of the focus group sessions, where a Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said: “sometimes if my husband uses his bicycle and if unfortunately he meets national security guards, the bicycle is confiscated”. Similarly a 19-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said: “if he is back from the village, he may meet thieves that take his money that he has earned when he was digging”. This problem was not brought up during the interviews in Lugufu 1; a probable cause might be the location of the camp. However, even if the participants in Lugufu 1 did not express concerns related to restrictions and controlling police, they still expressed their concerns regarding employment opportunities as the camp is situated far away from any inhabited area where such opportunities might be found. Hence, the struggle to find work is evident also in Lugufu 1 – A 25-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 explained how her husband struggled to earn a living: “he does not have any work, but when he wakes up, he takes his bike and walks up to the bus stop. If there is anybody to carry lots of lots of things, he takes them from the bus stop into the camp, like a taxi, but they are using bikes […] then they are being paid, he is a bicycle driver”, hence inventiveness becomes essential when trying to earn a living. In sum, both the restrictions of movement and the location of the camps limit the possibilities for the refugees to find work.

Since, as stated, WFP expects refugees to supplement their food ration, employment opportunities become even more important for refugees. Thereby, the restrictions of movement could have serious consequences as refugees, without an income, might suffer from severe food shortages. Moreover, WFP has gone from providing the refugees with maize flour to providing them with maize grain. This implies that the refugees themselves have to pay for the grinding of the maize. This problem was emphasized by one of the Zone Leaders, who stated: “Today we are only getting maize grain. Three years ago we were getting maize flour. The food ration is supposed to last for fourteen days, but you
have to sell some of the ration in order to pay for the grinding of the maize, which means that you lose some of the food and it doesn’t last for fourteen days”. Because of the restrictions of movement refugees cannot find wage earning opportunities and in turn they cannot afford to pay for the grinding of the maize and are hence forced to sell parts of their food ration. Also, in one of the focus groups, a Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 explained how she was affected by this problem: “If you try to go out of the camp to get money to grind your maize grain, police men refuse us the permission and we are obliged to sell a part of our ration to get money to compensate what we don’t have or otherwise we travel secretly into the Tanzanian villages to find job”.

Another reason as to why it is imperative that refugees find wage earning opportunities is the withdrawn distribution of non-food items, such as clothes and hygiene and sanitary materials. According to Rutinwa, clothes are not frequently distributed and problems related to the shortage of clothes were brought up in several interviews. One 25-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1, for example, stated: “[when] there are distribution of clothes, those people who are in charge of the distribution, they select good clothes first and after the rest they come and they distribute to people”. We cannot prove or refute this statement but we have chosen to interpret it through what BenEzer refers to as Psychological Truth.244 That is, even if the participant had imagined or been told that the staff took some of the clothes beforehand, this event is still a perceived reality for the participant and will thereby affect her everyday life; she might not trust NGO workers and therefore not feel safe under their protection. The consequences of the lack of clothes also became evident in some interviews. For example, a 26-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 explained: "There is a problem of poverty because if you give birth, you don’t have clothes for your baby. This is a really problem, even if you can ask this to the nurses, they can tell you that there are some women who come to give birth without anything, any, any even a very, very small piece of cloth. While after giving birth you have to bleed […]“. This quote shows that even when giving birth,

244 See chapter “Methodology” for discussion on Psychological Truth p. 11.
refugee women are not provided with clothes or sanitary materials, thus implying serious health-related consequences for both the mother and the newborn baby.

At the time of our field study, refugee women had, reportedly, not been supplied with any sanitary material since 2004.\textsuperscript{245} The Sphere Handbook, however, states that: "Women and girls who menstruate should have access to suitable materials for the absorption and disposal of menstrual blood".\textsuperscript{246} Apart from the health aspect, the lack of sanitary materials can also affect girls’ attendance in school. Indeed, Rutinwa has found lack of clothing and sanitary materials to be the main reasons as to why girls stop attending school. We have also shown, through Sommers’s report, that firewood collection is another major cause for girls attending school to a lower extent than boys. In sum, lack of sanitary materials and firewood collection primarily affect girls’ school attendance. Boys, on the contrary, are not affected to the same extent; thereby they have a better chance of receiving an education. Consequently, low school attendance for girls might negatively affect girls’ and women’s chance of emancipation and the patriarchal structures will be maintained as more men than women will be educated.

Thus far in the analysis, we have shown that women experience their everyday lives to be evolving around domestic duties performed in the private space. Hence, it is important that the places/spaces where these domestic duties are performed are secure and experienced as safe by the women. We will now present and analyze how women experience public space, which they use mainly for the reason of performing domestic duties. This discussion will evolve around issues concerning fear/safety, more specifically, the collection of firewood.

\textsuperscript{245} According to Benjamin Zawacki, Protection Officer based in Kasulu.
Part 2 – Place and Fear

As was shown in the first quotes of this chapter, participants from Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 respectively, stated that the beans they are given in the distribution centre require long cooking time. Consequently, the main reason as to why women have to spend such considerable amount of time collecting firewood is the long cooking time that the beans, provided by WFP, require. One 26-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 explained that she went to collect firewood “approximately five times a week because the beans we are now given requires a lot of firewood”. More specifically, a 26-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said that if “you’re going to eat beans, you put them on fire […] they can take too long [to cook], from 7am to 2pm”. Hence, if WFP would distribute other foodstuffs, which do not require a long cooking time, the women would not have to spend as much time in the forest.

When asked Are there any places and/or times in the camp where/when you feel unsafe or afraid? If so, which ones/at what time and why? most women brought up their fear of being attacked and/or raped in the forest when collecting firewood. For example, a 22-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 said “I fear very much, because I’ve heard that in the forest there are groups with people who just capture women and rape them”. While it became evident that the forest was the space in which the participants felt most unsafe, it was not always as clear who the participants were afraid of (especially not in Lugufu 1). To illustrate: a 26-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 explained, “when I’m collecting firewood, I fear the forest because there arrive people who can just rape me or beat me”. Parallels can be drawn between this quote and de Certeau’s idea that the walkers of a street (place) transform it into a space. Accordingly, the people this woman fears transform the forest (place) into a fearful space; her mental map has helped her to locate the forest as a threatening area. According to Valentine, the development of mental maps is important to take into consideration in order to understand why particular places are associated with fear.
Moreover, the participants’ mental maps, i.e. their view of the forest as being a dangerous place, seem, in many cases, to have been based on secondary sources (more specifically, other women who have told them about their experiences of being attacked in the forest). Moreover, not only the forest was experienced as a fearful place as a consequence of secondary sources; one 39-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 expressed her fear of passing through the graveyard: “I heard that last month that there was a certain woman from Lugufu 2, [who] was passing through the graveyard […], was raped”. Similarly, a 24-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 said: “in Lugufu 2 there is areas at the graveyard where people are being killed sometimes and beating to death, so I’m worried to walk in those areas. I fear. So I don’t usually pass those areas”. These two quotes show, similarly to what Rose states, that sexual attacks warn women not to enter certain areas. However, we believe this argument to be non-applicable to the discussion on firewood collection as the refugee women are forced to enter the forest even if they consider it, through their mental maps, to be a highly unsafe place. Furthermore, since several participants have expressed fear of rape, they ought to be aware that their bodies are viewed as being intimately related to sexuality; this, as stated by Laws, should delimit women’s spatial mobility as they might choose not to enter those areas. This awareness cannot, however, we believe, constrain the refugee women entirely, since they enter the forest by means of survival; there is no choice involved in this issue.

When the participants living in Lugufu 1 explained who they believed the perpetrators to be, they often referred to “bandits”, “robbers” or “thieves”. In Mtabila 1, however, the participants more frequently explained who they believed the perpetrators to be (but, in some cases, they also referred to “robbers” or “thieves”). For example a 25-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 stated: “last month, it was in March, I went to collect firewood with a man […] when I saw Jayweez [Tanzanians who are security guards in the local villages]. I tried to hide myself, after hiding, those Jayweez came and caught that man and start to beat him”. Regarding the same issue, a 19-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said: when looking for firewood we meet Tanzanians, we run […] When they come they see the group of people with firewood,
they say leave our trees, these are our trees [...] this has happened to me”. Since this conflict between refugees and the local population was mainly brought up during the interviews in Mtabila 1, we believe the location of the camps to have great impact on the relationship between locals and refugees. Tanzanians living in Kasulu area have to share the natural resources with a large refugee population and therefore tensions arise (as was discussed in the chapter “Refugee Context in Tanzania”). Illustratively, one Burundian woman participating in one of the focus groups in Mtabila 1 explained: “There is no security in the forest outside the camp. When we go there, we are like thieves. You meet a Muha [local people]. Even if the forest doesn’t belong to him, he asks you the reason of your presence in the area. A refugee is a refugee”. This problem is not as visible in Lugufu 1, again, due to the highly remote area in which the camp is situated.

As shown so far, a large amount of firewood is required in order to satisfy basic needs. An extensive extraction of firewood will, in all probability, eventually cause environmental degradation, as has been discussed in the chapter “Humanitarian Guidelines and Previous Research”. In order to minimize the deforestation, various measures\(^\text{247}\) have been taken around Tanzanian camps; refugees are, for example, only allowed to collect firewood from the ground. Furthermore, refugees in Mtabila 1 receive education, by CARE International, on how to collect firewood without harming the vegetation.

*\textit{The Sphere Handbook} states: “When necessary, appropriate fuel should be provided or wood harvesting programme established that is supervised for the safety of women and children, who are the main gatherers of firewood. In general, items should be provided that do not require long cooking times or the use of large quantities of water. The provision of milled grain or grain mills will reduce cooking times and the amount of fuel required.”\(^\text{248}\) Sphere’s guidance note is in accordance with UNHCR’s guidelines in the handbook – \textit{Cooking Options in Refugee Situations}, which states that it is suitable to

\(^{247}\) According to one Zone Leader, a measure taken by the Tanzanian government was to allot refugees with a particular area of the forest, for the purpose of firewood collection. However, even in this area, conflicts with locals continued to occur.

supply refugees with fuel when there is a shortage of available fuel and when there is a security risk linked to fuel collection.\textsuperscript{249} If looking at these criteria and if linking it to what we have presented from the interviews so far, it is clear that the refugees should be provided with fuel or, rather, as recommended in UNHCR’s \textit{Environmental Guidelines}, be encouraged to harvest fuel wood themselves;\textsuperscript{250} this, we believe, would enhance the security and also improve the refugee women’s everyday lives. When Women’s Commission assessed UNHCR’s \textit{Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women}, they found measures, as those referred to above, to be of importance when addressing the everyday lives of refugee women. They further found that alternatives to firewood (which was being introduced in Zambia in order to reduce the hostility that the refugees’ firewood collection had created amongst the local population) were given positive responses from refugee women. From our interviews, we believe that there would be a similar response since most women, as has been shown, expressed deep concerns when discussing safety and the collection of firewood. For example, one (age unknown) Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said: \textit{“the many problem that troubles me is looking for firewood, if I had money I could buy charcoal or firewood so that I don’t have to go into the forest”}.

As stated, UNHCR’s \textit{Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women} emphasize the importance of providing protection through assistance. Through several answers given during the interviews, we found one practical example of such assistance, which seemed to aim at providing protection; UNHCR occasionally provided the refugees living in Mtabila 1 with a truck, which, according to several participants, took refugee men to the forest to collect firewood.\textsuperscript{251} This assistance does not seem to have been successfully implemented, however, as several participants explained that UNHCR had failed to inform the refugees in advance when the trucks would be provided. To illustrate, a 25-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 brought up the lack of information

\textsuperscript{249} See above in the section “Cooking Options in Refugee Situations”, pp. 35-36.
\textsuperscript{250} For discussions on successful implementation of harvesting programmes see above in the section “Environmental Guidelines” pp. 31-32.
\textsuperscript{251} Conversely, Rutinwa (2005) writes that such trucks are aimed to take refugee women to the forests, p. 32.
regarding the trucks: “in my zone, if you are married and you have a husband, your husband has to go, it’s an obligation […] My husband is sometimes outside the camp to look for job […] a car has already come and the husband was not around. (Interviewer – will you know in advance when the car is coming?) No, we don’t get information before”. Similarly a 26-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said: “The time when UNHCR went there [to her village] my husband was absent, he had gone out of the camp to look for a small job”. Another aspect was brought up by one of the Zone Leaders who, when asked what the most common problem in the camp was, stated: “Collecting firewood, the food is not enough. UN has provided trucks, but these are not enough”. We believe the purpose behind the idea of providing a truck for the collection of firewood for refugee men to be very good, since it encourages or, rather, forces men to assist women with a part of the domestic duties. However, UNHCR does not only seem to have failed in providing sufficient information, they also seem to have omitted a group from this assistance, namely widows. If women are not allowed onto the trucks, these women (without husbands) are not being given the same assistance as the remaining population. This, we believe, is a serious consequence, particularly as UNHCR states in the Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women that assistance should be advantageous for women; otherwise the prospect of protection is lost.

Another aspect regarding the provision of trucks was brought up in one of the focus groups where the women discussed the response of the local population: “when we decide to go into the forest, the time we come back without anything because we don’t have good relationship with neighboring villages. When they see us, they chase us with machete and say go back in your camps because we are well informed that UNHCR has provide you truck for carrying firewood”. Hence, despite the implementation of trucks, refugees are still forced to enter the forest to collect firewood (as the number of trucks is reportedly insufficient and groups such as widows seem to be omitted from this assistance) and therein face even more hostility from locals who seem to believe that trucks are provided on a frequent basis.
On site, we noticed, as stated, a clear difference between Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1; it was only in the latter camp we saw men carrying firewood. Furthermore, the same differences were noticeable in the interviews; several women living in Mtabila 1 told us that their husbands, at times, were the ones collecting firewood. This might be due to the fact that, as we were told on site, CARE International had encouraged burden sharing between men and women in the collection of firewood. One 26-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 explained how she was assisted by her husband: “if I’m sick, my husband can go and if it’s the same for my husband, it’s me, wife, who has to go and collect firewood [...] it’s my husband who is used to go and collect firewood and I have to stay at home because I’m pregnant [...]”. In this particular case, it seems as if the pregnancy was the main reason for the assistance. Another Burundian woman, participating in one of the focus groups, explained: “There are some husbands who accept to go without the company of their wives, but these are very few [...] when women get risks, the husbands decide to go themselves to collect firewood and women have to prepare food at home. Concerning my situation, my husband goes into the forest”. Regarding the promotion of burden sharing, we believe that CARE International’s intention was to enhance the security for women since most assault seemed to occur in the forest. Again, this seems, mainly, to be a consequence of the tense relationship between locals and refugees due to the fuel issue. However, an equal burden sharing between men and women in the collection of firewood was, as has been shown earlier in the analysis, an exception rather than a rule.

As stated when discussing the division of labour, women’s and men’s assumed different roles were not evident in all families as some of the participants’ husbands were starting to help them with domestic duties (foremost with the firewood collection); again, it seems as if the pattern is undergoing a change. Also, as has been previously acknowledged, traditions and cultural beliefs seem to slow down the process of equal burden sharing. This was brought up in Rutinwa’s report, where it was revealed that many men grounded their refusal to collect firewood on cultural constraints. Hence, in order to change the traditional pattern (in this case, the unequal division of labour), men have to assist women
in domestic duties and are thereby required to ‘step out of’ the constructed male role and instead enter the ‘female space’ to do, what traditionally has been viewed as ‘women’s work’. Furthermore, in order to reach an equal burden sharing, women, indeed, have to be willing to allow men to enter this constructed ‘female space’.

We believe that, just as gender, culture is socially constructed; it is dynamic in nature and therefore open to change. Hence, if more men continue to, for example, collect firewood, this practice will eventually become accepted also within in the male sphere and will, thereby, become viewed as being ‘normal’ within the social structure. We want to emphasize, again how we view social structures: “[t]hrough their everyday interactions with people and objects, individuals develop certain kinds of knowledge – conscious, subconscious and ideological – and their subsequent actions based on these kinds of knowledge reproduce a social structure.” This quote shows that it is difficult to deconstruct a social structure – e.g. a patriarchal society – but since it is a social construct, it is open to change. Also, since social structures change over time and space, we believe that these practices (e.g. men collecting firewood), which are now in the initial stage of being introduced, eventually will become accepted and part of the social structure. Moreover, another issue worth considering, which might hold back the process of equalizing the division of domestic duties between men and women, is the fact that men also face problems of assault when collecting firewood. Such problems were brought up by Rutinwa, who found that men, who accompanied their wives when collecting firewood, were not always able to prevent their wives from being sexually assaulted. Moreover, cases were also found where the men were victims of sexual assault themselves.

It became clear from the interviews that Koskela’s argument, that women have internal negotiation in everyday life regarding where to go, when to go and with whom to go, can, to a certain extent, be applicable on the everyday lives of the participants. Regarding where to go, several participants, as has been stated, avoided passing through certain

areas (such as the graveyard) because of fear of violence. Regarding when to go, many participants said, for example, that they only went to collect firewood in the forest during the daytime. Finally, regarding with whom to go, it was revealed through several interviews that the participants only went to the forest in groups. To illustrate: one Burundian woman, participating in one of the focus groups, said “when I want to go into the forest, I’m obliged to go in group because I’m afraid of being raped”. All three aspect were brought up by one 21-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1, who stated that she goes to the forest “around seven, it’s already light […] I go in a company three, four or five […] (Interviewer – What would make you feel safer when collecting firewood?) To be with my friends and the company should be close up […] and then not to enter deep into the forest, just stay nearby and stay close from one to another”. As stated, Koskela’s arguments can, although only to a certain extent, be applied on this context since women negotiate with whom to go and when to go. However, since women need firewood in order to survive they cannot negotiate whether or not to enter certain areas, such as the forest, despite of their fear to do so.

In the theory chapter, we brought up a further argument made by Koskela, who states that by daring to use public space, women are producing space, which, consequently, becomes available for other women. As has been shown in this chapter, women collect firewood several times a week, therefore Koskela’s statement, that “by routinizing space, women are taming it for themselves”253, implies that the participants should (due to the routine of collecting firewood) have tamed the forest and made it available for other women. However, as most participants expressed a fear of entering the forest due to the high risk of assault, the forest does not appear to be a tamed space. Moreover, refugee women have collected firewood in the forests outside Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 for more than ten years (i.e. routinizing the forest), still these spaces cannot be considered as being tamed; hence, Koskela’s argument does not hold in a refugee context in a non-western rural society.

253 Koskela (2005), p. 263.
In UNHCR’s *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women*, the design of the camps is brought up as an important aspect when discussing refugee women and security-related issues. Furthermore, Listerborn argues that the spatial planning is important to take into consideration when trying to understand how people experience the physical environment. On that note, we believe the Cross-Cutting issues – *gender*, *protection* and *environment* – to be of great relevance. It was for this reason we asked the participants: **do you, at any time, feel unsafe and/or afraid when you have to go to: – a public latrine? – the water collection point? – the distribution centre? – the dispensary?**

These four places are all related, in one way or another, to a refugee woman’s everyday routines and are, hence, of importance when trying to understand how refugee women experience their everyday lives with regards to safety. They will be discussed in the same order as they have been presented.

During the interviews, the participants expressed concerns about public latrines as being unsafe due to their association with diseases. To illustrate, one 35-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1, stated: “Because it’s a dirty place [it’s] unsafe”. Similarly, one 22-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 expressed: “I’m afraid of public latrine, because those people suffering from infection disease, you can caught it, when you enter into the toilet”. When we posed this question, we expected the women, who answered that they were afraid, to feel unsafe due to fear of physical attacks or the like. The unexpected answers that diseases were the main cause for feeling unsafe when using the public latrines, we believe, would not have been revealed if we would have conducted a quantitative study, where the participants would have had no chance to freely elaborate on the question of safety. Moreover, Listerborn argues that even if fear is subjective, it is still a part of a larger discourse of fear, which, she states, shapes our way of thinking. This is probably the reason as to why we associated fear differently from the participants; disease is not something that we, in our social context, generally relate to when discussing our everyday lives from a safety perspective.
The *Sphere Handbook* draws in a protection, environmental and gender perspective when discussing the placing of latrines in the following guidance note: “inappropriate siting of toilets may make women and girls more vulnerable to attack, especially during the night, and ways must be found to ensure that women feel, and are, safe using the toilets provided. Where possible, communal toilets should be provided with lighting or families provided with torches …”254 UNHCR also brings up, in the *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women*, that women become potential victims of various forms of assault if latrines and other facilities (which are seldom well-lid) are situated far from the living area in a camp.255 Furthermore, Listerborn argues that lightness and darkness affect how people experience certain spaces in a city. Correspondingly, several of the participants explained that they, when entering certain spaces (e.g. the public latrine), were affected by lightness and darkness. Hence, we believe Listerborn’s argument to be applicable also on a non-urban context, in this case a refugee camp. To illustrate, a 20-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 expressed her concerns of using public latrines: “I don’t feel safe because of the darkness”. Also when discussing her private latrine256 she brought up how darkness affected her: “I’m afraid to go outside, even to go to the toilet at night I’m afraid […] it’s because of darkness, but it’s better when there is a moon”. This quote clearly shows that this participant feels safer to go to the toilet when it is not dark. Hence, changes of the physical environment (e.g. ensuring well-lit latrines) would probably enhance women’s experienced feeling of safety. That lightness and darkness has an effect on women’s perceived fear is confirmed, as shown, by the *Sphere Handbook*, UNHCR’s *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women* and by scholars within Feminist Geography. Even so, as has been shown through the interviews, it does not seem to be prioritized either in Lugufu 1 or Mtabila 1 refugee camps. Financial restraints, due to cutbacks in funding, are probably one of the reasons as to why, in the refugee camps, we never saw any sort of lighting outdoors in the public space.

256 Most households in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 had private latrines.
Regarding the water collection points, the *Sphere Handbook* states: “[…] Times should be set which are convenient and safe for women and others who have responsibility for collecting water, and all users should be fully informed of when and where water is available.” 257 Indeed, most participants stated during the interviews that they felt safe and secure when fetching water. This, we believe is probably due to the fact that these water points only were open at particular hours during the day, hence never when it was dark. Some concerns were brought up, however, concerning the inadequate number of water posts and the queuing the collection implied. For example, one 35-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 stated: “at the water collection place, they made a long queue and if you didn’t come at the time, you go back home without water”. On that note, one 22-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 brought up the consequences of the long queues as she stated that the water collection point was open “three times per day, they open in the morning, at noon and in the evening. If you will go to fetch water later, you can be obliged to look for water in the rivers […] rivers will have diseases such as worms can attack people in the river”. No participant expressed fear of assault, or the like, when fetching water from the water collection point. Even if a few participants insinuated that tension amongst the women could arise while queuing, it still seems as if this space was experienced generally as being safe, which is important since women use this space in their everyday routines.

The distribution centre also seemed, generally, to be experienced as a safe space by the participants. Furthermore, the different views on safety and/or security (that we brought up when discussing fear of diseases) became evident also in this discussion. To illustrate: one 24-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said “during distribution day, you cannot feel unsafe because you’re going to get food to eat”. This quote shows that feelings of safety are contextually bound; due to the restrictions of movement and their effect on the refugees’ income, refugees have become dependent on aid, i.e. distributed food, for their survival. As has been revealed in previous sections, the distributed foodstuffs are not sufficient since it does not usually last the proposed fourteen days;

hence the feeling of safety is enhanced during the distribution day when refugees get their food ration. Moreover, the Cross-Cutting issues Gender and Protection are acknowledged in The Sphere Handbook when the food distribution is brought up: “When food is in short supply, tensions can run high when deliveries are made [i.e. on the distribution day]. Women, children, elderly people and people with disabilities may be unable to obtain their entitlement, or may have it taken from them by force. The risks must be assessed in advance and steps taken to minimize them.”258 One step that had been taken in order to minimize the security risks was the implementation of security guards who supervised the distribution centre. This measure seemed to enhance the feeling of safety among the participants. For example, one 19-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 stated: I don’t fear, because there are security guards watching the distribution”.

That the feeling of safety is contextually bound became evident also when the dispensary was brought up; one 24-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1, for example, explained, “I’m afraid, especially in the maternity ward. When you come to give birth, because nowadays we have so many diseases, such as HIV and I’m afraid because you can be contaminated. For instance, if you’re going to have […] a blood transfusion. In that case the blood may be contaminated with HIV”. In a country/context where HIV is widespread and medical resources limited, it seems only natural to feel worried during certain treatments at the dispensary. However, most of the participants did not bring up such intimate situations, but seemed, instead, to associate the dispensary with safety. To illustrate, a 39-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 stated: “I don’t fear anything because I come here to the dispensary for treatment”. This association (between dispensary and safety) seemed to be shared by nearly all participants.

Part 3 – Gender and Power

Thus far in the analysis, we have (in part 1) discussed women’s everyday routines and the division of labour between men and women; places/spaces where the participants felt safe or unsafe have been elaborated on (in part 2). We will now analyze how the participants viewed their positions as women and how the prevailing power structures seem to have affected this view.

Many answers given by the participants to the question – Do you believe that men living in Lugufu 1/Mtabila 1 feel safe or unsafe in the same places or at the same times as you? Why? Why not? – revealed its generalizing nature. We became aware that we should have rephrased the question since many participants indicated that fear (naturally) is individual.259 One 20-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1, for example, said “I can’t know, but I feel that some fear and some don’t fear”. Similarly one 26-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 stated: “I don’t know, because I’m talking about myself, I don’t know about the others”. We still found this question to be useful though, as several participants’ answers revealed how they perceived themselves in relation to men.

Many participants did speak about both men and women as groups and how these groups perceived fear; these answers were broad in character and various perspectives were brought up. Some participants explained that men, as women, fear certain places. A 20-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1, for example, said “men also fear those places, they are also human beings, they have to fear”. What men fear was, on several occasions, explained to be similar to what women fear. On that note, a 26-year-old Congolese woman explained: “I think maybe we are the same, because all of us we are in the camp […]”. This quote shows, we believe, that the shared fear might be rooted in the fact that they are all refugees. In other words, all these people belong to the collective –

259 Even if, as stated, fear is subjective, it is a part of a larger discourse. Still, we should have considered men as individuals as we did with the women.
refugees – and are thereby exposed to the same things, e.g. attacks in the forest while collecting firewood, confiscated firewood and hostilities from locals (as has been shown throughout this chapter). However, even if refugees, as a collective, fear the same places (e.g. the forest), we find it important to, again, emphasize that the division of labour forces women to spend more time in these areas; thereby they become more exposed. This is evident in the following quote made by a 25-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1: “For a woman, she all the time thinks about what to eat, especially due to the problem of firewood, while a man has no thought, never wonder about the problem”.

To be more exposed, as stated by a 26-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 “men can’t fear of rape because men are the ones who rape, they can’t be raped”, seemed by some participants to imply that they view themselves as being weaker than men in general. To illustrate, a 22-year-old Congolese woman stated: “men have power, but we women are too weak, weak, weak”. Similarly a 25-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1 said: “men don’t fear but we as women, we fear. They are men, and men are men, they can just protect themselves but women should run away, only they have to run away”. Moreover, it seems as if several participants perceive fear as something that is inborn in women. Contrarily, we believe, as Koskela, that fear of violence is a consequence of committed crimes; it is also a consequence of the gender power relations from which society and space are built and constructed. Therefore, the perceived fear cannot be something which is inborn in women, instead this fear must have its origin in the prevailing patriarchal structures, where men, as stated by McDowell, uphold the power over women. Furthermore, we believe that the view several participants had of themselves as weak is rooted in the fact that they were raised in a society where the construction of women, as being in need of protection by men, was constantly being reproduced. With this argument, we would like to draw a parallel to Grosz’s system of “social tattooing” 260; bodies are marked by social codes which indicate to the body its capabilities and obligations. The impact of social codes became evident from the statements made by several of the participants; they have obligations, as women,

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to, for example, take responsibility for domestic duties, such as collecting firewood. The social codes also tell them that they are capable of performing these domestic duties.

Despite their capabilities, the participants seemed, as stated, to view themselves as weak; we believe this view to be (as in the case of fear) rooted in the prevailing power structures. We argue that, what capabilities and obligations bodies have change over time and space since social structures, and therefore also social codes, are dynamic in nature. Therefore, we believe, that if women are encouraged to participate in decision-making (i.e. - in areas that have been dominated by men) these areas will no longer be associated with a particular gender group. Consequently, ‘the tattoo’ is able to change shape; what women are seen as being obliged and capable of doing will change over time and space as the empowerment of women will change the social structures.

It is, as stated, in UNHCR’s *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women* emphasized that in order to improve refugee women’s security situation, women themselves should be encouraged to participate in decision-making regarding protection concerns. Moreover, they should, according to UNHCR, be consulted on issues regarding water and firewood collection. However, when asked the last interview question: *if you had the power to change anything in the camp that would make your everyday life safer, what would it be?* one 20-year-old Congolese woman living in Lugufu 1, for example, said: “I’m just a woman, I’m just a refugee, I can’t do anything”. This quote shows that this participant do not consider herself to be in a position where she is able to make a difference (because she is a woman and a refugee). We would like to draw parallels between this statement and Laws’s arguments regarding collective identities and that “space imbue bodies with meaning”\(^\text{261}\); this participant probably identifies herself as *just* a woman and *just* a refugee because the space that imbue her body with meaning is constructed of constellations and structures that are decisive for her notion of herself in relation to power. In this particular context, refugee women – as a collective – do not seem to be encouraged to participate in decision-making; hence the association of

\[^{261}\text{Laws (1997), p. 52.}\]
themselves as being powerless. On that note, no participant insinuated in any way that they had the power to change anything in the camp; we believe that if they had been encouraged to participate in decision-making regarding protection concerns, it would have been revealed through the answers of this question.

Women’s Commission also found, when assessing UNHCR’s *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women*, that there was a lack of refugee women participating in decision-making. They argue, as stated, that refugee women’s presence at meetings concerning camp management and governance would imply that protection issues – related specifically to women – would be discussed and taken into consideration to a larger extent. We believe that protection problems related to firewood collection would be considered to a larger extent and from a woman’s perspective (as she is the main gatherer of firewood) in camp management if the participants were involved in decision-making. Through the answers we received from the question presented above, it appears as if women are not involved, to a large extent, in decision-making, since firewood collection continuously (as shown throughout the analysis) was brought up as a major concern. To illustrate, a 24-year-old Burundian woman living in Mtabila 1 said: “if I had means I could help people in problem of food, firewood and if I owned a car I could go into the forest and bring charcoal”

We would like to draw parallels to Feminist Geography and the argument that western urban cities predominately are constructed by men. Listerborn, for example, states that if women are not involved in the design of a city park, security-related issues concerning women’s safety (e.g. well-lit walking paths) will, perhaps, not be considered to the same extent as it would have been if more women were involved. Even if this argument stems from a western point of view, we still find it important to bear in mind when analyzing the participants’ answers; if refugee women would be involved in decision-making, we believe that the problem of refugee women’s safety when collecting firewood would be given more space on the agenda of camp management.
Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, we have showed how refugee women experience their everyday lives with regards to safety. We have analyzed, through arguments and concepts included in Feminist Geography, the security-related problems, which were frequently brought up by the participants. We will, in this last chapter, conclude the study by discussing such security-related problems and present why and how, we believe, Feminist Geography ought to be developed further.

Discussion

As shown in the analysis, the physical environment matters for how women perceive fear. To improve the lighting in the camp, for example, we believe, would enhance refugee women’s feeling of safety in certain areas of the camp. We would, however, like to claim, as many feminist geographers262, that by merely changing the physical environment, women’s exposed situation would not be changed. The instance we brought up in the chapter “Humanitarian Guidelines and Previous Research”, regarding Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, shows that even when women were relieved of having to move in such areas, they were still exposed. As stated, Women’s Commission found that when UNHCR began supplying refugees with firewood, as a preventive measure when combating the problem of attacks on women in the forest, the instances of rape decreased somewhat. However, as stated, UNHCR found that the occurrences of rape later on increased in other areas. This shows that, while it was a good initiative (since women no longer were forced to enter the forest where they felt unsafe), this measure did not solve the problem entirely since women, as a group, still were exposed to the same kind of violence. Accordingly, we would like to argue, as many feminist geographers do, that women’s exposed situation is rooted in the existing power structures. Hence, even if

262 See for example Listerborn (2002a) and Valentine (1989).
protection is imperative, the power relation between men and women also need to be changed in order enhance women’s feeling of safety.

As the title reveals, UNHCR’s *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women* exclusively concerns refugee women. We would, however, like to draw parallels between these guidelines and the measures included in the project ”Safe City” in Toronto where women, as stated, were consulted on how they believed their feeling of safety could be enhanced in public space. As a result, the physical environment was considered and the subsequent measures taken (e.g. to be able to request bus-stops) can be viewed as a successful implementation of what UNHCR refers to as “protection through assistance” since the assistance was advantageous for those the protection was intended for (i.e. women). However, the same conclusion was drawn; women’s fear in public space was found, also here, to lie in the existing power structures. We would like to apply the conclusion drawn in Toronto to Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1, and argue that refugee women, in all probability, would be protected if assistance, such as firewood distribution, would be provided. Such assistance would, however, probably not eliminate the refugee women’s exposure, just as it did not eliminate women’s exposed situation in the Dadaab camp, Kenya. The refugee women would be protected through assistance, but the protection would merely imply that they no longer would be forced into areas (e.g. the forest) where they felt unsafe.

In order to enhance refugee women’s feeling of safety, we believe, as has been emphasized by both UNHCR and Women’s Commission, that refugee women should be encouraged to participate in decision-making regarding, for example, camp management. We believe that if refugee women would, to a larger extent, have the possibility to participate in camp management, it would not only bring a woman’s perspective into discussions concerning, for example, protection-related issues, but would probably also enhance women’s empowerment, which, in turn, might affect how power is perceived in relation to gender.
Education is another factor worth considering when discussing women’s possibility to influence their everyday lives. Therefore, refugee women and girls should, as stated, be supplied with adequate sanitary materials and girls should be relieved of domestic duties (such as collecting firewood) since these restraints, as has been shown in the analysis, are argued to be the main causes for the low attendance of girls in school.

As shown throughout the study, security-related problems, faced by refugee women in their everyday lives, need to be combated on a multitude of scales. These could be large interventions but also small ones. The beans provided by WFP, for example, require long cooking time and thereby a large amount of firewood. This frequent firewood collection in turn increases the risk of environmental degradation (this, we believe, would be the case even if the firewood would be distributed by UNHCR) and consequently enhances the hostility among the local population. In other words, the provided beans, which are supposed to represent survival, instead force women to enter areas where they feel unsafe. One ‘small’ intervention, therefore, could be to change the foodstuffs distributed to refugees.263

According to UNHCR, “Physical organization and location of camps”, “Social organization” and “Physical safety” are all of importance when aiming to improve refugee women’s security situation. Such issues are also emphasized in the Sphere Handbook, where the Cross-Cutting issues – Gender, Protection and Environment – permeate all standards throughout the handbook. This shows that there is a clear similarity between the arguments and concepts we have presented from Feminist Geography and the intentions of actors (e.g. UNHCR) involved in refugee relief work. Furthermore, Listerborn argues, as stated, that the construction of a city and the everyday habits of men and women need to be studied to see if a pattern can be detected, and subsequently changed, in order to increase the feeling of safety among women. Likewise, UNHCR argues that if a repeated pattern of violence is recognized (as the attacks on

263 We comprehend, however, that financial constraints and cutbacks in funding might hamper such intervention.
women during firewood collection has been in this study), the systematic reasons behind these patterns need to be identified, in order to find adequate measures to combat the violence. From these distinct similarities, we argue that it seems only natural that Feminist Geography would include refugee women residing in non-western rural areas in their literature. However, as has been shown in the analysis, many of the arguments included in Feminist Geography, clearly exclude refugee women from the discussion. For example, several feminist geographers\textsuperscript{265} argue that women avoid certain spaces due to fear of violence and thereby their spatial mobility becomes constrained. Nonetheless, such arguments only include women who are using spaces on a voluntary basis; therefore refugee women, whose survival needs force them to enter areas where they feel unsafe, are excluded from this discussion.

We want to note, however, that throughout the analysis we have shown that some arguments and concepts from Feminist Geography can be applied to a non-western rural area. For example, changes in the physical environment, such as improving lighting, has been found, by feminist geographers, to enhance the feeling of safety among women in western urban areas; likewise it was established by the participants that such measures probably would enhance their feeling of safety. Although some arguments and concepts are applicable to a non-western rural area, we maintain that Feminist Geography needs to be developed further. All feminist geographers, from whom we have presented arguments, have made it clear, in their respective research, which areas they are focusing on (these are mainly western urban areas or, more rarely, rural western areas). Even so, since refugee women constitute a large number of the world’s total female population, research within Feminist Geography should also, we argue, include this large group of women. In addition, by bringing in arguments and concepts from Feminist Geography, new ways of understanding how the physical environment and social structures affect the everyday routines of refugee women will be gained.

\textsuperscript{265} See, for example Laws (1997), Rose (1993) and Listerborn (2002b).
Conclusion

We have established that refugee women’s everyday lives in Lugufu 1 and Mtabila 1 mainly evolve around domestic duties. Some of these domestic duties are performed in areas where the participants, reportedly, feel unsafe; fear of being attacked and raped in the forest when collecting firewood is a major concern. Also, as fuel is a basic need, and as refugee women, allegedly, are the main gatherers of firewood, they are forced into areas, where they feel unsafe, for means of survival. Moreover, we have showed that spatial planning matter for how refugee women perceive their surrounding environment. Through the interviews and our theoretical framework we have drawn the conclusion that changes in the physical environment can, to a certain extent, increase refugee women’s perceived feeling of safety. We have, however, also concluded that such changes would not reduce women’s exposed situation; attacks and assaults might still occur in other settings. Hence, apart from practical measures, also social measures, such as participation of women in decision-making, are crucial in order to change their exposure and deconstruct the prevailing male gendered decision-making space. These measures include issues such as Gender, Protection and Environment and therefore Sphere’s Cross-Cutting issues matter for refugee women’s perceived feeling of safety in their everyday lives. In order to decrease refugee women’s exposure and to enable empowerment amongst refugee women, these Cross-Cutting issues need to be considered when implementing relief aid.
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Tawakal Kibari at the Tanzanian Red Cross Society (TRCS), we met in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. February 2005.

Benjamin Zawacki, Protection Officer at UNHCR, we met in Kasulu, Tanzania. April 2005.

Zone Leaders in Mtabila 1 refugee camp, Kasulu, Tanzania. April 2005.
Interview Questions

1. Where in Congo/Burundi are you from?

2. For how long have you been living here in Lugufu 1/Mtabila 1?

3. How old are you?

4. How many months due are you/how old is your newborn now?

5. What does your family look like?

6. Where in the camp do you live?

7. Can you describe, in detail, what a regular day currently looks like for you?

8. What does a regular day look like for your husband?

9. Do you experience that mothers whose breast milk is not enough to feed their babies, is always getting supplementary food in the dispensary?

10. Do you, as a pregnant or breast feeding woman, receive daily supplements of iron? (in the shape of tablets or dietary foods for example)

11. Do you find the health services at the dispensary to be accessible for all people living in Lugufu 1/Mtabila 1? If not, can you see that the services are inaccessible to any specific groups? For example disabled people, older people, children and/or people living with HIV/AIDS?

12. Are there any places and/or times in the camp where/when you feel unsafe or afraid? If so, which ones/at what time, and why?
13. Do you, at any time, feel unsafe and/or afraid if you have to go to:

- a public latrine?
- the water collection point?
- the distribution centre?
- the dispensary?

14. Do you believe that men living in Lugufu 1/Mtabila 1 feel safe or unsafe in the same places or at the same times as you? Why, why not?

15. If you had the power to change anything in the camp that would make your everyday life safer, what would it be?
The Refugee Act, 1998

Enacted by the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania

Extracts:

1998: 6 Application – This Act shall apply throughout the United Republic of Tanzania.

1998: 51-52 (5) (a) – No asylum seeker or refugee shall be allowed to leave a designated area as directed under this section unless he has sought and obtained a permit from the Director or Settlement Officer as the case may be, and, subject to such terms and conditions as the Director or a Settlement Officer may, prescribe in the permit.

1998: 52 (5) (b) – No asylum seeker or refugee may be allowed to be out of a designated area for more than fourteen days unless the Director has allowed in the permit a longer period upon which an asylum seeker or a refugee may stay outside the designated area.

1998: 53 (6) – Any asylum seeker or refugee to whom a permit or travel document has been issued under this section who fails to comply with the terms and conditions therefore shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.