

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**



**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACED BY WOMEN AND CHILDREN AT
TONGOGARA REFUGEE SETTLEMENT**

BY

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A Dissertation submitted to the Department of Peace and Governance in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Science in International Relations Degree.

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ABSTRACT

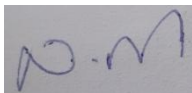
This study investigates the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement. Using a mixed-methods approach, we identify significant challenges in accessing healthcare, education, and psychosocial support services, including concerns around gender-based violence, economic empowerment, child protection, and safety. These challenges have devastating effects on well-being, compromising health outcomes, educational achievements, mental health, and quality of life. The research examines the existing policy framework and identifies opportunities for improvement, including training, community awareness, and psychosocial support. The findings have significant implications for policymakers, humanitarian organisations, and stakeholders addressing complex refugee issues.

DECLARATION

I Nyaradzo Shyleen Mupota (B232505B), do hereby declare that this dissertation is a result of my effort and research, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgments, bibliography, references, and comments included in the body of the report, and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.

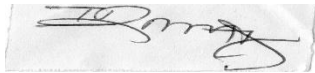
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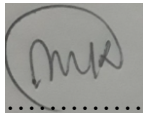
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Dr Kurebwa (Chairperson)

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the memory of my late parents, Memory Merjury Mpota and Enock Mpota, whose wisdom, guidance, and unwavering support inspired me to pursue my academic dreams. Their legacy lives on through the values they instilled in me, and I hope this work honors their memories.

I also dedicate this research to my kids who bring joy and purpose to my life. May this work contribute to a better understanding of the world we live in and inspire them to pursue their passions and make a positive impact on the world.

May this research be a testament to the power of love, family, and dedication, and may it inspire future generations to strive for knowledge, wisdom, and positive change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I thank the Almighty God for granting me the courage, strength, and divine guidance that enabled me to complete my studies. Without His blessings, this achievement would not have been possible.

I am deeply grateful to my academic supervisor, for the guidance rendered, expertise, and unwavering support. His encouragement and constructive feedback have been invaluable to me.

I wish to express my profound appreciation to my beloved family for the love, support, and encouragement they have shown me throughout my journey. I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those who stood by me and offered their support and encouragement. May God bless you all. Peace and love be unto you.

Thank you!

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- GBV - Gender Based Violence
- NGO - Non- Governmental Organisations
- PSS - Psychosocial Support
- TRS - Tongogara Refugee Settlement
- UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- WFP - World Food Programme

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	ii
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	vi
Chapter 1	1
The research problem and its setting	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.0 Background to the study	1
1.1 Statement of the problem	3
1.2 Purpose of the study	3
1.3 Aim/ purpose of the research	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4 Research objectives	4
1.5 Central research question	4
1.6 Research questions	4
1.7 Assumptions/ expectations of the study	4
1.8 Significance of the study	5
1.8.1 Refugees and displaced persons	5
1.8.2 Humanitarian organisations	5
1.8.3 Policymakers and government	5
1.8.4 The international community	5
1.8.5 Academic and research communities	5
1.8.6 Donors and funders	5
1.9 Limitations of the study	6
1.9.1 Access to data and information	6
1.9.2 Data reliability	6
1.10 Delimitation of the study	6
1.10.1 Scope of the Study	6
1.10.2 Methodology Approach	6
1.11 Definition of key terms	8
1.12 Chapter Outline	9
Chapter 2	10
Review of related literature and theoretical framework	11
2.0 Introduction	11

2.1 Theoretical framework	11
2.1.1 Applicability of the theories to the study	13
2.1.2 Weaknesses of the Feminist Theory to the study	14
2.1.3 Weaknesses of the Human Security Theory to the study	14
2.2.1 Challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps	14
2.2.2 The Effects of the challenges on the well-being of women and children in refugee camps.....	19
2.2.3 Mitigatory measures against challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps.....	23
2.2.4 Potential opportunities for women and children in refugee camps.....	28
2.3 Chapter Summary	34
Chapter 3	35
Research methodology.....	35
3.0 Introduction.....	35
3.1 Research philosophy	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2 Research design.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.3 Target population.....	35
3.4 Research sample.....	37
3.5 Sampling	37
3.5.1 Sampling technique.....	38
3.5.2 Qualitative (non-probability) sampling techniques	39
3.5.3 Pilot Testing.....	41
3.6 Data collection techniques	41
3.6.1 Quantitative data collection instrument: Structured questionnaire	42
3.6.2 Qualitative data collection instruments	42
3.7 Data collection procedures	43
3.8 Data presentation and analysis proposal	43
3.8.1 Thematic analysis.....	43
3.8.2 Statistical analysis	43
3.9 Validity and reliability.....	44
3.9.1 Triangulation.....	44
3.9.2 Member checking.....	44
3.9.3 Audit trail	44
3.10 Ethical considerations.....	44
3.10.1 Informed consent.....	44
3.10.2 Confidentiality and anonymity	45

3.10.3 Minimisation of harm	45
3.10.4 Ethical approval	45
3.11 Chapter summary	45
Chapter 4	46
Data analysis, presentation and discussion	47
4.0 Data presentation and analysis	46
4.1 Introduction	47
4.2 Bio data and demographic analysis	47
4.2.1 Gender	47
4.2.2 Age range	48
4.2.3 Highest level of education	49
4.2.4 Current position	50
4.2.5 Number of years residing at the camp	50
4.2.6 Nationality distribution	51
4.3 Data presentation and analysis	52
4.3.1 The challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.....	52
4.3.2 The effects of challenges on the well-being of women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.....	56
4.3.3 The existing mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced.....	60
4.3.4 Potential opportunities to deal with the challenges faced.....	63
4.4 Implications of findings and their limitations and conclusions drawn	67
4.5 Chapter summary	68
Chapter 5	70
Summary, conclusions and recommendations	70
5.1 Introduction	70
5.2. Summary of the study	70
5.2.1 Chapter 1	70
5.2.2 Chapter 2	71
5.2.3 Chapter 3	71
5.2.4 Chapter 4	71
5.2.5 Chapter 5	71
5.3 Conclusions	72
5.4 Recommendations	74
5.4.1 Challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement	74
5.4.2 Opportunities for women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement	74
5.4.3 Recommendations for women refugees at Tongogara Refugee Settlement	74

5.4.4 Recommendations for children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement	75
5.5 Areas for further research	75
5.5.1 Comparative study of refugee and host community experiences	75
5.5.2 Gender based violence and mental health support	75
5.5.3 Women's leadership and participation	75
References	76
Appendix	81

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Background to the study

The challenges and opportunities encountered by women and children in refugee camps constitute a significant focus of research within the wider framework of humanitarian crises and global displacement. The ongoing conflicts, environmental disasters, and political instability displacing millions globally have drawn heightened scrutiny to the distinct vulnerabilities of women and children in these contexts from both researchers and practitioners. Refugee camps, typically marked by overcrowding, insufficient resources, and restricted access to essential services, foster conditions in which women and children encounter increased dangers, including gender-based violence, exploitation, and health issues. This condition is intensified by cultural norms and societal systems that may further marginalise certain people, necessitating an examination of their individual experiences and needs.

The challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps have increasingly emerged as a central concern in humanitarian studies and international relations. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2021, over 82 million individuals are forcibly displaced worldwide, with women and children constituting a substantial segment of this demographic, frequently encountering increased vulnerabilities stemming from gender-based violence, discrimination, and restricted access to essential services. The convergence of gender and age in refugee circumstances presents distinct issues that require specialised treatments. Research demonstrates that women in refugee environments face an elevated risk of sexual violence, especially in the lack of efficient law enforcement and preventive measures (Mastrorillo et al., 2019). Moreover, children in these settings often experience interruptions in education, healthcare, and psychosocial assistance, which can have enduring effects on their development and well-being (Kälin & Scherer, 2020).

In the African context, where several refugee camps are situated, the circumstances are very grave. Countries like Uganda and Kenya accommodate substantial refugee populations, with women and children encountering considerable obstacles in obtaining vital services. A research by Dempsey et al. (2021) underscores the difficulties encountered by women in Ugandan refugee camps, where restricted access to healthcare and economic possibilities intensifies their vulnerability. In Zimbabwe, the surge of refugees from nearby countries has stretched resources, resulting in heightened competition for scarce employment and services,

disproportionately impacting women and children (Moyo, 2022). Tongogara Refugee Settlement accommodates more than 15,000 individuals, primarily from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, and Mozambique, who have escaped their nations owing to conflict, persecution, and political instability (MSF, 2019). Although the camp aims to offer shelter and protection, women and children encounter distinct problems and vulnerabilities. Women and girls face the threat of gender-based violence, encompassing sexual exploitation and abuse (Hanson, 2018), whilst children are susceptible to child labour, exploitation, and psychosocial trauma (Betancourt et al., 2015). The camp's infrastructure and resources are frequently insufficient, resulting in challenges such as restricted access to healthcare (McMichael, 2013), education (Dryden-Peterson, 2015), and sanitation facilities (Waterkeyn, 2009), food insecurity and malnutrition (Faulkner, 2016), overcrowding and substandard living conditions (UNHCR, 2019), as well as limited economic opportunities and empowerment initiatives (Kagan, 2011).

In the absence of quality education, children forfeit essential learning opportunities, impeding their cognitive growth and future potential. Insufficient sanitation facilities result in substandard hygiene, elevating the risk of waterborne infections and other health complications. Food shortages and hunger severely impact the health and welfare of mothers and children in the camp. Insufficient nutrition results in impaired growth, compromised immune function, and heightened vulnerability to illnesses. Malnutrition adversely impacts mental health, resulting in anxiety, depression, and diminished cognitive performance. Food insecurity diminishes dignity, compelling persons to depend on insufficient assistance or engage in desperate actions to obtain sustenance. The overcrowding and inadequate living conditions at Tongogara Refugee Settlement foster a climate that facilitates the proliferation of diseases, exploitation, and violence. Insufficient shelter and inadequate water supply heighten the risk of waterborne infections, while substandard sanitation facilities elevate the probability of outbreaks. The confined living arrangements result in elevated stress levels, diminished privacy, and intensified conflicts among inhabitants. The absence of economic opportunities and empowerment initiatives at Tongogara Refugee Settlement sustains reliance on humanitarian assistance, inhibiting self-sufficiency and autonomy. In the absence of education, training, or income-generating opportunities, women and children cannot escape the cycle of poverty, reconstruct their lives, or strategies for the future. This constraint further entrenches gender roles, perpetuating inequity and disempowerment. The Tongogara Refugee Settlement

offers women and children chances to reconstruct their lives, obtain critical services, and engage in community development efforts (Akesson et al., 2016).

This study seeks to explore the complex problems and opportunities encountered by women and children in the context of Tongogara Refugee Settlement, integrating findings from the literature review. This research aims to overcome the deficiencies in comprehending the particular problems and opportunities faced by women and children in refugee camps. Although current literature has examined numerous facets of refugee experiences, there is a deficiency of thorough studies that specifically address the interaction of gender and age in these circumstances. This study seeks to address these gaps, contributing to the greater conversation on refugee rights and protection, and highlighting the imperative of gender-sensitive measures in humanitarian interventions. By studying the intersections of displacement, gender, and age, this research strives to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complicated experiences of women and children refugees. This study aims to enhance evidence-based policies and programs that cater to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement, thereby creating a more protective and empowering environment for refugees.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Despite humanitarian aid efforts, women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement face persistent challenges, including inadequate healthcare, limited education, poor sanitation, and insufficient economic opportunities. These challenges worsen their vulnerability to poverty, disempowerment, and instability. Furthermore, the complex interplay of gender and age in refugee camps, particularly regarding gender based violence and its long-term consequences on health, education, and overall welfare, remains understudied. However, if left unaddressed, these issues may have severe repercussions, including increased risk of violence, adverse health outcomes, and restricted development opportunities for women and children (UNHCR, 2021). This research aims to investigate and address these challenges, informing evidence-based policies to enhance safety, dignity, and empowerment for these at risk populations.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges faced by refugees at Tongogara Refugee Settlement (TRS), with a special focus on women and children. This research aims to

identify the key challenges encountered by this vulnerable population and then inform policymakers and the government about them so they can assist in address the challenges faced. Additionally, this study seeks to provide evidence based recommendations to enhance safety, dignity, and empowerment for at risk populations, promoting a more effective and sustainable response to the refugee crisis.

1.4 Research objectives

The research seeks to:

- 1.4.1** outline the challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.
- 1.4.2** assess the effects of the challenges on well being of women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.
- 1.4.3** examine the existing mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced.
- 1.4.4** suggest potential opportunities to deal with the challenges faced.

1.5 Central research question

What are the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement?

1.6 Research questions

- 1.6.1** What are the challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement?
- 1.6.2** What are the effects of these challenges on the well-being of women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement?
- 1.6.3** What existing mitigatory policy framework address the challenges faced?
- 1.6.4** What potential opportunities can be drawn from the challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement?

1.7 Assumptions/ expectations of the study

This study is built on a set of assumptions and also assumes that the researcher will have access to the necessary resources and support to conduct the study effectively.

- 1.7.1** The study assumes that participants will be willing to share their experiences and challenges, and that they will provide honest and accurate information during data collection.
- 1.7.2** The study assumes that it will not be able to control all the variables, such as language, culture and educational background.

1.8 Significance of the study

This study is significant to various stakeholders, including refugees and displaced persons, humanitarian organisations, policymakers and government, the international community, academic and research communities, and donors and funders.

1.8.1 Refugees and displaced persons

This constituency will benefit from informed policies and programs that address their specific needs and challenges.

1.8.2 Humanitarian organisations

This study's findings will enable humanitarian organisations to optimise crisis responses, informing evidence-based, decision-making, improving resource allocation, and strengthening targeted interventions to better address refugee needs globally.

1.8.3 Policymakers and government

It is the mandate of every government to protect its citizens. So by drawing insights from the findings of this study, government and policymakers can shape policy decisions and resource allocation based on the research recommendations.

1.8.4 The international community

The research is critical to the international community which can draw on the study's insights to inform global discussions and standards on refugee protection, gender equality, and sustainable development.

1.8.5 Academic and research communities

Globally calls for the protection of refugees are increasing, hence students can advance theoretical understanding and develop new research questions and methodologies.

1.8.6 Donors and funders

This study informs donors and funders, enabling prioritized funding for effective programs addressing refugee women and children's pressing needs, and ensuring evidence based investments yield meaningful improvements at TRS.

In conclusion, by shedding light on the intersections of displacement, gender, and age, this research will highlight the unique experiences and needs of women and children refugees,

ensuring their voices are heard and needs addressed. The study's recommendations will contribute to more effective humanitarian responses, enhancing protection, empowerment, and well-being outcomes for women and children refugees.

1.9 Limitations of the study

Every research endeavor encounters constraints that shape its findings. This study, exploring the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS, is no exception. Recognizing these limitations enables a more accurate interpretation of the results and acknowledges the complexities inherent in researching vulnerable populations.

1.9.1 Access to data and information

The study may not be able to capture the full range of challenges and opportunities faced by women and children due to the sensitive nature of some topics, such as gender-based violence.

1.9.2 Data reliability

The study may also rely on self-reported data from women and children, which can be subject to biases and social desirability bias.

Conclusively, by acknowledging these limitations, this study provides a nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding women's and children's experiences at TRS. While these constraints may impact the study's scope and generalisability, they do not diminish its significance. Instead, they highlight areas for future research and underscore the importance of contextualising findings within the specific realities of refugee camps. Ultimately, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children in these vulnerable contexts.

1.10 Delimitation of the study

This section outlines the scope and boundaries of the study, specifying the geographical location, population sample, timeframe, research methodology, and sampling strategy.

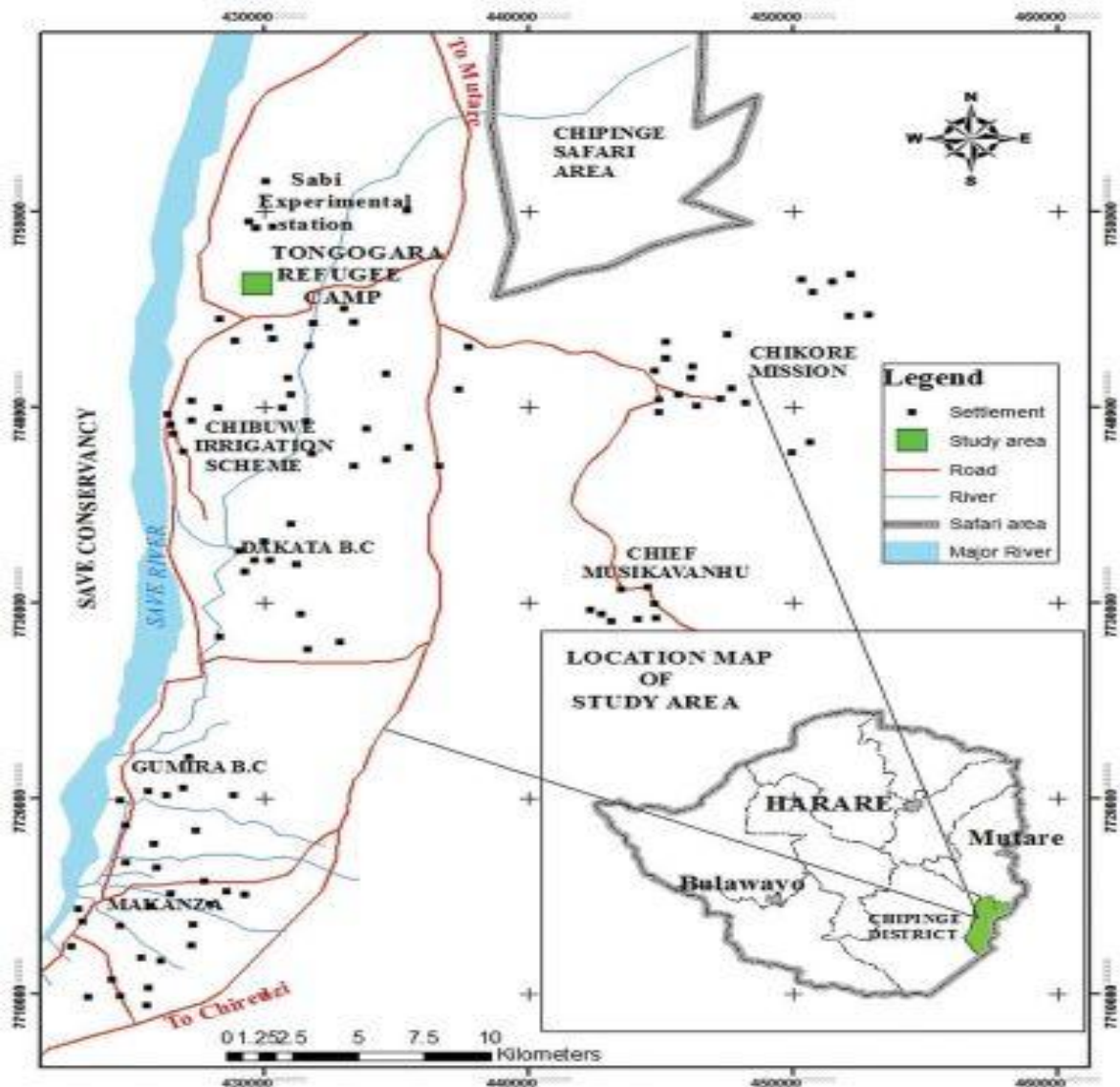
1.10.1 Scope of the Study

The study will be confined to examining the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement (TRS), located in Chipinge, Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe, as shown in Map 1.1 below. This location is chosen due to its proximity to the researcher and overall convenience.

1.10.2 Methodology Approach

The study will target camp management and humanitarian aid workers, and women and children at TRS as respondents, covering the period from 2019 to 2024. A mixed method

research methodology will be employed, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative component utilizes a phenomenological approach, which is concerned with understanding the lived experiences of individuals and the meanings they ascribe to those experiences (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The quantitative aspect involves structured surveys that will enable the researcher to gather numerical data on the demographics, needs, and challenges faced by the refugee population.



Map 1.1 Sketch Map of Tongogara Refugee Settlement

Source: Sibanda et al., (2022)

1.11 Definition of key terms

1.11.1 Displacement - The forced movement of people from their homes or communities, often resulting in a loss of access to resources, livelihoods, and social support networks (Zetter, 2019).

1.11.2 Empowerment - The process of enabling individuals or groups to gain control over their lives, make informed decisions, and access resources and opportunities to improve their well-being and status (Rowlands, 2020).

1.11.3 Forced migration - The movement of people from their homes or countries due to factors such as conflict, persecution, human rights violations, or natural disasters, often against their will or without their consent (Schraven et al., 2021).

1.11.4 Gender-based violence - Violence or abuse that is directed at individuals or groups based on their gender, including sexual violence, domestic violence, and other forms of exploitation (Peterman et al., 2020).

1.11.5 Human rights- Fundamental rights and freedoms that are inherent to all human beings, including the right to life, dignity, equality, and protection from harm or abuse (Donnelly, 2021).

1.11.6 Refuge – A refuge is a place of safety or shelter where individuals can seek protection from danger, persecution or harm. It often serves as a sanctuary for those fleeing violence, conflict or natural disasters, allowing them to find security and stability while they navigate their circumstances (Mastrorillo, 2022).

1.11.7 Refugee - A person who has been forced to leave their country due to persecution, war, or natural disasters, and seeks safety and protection in another country (Mastrorillo, 2022).

1.11.8 Refugee camp - A temporary settlement built to provide accommodation and services to refugees, asylum seekers, or internally displaced persons who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, persecution, or natural disasters (Crisp, 2020).

1.11.9 Vulnerable populations - Groups of people who are more susceptible to harm, exploitation, or marginalization due to factors such as age, gender, disability, or social status (World Bank, 2020).

1.12 Chapter Outline

The dissertation will be outlined as follows:

1.12.1 Chapter 1: The research problem and its setting

The chapter will introduce the research by giving the background of the study, the study objectives and key terms that informs the study. It will explore the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, delimitations definitions of terms as well as organisation of the study.

1.12.2 Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework

This chapter will explore and review prior research information, data and existing literature on the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS. The chapter also presents the theoretical framework, which informs the study as well as citing its significance as it applies to the area under study.

1.12.3 Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter provides a detailed description of the research methodology that will be used by the researcher in conducting the study. It presents the research approach of this study, which is the mixed research method, the research design, the study population, sample, sampling techniques, data collection techniques, data presentation and analysis and ethical issues to be upheld.

1.12.4 Chapter 4: Data presentation, analysis and interpretation

Chapter four, will present the research findings, data collected and discussed in line with the objectives. Data will be presented and analysed through thematic analysis by the responses collected from the primary participants, and data collected from key informants. The chapter will discuss and harmonize the findings of the study with existing literature as an attempt to either validate or refute existing data (knowledge gap) from prior studies on the matter under study.

1.12.5 Chapter 5: Conclusions, summary, recommendations and further studies

This is the final chapter of the research and will focus on the analysis of the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara refugee Settlement. It will summarise the findings, and conclusions as well as highlight recommendations on the research study marking the end of the study.

Chapter 2

Review of related literature and theoretical framework

2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research problem and its settings on the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement. This chapter reviews the related literature and theoretical framework used. The research used the Feminist Theory and Human Security Theory theoretical frameworks. The literature will be reviewed under themes derived from the research objectives. The themes are:

Theme 1: Challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.

Theme 2: Effects of challenges on the well-being of women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.

Theme 3: Mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.

Theme 4: Potential opportunities to address challenges faced women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.

2.1 Theoretical framework

This research is guided by feminist theory and human security theory. The Feminist Theory and the Human Security Theory, provide essential perspectives on the gendered aspects of displacement, the emphasis on individual and community security, and the necessity for empowerment and agency. The Feminist theory emphasises the gendered aspects of international relations and the necessity of prioritising the experiences and viewpoints of women and children in refugee camps. The Feminist philosophy underscores the necessity of confronting the distinct issues encountered by women and children, such as gender-based violence and restricted access to resources. Theory of human security emphasises the safeguarding and empowering of persons and communities over the mere protection of states. The human security theory underscores the necessity of addressing the fundamental causes of violence and displacement, while ensuring that refugees have access to essential requirements such food, water, shelter, healthcare, and education. These ideas direct the examination of the

obstacles and opportunities encountered by women and children at TRS, and offer suggestions for enhancing their protection and empowerment.

The Feminist Theory offers a critical framework for understanding the gendered dimensions of displacement and the experiences of women and children in refugee camps (Bhugra and Jones, 2001). At its core, the Feminist Theory posits that gender is a social construct, and that gender roles and expectations are shaped by cultural, social, and political contexts (Agier, 2011). This perspective reveals how power dynamics are often skewed to disadvantage women and children, leading to increased vulnerability and marginalization (UNHCR, 2019). Furthermore, Feminist Theory highlights the importance of intersectionality, recognizing that multiple forms of oppression, such as gender, race, class, and sexuality, intersect and compound, resulting in unique experiences of marginalization (Crenshaw, 1991).

In the context of refugee camps, the Feminist Theory sheds light on the gendered nature of displacement, where women and children are disproportionately affected by violence, exploitation, and poverty. The theory also reveals how limited access to resources, such as education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, perpetuates gender inequality. However, the Feminist Theory also emphasizes the importance of agency and empowerment, advocating for the amplification of women's and children's voices, their participation in decision-making processes, and the support of their autonomy and self-determination. By applying the Feminist Theory, this research aims to center the experiences of women and children, analyse gendered power dynamics, and inform gender-sensitive interventions that promote their empowerment and well-being.

The Human Security Theory offers a people-centred approach, shifting the focus from state-centric security to individual-centric security, and prioritizing the protection and empowerment of people. At its core, the Human Security Theory emphasizes the importance of freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom to live with dignity. In the context of refugee camps, this theory highlights the vulnerability and risk faced by refugees, who often lack access to basic needs and rights, such as food, water, shelter, healthcare, and education. Furthermore, the Human Security Theory stresses the importance of empowerment and participation, recognizing that refugees' voices and agency are crucial for effective and sustainable solutions. By applying Human Security Theory, this research aims to prioritize refugee well-being, address the root causes of displacement, and foster empowerment, ultimately supporting

refugees' autonomy, participation, and self-determination (UNHCR, 2019; Ogata and Sen, 2003).

Human Security Theory is crucial to the study of women and children in refugee camps as it centres the experiences of vulnerable populations, highlighting the importance of basic needs and rights, and emphasizing empowerment and participation. By applying this theory, the study can better understand the complex challenges faced by women and children, including their vulnerability to violence, exploitation, and poverty. The Human Security Theory also informs a comprehensive approach to supporting refugees, addressing the root causes of displacement and promoting empowerment. This framework guides the development of effective strategies and interventions, ultimately improving refugee outcomes. Furthermore, Human Security Theory provides a structured approach for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, ensuring a holistic and sustainable response to the needs of women and children in refugee camps. By grounding the study in Human Security Theory, the research can identify effective ways to promote the well-being, agency, and self-determination of women and children, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced understanding of their experiences and informing evidence-based solutions.

2.1.1 Applicability of the theories to the study

The Feminist Theory provides a critical lens for understanding the gendered dimensions of displacement. It posits that gender is a social construct shaped by cultural, social, and political contexts (Agier, 2011). This perspective reveals how power dynamics often disadvantage women and children, leading to increased vulnerability and marginalization (UNHCR, 2021). The theory also emphasizes the concept of intersectionality, recognizing that forms of oppression, such as gender, race, class, and sexuality, intersect and compound, resulting in unique experiences of marginalisation (Crenshaw, 1991; Sinha, 2020). In refugee camps, this theory sheds light on the heightened risks of violence, exploitation, and poverty faced by women and children, and advocates for their agency and empowerment. By amplifying their voices and ensuring their participation in decision-making processes, the Feminist Theory informs gender-sensitive interventions that promote their well-being (Hyndman & Giles, 2019).

The Human Security Theory is equally applicable, as it emphasizes the importance of addressing the basic needs and rights of refugees. It recognizes that refugees often lack access to essential services and are vulnerable to various forms of violence and exploitation (Kälin

and Scherer, 2020). This theory highlights the significance of empowerment and participation, asserting that the voices and agency of refugees are crucial for effective and sustainable solutions (Ogata & Sen, 2003). By applying Human Security Theory, this research aims to prioritize the well-being of women and children, address the root causes of their displacement, and foster their autonomy and self-determination.

2.1.2 Weaknesses of the Feminist Theory to the study

Despite the strengths of the Feminist Theory, it also has some limitations. The Feminist Theory may sometimes be critiqued for its focus on gender at the expense of other intersecting factors such as ethnicity, nationality, and socioeconomic status. This can lead to an oversimplification of the experiences of women and children in refugee contexts, potentially overlooking the complexities of their situations (Sinha, 2020). Additionally, while the Feminist Theory advocates for empowerment, it may not always provide concrete strategies for achieving this in resource-constrained environments like refugee camps.

2.1.3 Weaknesses of the Human Security Theory to the study

The Human Security Theory, while comprehensive, can also face challenges in practical application. The broad scope of the theory may result in difficulties in operationalizing its principles within existing frameworks of humanitarian aid, which are often rigid and state-centric (Kälin & Scherer, 2020). Furthermore, the emphasis on individual agency may inadvertently place the burden of resilience on refugees themselves, rather than addressing systemic issues that contribute to their vulnerability (UNDP, 2019).

2.2.1 Challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps

Objective 1 seeks to outline the challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps. This section examines the following key challenges gender-based violence (GBV), access to healthcare, mental health issues, educational barriers, economic disempowerment, child protection concerns, cultural and social isolation, employment opportunities for refugees, exploitation risks for refugee children.

These challenges intersect and exacerbate one another, underscoring the need for comprehensive solutions.

2.2.1.1 Gender-based violence (GBV)

Gender-based violence remains a critical and pervasive issue in refugee camps, profoundly impacting the safety and well-being of women and girls. Instances of GBV manifest in various forms such as sexual assault, domestic abuse, and trafficking. The precarious living conditions,

combined with the breakdown of social structures in crises, exacerbate the threat of violence. As reported by Baker et al (2020), an alarming 73% of women in refugee situations have encountered GBV, underscoring the urgency of addressing this issue. The UNHCR (2021) highlights that the lack of adequate security, insufficient lighting, and the absence of dedicated spaces for women increases their vulnerability. The psychological effects on survivors are profound and often debilitating, leading to long-term mental health issues such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression, as cited by Mastrorillo et al (2019). The societal stigma attached to GBV further isolates survivors, making recovery and reintegration into the community challenging. Economically, survivors face barriers to employment, creating cycles of dependency and long-term socio-economic disempowerment (Peterman et al., 2020). This highlights the need for comprehensive programs that not only provide immediate protection and legal support but also address economic independence as a pathway to recovery.

2.2.1.2 Access to healthcare

Healthcare access is a pivotal challenge for women and children in refugee camps, particularly concerning maternal health services. Significant barriers include a lack of skilled healthcare personnel, inadequate medical facilities, and cultural stigmas surrounding women's health. Schwerdtle et al (2019) emphasize that without trained professionals present, the risks during pregnancy and childbirth rise sharply, potentially leading to complications or maternal mortality. Furthermore, mental health services, often neglected in crisis responses, are severely underfunded, leaving many refugee women and children without necessary support (Mastrorillo et al., 2020). Efforts by organizations like the UNHCR (2021) advocate for integrated healthcare systems that consider both physical and mental health needs. Disparities based on gender and age contribute to the vulnerability of women and children, necessitating tailored healthcare programs that incorporate culturally sensitive practices to ensure effective service delivery.

2.2.1.3 Mental health issues

Mental health challenges are alarmingly prevalent among refugee populations, especially among women and children who have suffered traumatic experiences due to displacement and violence. Research by Mastrorillo et al (2019) reveals that anxiety and depression rates are significantly high in refugee women, which can be intensified by various stressors inherent in camp life, including overcrowding and insufficient psychosocial support. Psychosocial support programs can play a transformative role in improving mental health outcomes by providing safe spaces for expression and community engagement (Schwerdtle et al., 2019). Moreover,

the effects of trauma on children are also profound, with many showing signs of PTSD due to the violence and instability they have witnessed. The necessity for targeted interventions to address the mental health needs of these vulnerable groups cannot be overstated (Hassan et al., 2020).

2.2.1.4 Educational barriers

Numerous barriers hinder access to education for refugee children, particularly girls, where safety concerns dominate. Cultural norms may dictate that girls remain at home to avoid potential violence while attending school, as articulated by Schraven et al (2021). The long-term effects of educational deprivation can lead to cycles of poverty and limited opportunities, as education is crucial for individual and community development (Bettini et al., 2020). According to the UNHCR (2021), only 61% of refugee children have access to primary education, with even fewer progressing to secondary education. To tackle these obstacles, successful educational interventions must focus on enhancing safety and security within schools, integrating protective measures, and addressing financial barriers that keep girls from attending. Required resources may include hygiene products for menstruation, scholarships, and vocational training programs tailored to young women (Mastrorillo et al., 2021).

2.2.1.5 Economic disempowerment

Economic disempowerment remains a pervasive challenge for refugee women, often exacerbated by legal barriers that limit their employment opportunities. Kälin & Scherer (2020) underscore that restrictive legal frameworks frequently prevent women from seeking employment, forcing them into dependency on male family members for financial support. Gender-specific barriers to entrepreneurship, as identified by Mastrorillo et al (2019), further limit the capacity for women to achieve economic independence. The ramifications of such economic vulnerability were exacerbated by emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic (Peterman et al., 2021), which disrupted informal economies and led to increased unemployment rates. Vocational training programs are essential for empowering these women, enabling them to develop skills and regain financial stability (Zetter, 2018). Such programs need collaborative efforts among NGOs, governments, and communities to ensure sustainable livelihoods and foster resilience among refugee women.

2.2.1.6 Child protection concerns

Protecting children in refugee camps is paramount, as they face myriad risks, including exploitation, trafficking, and violence. According to UNICEF (2021), refugee children often

lack adequate protection mechanisms and are highly vulnerable in unstable environments. The psychological ramifications of separation from families or loss of caregivers further compound these risks, necessitating strong community-based child protection systems (Mastrorillo et al., 2019). Education serves a dual purpose it not only provides academic learning but also acts as a protective factor against exploitation. Comprehensive policies must be developed to safeguard children, ensuring that educational settings are secure and capable of addressing the diverse needs of refugee children (Schwerdtle et al., 2020).

2.2.1.7 Cultural and social isolation

Cultural and social isolation can drastically affect the integration of refugees into host communities. Bettini et al (2020) highlight how social dynamics and cultural barriers can contribute to the exclusion of refugee women and children, leading to increased mental health challenges and a lack of support networks. Successful community integration programs that foster social cohesion between refugees and host communities are critical for rebuilding lives and enhancing communal ties (Kälin & Scherer, 2020). The impact of social isolation extends beyond mental health; it stifles individuals' ability to pursue educational and economic opportunities, further entrenching their disadvantage. Active community engagement initiatives can lead to the establishment of supportive networks that promote integration and enhance overall well-being (Peterman et al., 2021).

2.2.1.8 Employment opportunities for refugees

Employment opportunities are vital for refugees to regain their independence and reduce dependence on humanitarian aid (Kälin & Scherer, 2020). Employment fosters dignity, self-esteem, and community integration (Baker et al., 2020). Unfortunately, many refugees, particularly women and girls, encounter significant employment barriers rooted in their legal status and lack of recognition of their qualifications (Mastrorillo et al., 2020). Ambiguous employment rights often compel refugees to engage in informal labour markets, exposing them to exploitation and abuse (Schwerdtle et al., 2019). With nearly 60% of refugee families living in poverty, innovative solutions must be developed to create economic opportunities that uplift families and promote sustainable livelihoods (Peterman et al., 2021). Initiatives might include facilitating skills training, entrepreneurship programs, and legal advocacy to enhance access to formal employment.

2.2.1.9 Exploitation risks for refugee children

Women and children represent a significant proportion of refugee populations, making them particularly vulnerable during crises. Issues surrounding safe motherhood and reproductive health are critical, as they directly relate to maternal and neonatal mortality rates (Mastrorillo et al., 2020). Refugee children may face premature responsibilities and societal pressures leading them to early marriages, significantly increasing their risks of unplanned pregnancies and unsafe abortions (Zetter, 2018). Compounding these issues are societal stigmas and economic dependencies that often silence young women seeking medical assistance and support (Bettini et al., 2020). Ensuring access to safe reproductive health services and education is essential in safeguarding the rights and health of women and children in refugee contexts.

Children in refugee camps are at grave risk of exploitation, including child labour, forcible recruitment as soldiers, and human trafficking (Hassan et al., 2020). Violence, stemming from the chaotic environments of refugee camps, remains a leading cause of death and trauma among children. Many experience various forms of abuse and neglect during displacement (Mastrorillo et al., 2020). The lack of social acceptance and adequate integration mechanisms exacerbates the risks faced by these children, compelling the need for comprehensive social support systems that prioritize protection and rehabilitation (Peterman et al., 2021). Initiatives must aim to create safe spaces, provide educational opportunities, and ensure overall well-being for refugee children to mitigate the risks of exploitation and abuse.

Conclusively, this literature review highlights the complex challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps, including gender-based violence, limited healthcare access, mental health issues, educational barriers, economic disempowerment, child protection concerns, cultural and social isolation, and exploitation risks. Despite existing research, gaps remain in understanding the specific experiences of women and children at TRS.

To address these gaps, this study aims to investigate the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS. By focusing on this specific context, this research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the complex issues affecting this vulnerable population. The findings of this study will inform evidence-based interventions and policy recommendations tailored to the unique needs of women and children at TRS.

2.2.2 The Effects of the challenges on the well-being of women and children in refugee camps

Objective 2 seeks to outline the effects of the challenges on the well-being of women and children in refugee camps. This section examines the following, health outcomes, psychosocial dimensions of health, communicable diseases and living conditions, malnutrition issues, gender-based violence risks, mental health considerations, importance of education and challenges in learning environments.

In refugee camps, access to basic necessities is often limited, including food, clean water, sanitation, and healthcare services. These conditions can lead to a variety of adverse outcomes that substantially affect the physical and psychological well-being of women and children. The interplay of these challenges results in a troubling cycle that perpetuates suffering and instability for those within these camps. With international humanitarian response mechanisms often stretched thin and underfunded, the existing system struggles to meet the foundational needs of women and children, worsening their collective plight.

2.2.2.1 Health outcomes for women and children

Recent studies illuminate the concerning health outcomes for women and children in refugee camps. For instance, research conducted by Mastroiello et al. (2016) highlights the heightened risk of health issues among refugees, which is exacerbated by various factors unique to camp life. Refugees are at greater risk for malnutrition—a condition directly linked to food insecurity and lack of access to healthy food options. Infectious diseases also pose a significant threat due to unsanitary conditions, lack of vaccinations, and crowded living quarters where pathogens can spread easily.

Women face unique reproductive health challenges in refugee settings, including lack of access to prenatal care, sexual and reproductive health services, and resources needed for safe childbirth. The prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) in camps compounds these challenges, often leaving women afraid to seek necessary medical assistance. Psychological health also deteriorates under these circumstances; fear, anxiety, and the trauma associated with displacement can lead to disorders such as PTSD, particularly among both women and children.

Khan et al. (2018) emphasised the cumulative impact of these stressors including loss of social support networks, the uncertainty of safety, and the trauma of having to leave one's home. The physical manifestations of these stresses can lead to chronic conditions such as hypertension,

diabetes, and other ailments that drastically reduce the quality of life and lifespan of those affected.

2.2.2.2 Psychosocial dimensions of health

The psychosocial aspects of health are critical in understanding the overall well-being of refugees in camps. According to Ager et al. (2017), the absence of social support systems plays a vital role in adversely affecting physical health outcomes. Refugees often find themselves isolated from their communities, further exacerbating their mental health struggles. Support systems that could provide emotional backing, practical assistance, or methods for stress-relief tend to disintegrate during the chaotic transition from home to camp.

Community-based interventions are essential in creating a sense of belonging and stability among refugees. Programs that foster social cohesion—such as cultural events, communal activities, and support groups can significantly improve both mental and physical health outcomes. Crisp (2010) cited harsh conditions in South Sudanese camps, where a lack of basic necessities not only resulted in high rates of malnutrition but also in increased morbidity and mortality rates among vulnerable populations.

Humanitarian organizations must prioritise services that cater specifically to the needs of women and children. As detailed by Buchanan et al. (2018), the factors contributing to reproductive health issues, such as increasing rates of sexually transmitted infections, need targeted programs addressing these health challenges.

2.2.2.3 Communicable diseases and living conditions

In regions like Kenya, research conducted by Oucho (2017) indicates that the dire living conditions marked by overcrowding and inadequate sanitation are fertile grounds for communicable diseases such as cholera, hepatitis, and tuberculosis. Overcrowding not only heightens the transmission rates of infectious diseases but also strains the limited healthcare resources available in these settings.

Women and children are particularly vulnerable in these environments. Without proper sanitation facilities, the risk of waterborne diseases increases, significantly impacting maternal and child health. Kibret et al. (2020) have shown that the prevalence of acute respiratory infections among children in Ethiopian refugee camps is alarming. Factors such as mold, overcrowded accommodations, and inadequate ventilation contribute to respiratory illnesses that can escalate without timely intervention.

To mitigate these health risks, comprehensive interventions emphasizing sanitation, hygiene education, and healthcare access are essential. Rehabilitation projects targeting the underlying issues of living conditions are necessary in addition to direct health interventions. To truly support the health of these populations, humanitarian organisations need to allocate resources towards improving basic living conditions in refugee camps, as this will provide a foundational layer upon which effective health interventions can be built.

2.2.2.4 Malnutrition issues

Malnutrition remains a catastrophic issue primarily affecting women and children in refugee camps. The World Food Programme (2021) reported that food insecurity is rampant due to various factors such as disrupted supply chains and poor distribution mechanisms. Malnutrition disproportionately impacts children under five, whose growth and cognitive development hinge heavily on access to nutritious food. Acute malnutrition, which can lead to severe complications and even death, is alarmingly common in these vulnerable populations.

Mastrorillo et al. (2016) documented that the rates of malnutrition among refugee children can exceed those found even in local populations facing economic hardships, highlighting the extreme levels of deprivation experienced in these settings. Beyond immediate health concerns, the ramifications of malnutrition extend far into the future. Studies conducted by Martin et al. (2019) demonstrate that malnutrition can lead not only to distorted physical health outcomes but also to long-term developmental delays and cognitive impairments that can severely limit educational and economic opportunities later in life.

In many African refugee camps, protracted conflicts contribute to entrenched poverty and food insecurity, leaving families with limited access to nutritious foods, significantly stunting children's growth and development. Abdullah et al. (2020) further emphasize that these conditions foster cycles of poverty, making it imperative for humanitarian organisations to introduce sustainable nutrition programs targeting vulnerable groups, particularly young children and pregnant or nursing women.

2.2.2.5 Gender-based violence risks

Women and children in refugee camps face significantly heightened risks of gender-based violence (GBV). The breakdown of social structures often magnified by conflicts creates environments conducive to various forms of violence, including sexual exploitation, trafficking, and domestic violence. Heise et al. (2020) found that refugee women face

disproportionate risks of GBV, which is often exacerbated by inadequate security measures within camps.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2021) corroborates these findings, suggesting that experiences of violence may become a routine aspect of life for many women in refugee camps. The absence of protective measures leaves them vulnerable to a range of abuses, from sexual assault to psychological and emotional violence. The compounding effects of poverty and displacement trap women and children in cycles of violence, making it exceedingly difficult for them to seek help or escape their circumstances.

Mastrorillo et al. (2016) emphasised that in African contexts, the heightened risk of sexual violence necessitates the implementation of urgent protective measures that adequately address and cater to the needs of women and children. Psychological trauma from these experiences often goes unaddressed; many refugees live with the fear and anxiety associated with their precarious situations while dealing with high rates of anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

2.2.2.6 Mental health considerations

Mental health issues are prevalent among refugees, with substantial evidence pointing to increased rates of anxiety, depression, and PTSD among those who have experienced trauma. According to Khamis (2019), the compounded trauma from conflicts and the stress of displacement necessitates targeted mental health interventions that acknowledge the unique circumstances faced by refugee populations.

The UNHCR (2020) notes that mental health issues in refugee communities are often stigmatized, deterring individuals from seeking necessary assistance and leading many to suffer silently. Aubry et al. (2021) argue for the integration of mental health services within humanitarian responses to effectively tackle these pervasive challenges.

Unfortunately, in many African refugee camps, a shortage of trained mental health professionals exacerbates the crisis, leaving most refugees without the support they so desperately need. As a result, mental health struggles can lead to a sense of isolation and hopelessness among refugees, significantly hindering their ability to engage with their communities and rebuild their lives.

2.2.2.7 Importance of education

Education is essential for the recovery and empowerment of displaced populations. However, UNESCO (2022) reports that millions of refugee children lack access to quality education, with

numerous barriers particularly affecting girls, including cultural norms and economic challenges. These educational barriers perpetuate cycles of poverty, limiting future opportunities for economic and social advancement.

According to a study by Djiré et al. (2019), educational deprivation among refugee children, particularly girls, leads to long-term consequences not only for individual potential but for societal growth as well. The UNHCR (2021) concurs that many children remain out of school, especially girls, due to prevailing cultural norms that prioritize the education of boys over that of girls.

2.2.2.8 Challenges in learning environments

The lack of safe learning environments poses a significant barrier to education for refugee children. A substantial lack of qualified teachers, inadequate educational resources, and unsafe surroundings further hinder access to education (Schwerdtle et al., 2020). This deprivation affects children's emotional and social development, leading to poor educational outcomes.

Without access to education, children's future opportunities diminutive, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and marginalisation, especially for women and girls. Djiré et al. (2019) highlighted the long-term implications of educational deprivation, making it imperative for stakeholders to prioritise educational programs that cater specifically to the needs of refugee children.

In conclusion, the devastating effects of the challenges on the well-being of women and children in refugee camps are stark reminders of the need for context specific research. This section has examined the far reaching consequences of limited access to basic necessities, including healthcare, sanitation, nutrition, education, and protection from gender-based violence. The interplay of these challenges perpetuates a cycle of suffering, instability, and long-term physical and psychological harm.

Given the gravity of these issues, it is crucial to investigate the unique experiences of women and children in specific refugee camps. This research aims to address this knowledge gap by exploring the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement.

2.2.3 Mitigatory measures against challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps

Objective 3 seeks to examine the existing mitigatory measures against the challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps. This includes, legal frameworks for refugee protection,

challenges in implementation, humanitarian assistance framework, the role of NGOs, long-term solutions and integration, gaps in existing frameworks and the involvement of refugees in policy discussions.

The complexity of refugee stories highlights the need for comprehensive, effective policy frameworks that fully consider the multifaceted challenges faced by these vulnerable populations. Such frameworks must acknowledge not only the immediate safety needs but also long-term issues related to health, education, and social inclusion.

2.2.3.1 Legal frameworks for refugee protection

Central to the international response to the refugee crisis is the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. These legal instruments define who is considered a refugee and outline the rights that these individuals possess when seeking asylum. They establish fundamental principles, including the right to seek asylum, the prohibition of forced return (non-refoulement), and access to basic rights such as education and work.

The principle of non-refoulement is particularly significant as it prohibits states from returning refugees to countries where they may face danger or persecution. This legal protection is a cornerstone of international refugee law and has been reinforced by various international human rights treaties (Goodwin-Gill and McAdam, 2007).

However, enforcement of these legal protections is inconsistent, often influenced by geopolitical dynamics and individual countries' domestic politics. Certain countries may interpret their obligations narrowly, invoking national security concerns to justify restrictive immigration and asylum policies. For instance, the narrow definitions of 'refugee' provided by these frameworks may not adequately address modern displacement scenarios, such as those caused by climate change, economic instability, or generalised violence (Zetter, 2018).

The Global Compact on Refugees (adopted in 2018) aimed to address these gaps by promoting cooperative frameworks among United Nations member states that uphold the principles of refugee protection while recognizing the multifaceted nature of modern displacement. By endorsing a more inclusive approach to displacement that goes beyond traditional definitions, the Compact seeks to ensure that those affected by crises have access to the protection and support they need.

2.2.3.2 Challenges in implementation

Despite having well-established legal frameworks, implementing these protections remains fraught with challenges. Many host countries experience political, economic, and social pressures that complicate the application of the Refugee Convention and other related legal frameworks (Hathaway, 2005). In politically unstable regions, governments may prioritize internal security over humanitarian obligations, resulting in measures that restrict access to asylum and jeopardize the safety of refugees. There can also be tendencies towards nationalism, where the rhetoric surrounding migrants and refugees becomes negative, driving public sentiment against their acceptance and integration.

Feller (2001) argues that the lack of political will in certain countries can hinder fulfilment of international obligations to protect refugees. This is compounded by resource constraints, as many host nations especially in the Global South struggle to provide for their own populations amidst economic challenges and therefore may view incoming refugees as a strain on limited resources.

Moreover, the rigid categorization of refugees by the international legal system fails to keep pace with contemporary issues of forced migration. The increasing number of individuals displaced by non-violent means, such as climate-induced famine or environmental disasters, reveals a significant gap in current protections. Zetter (2018) has emphasised the need for a re-evaluation of legal frameworks to better respond to and encompass these various displacement situations.

2.2.3.3 Humanitarian assistance framework

Humanitarian assistance is fundamental to addressing the immediate needs of refugees and forms a crucial part of the policy framework meant to protect vulnerable populations (Sphere, 2018). Organisations like the UNHCR, the World Food Programme (WFP), and various NGOs are tasked with providing essential services that include food, healthcare, shelter, and education (UNHCR, 2021). Yet, challenges in delivering effective humanitarian assistance abound. Funding shortfalls significantly limit the scope and efficacy of interventions, often resulting in prioritisation of aid in the face of overwhelming demand. The Global Humanitarian Overview (2022) outlines ongoing deficits in funding for vital humanitarian programs, leading to unmet needs for millions of refugees around the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored these vulnerabilities, disrupting supply chains, increasing overhead costs, and shifting global priorities. Refugees have borne a disproportionate burden as they face additional barriers to

accessing healthcare services during the pandemic, thus exacerbating existing health disparities (Ocha, 2022). Despite the critical nature of humanitarian assistance, a short-term focus can often overshadow the need for sustainable solutions. This dichotomy underscores the importance of developing long-term strategies that do not just respond to immediate needs but also lay groundwork for recovery and self-sufficiency.

2.2.3.4 The role of NGOs

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are vital contributors to the delivery of humanitarian services in refugee contexts. Many organisations fill gaps in service provision, especially in locations where government support is lacking or where broader international response mechanisms are slow to mobilise (Mastrorillo et al., 2018). However, NGOs often face hurdles, including limited funding and bureaucratic red tape that can impede rapid response. They typically rely on grants and donations, which can be difficult to secure, especially during times of global financial strain when donor fatigue sets in. While NGOs provide immediate relief, their effectiveness in creating lasting change relies heavily on collaboration with governmental and international bodies. For instance, local NGOs possess invaluable insight into community needs and cultural contexts, allowing them to create nuanced programs that resonate with refugee populations. Therefore, integrating NGO expertise with governmental policy initiatives can enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian efforts. However, the need for systemic change is pressing. Addressing the root causes of displacement through international cooperation, funding, and efficient policy implementation is crucial for creating sustainable solutions that uphold the rights and dignity of refugees.

2.2.3.5 Long-term solutions and integration

Long-term solutions for refugees often involve pathways to integration within host communities or potential resettlement into third countries (UNHCR, 2018). Proper integration policies promote social cohesion, facilitate economic self-sufficiency, and alleviate tensions between refugees and host populations (Zetter, 2017). Examples of successful integration programs include Sweden, Germany, and Canada, where refugees have access to language training, vocational education, and job placement services, as well as community integration initiatives that foster relationships between refugees and local populations (Krause, 2018). These programs not only support refugees but also challenge communities to engage in cross-cultural dialogue, fostering mutual understanding and social harmony. While the potential for successful integration is significant, existing policies are not uniformly implemented. Many

refugees encounter systemic barriers, including discrimination in job markets, inadequate access to education, and social exclusion, all of which hinder integration efforts (OECD, 2020).

The Kampala Declaration on Refugees is an example of an effort to address these integration challenges. It emphasizes the need for development-oriented approaches that target long-term solutions and advocate for resource allocation to support integration in host communities. However, resource constraints remain a considerable barrier, particularly in regions already grappling with economic instability (African Union, 2009).

2.2.3.6 Gaps in existing frameworks

Despite the comprehensive legal and policy frameworks available, several critical gaps remain unaddressed. One fundamental issue is the lack of comprehensive and reliable data on refugee populations, which hampers effective policy-making and the design of interventions that truly cater to the needs of vulnerable groups (UNHCR, 2021). Accurate data collection is essential for understanding the unique challenges faced by different refugee groups, ensuring that policies are targeted and effective. Without such data, interventions can be poorly planned and may ultimately fail to meet their objectives (Schraven et al., 2019). Moreover, there is often a disconnect between humanitarian assistance and development aid, leading to fragmented responses that do not adequately address the longer-term needs of refugee populations (World Bank, 2017). A more integrated approach that combines immediate relief with long-term support mechanisms is needed to create resilience within refugee communities and enable them to rebuild their lives.

2.2.3.7 The involvement of refugees in policy discussions

In addressing gaps in policy and improving the overall effectiveness of interventions, the involvement of refugees in decision-making processes is paramount (Schwerdtle et al., 2021). Often, the very individuals who are the subject of policies are excluded from discussions about their lives, needs, and futures. This lack of representation can result in misaligned policies that do not accurately reflect the realities of refugee experiences. Involving refugees in the policy-making process can lead to initiatives that are more relevant, culturally sensitive, and effective. By ensuring that refugee voices are heard, policymakers can develop solutions that are practical and tailored to the specific challenges faced by communities. This participatory approach not only promotes empowerment but also fosters a sense of ownership and agency among refugee populations (Crawley and Skleparis, 2018).

Efforts such as community consultations, participatory research, and co-created programs should be prioritised to ensure that policies resonate with those they intend to serve. By recognising the capabilities and expertise of refugees themselves, policymakers can design interventions that promote meaningful integration and support long-term resilience.

In conclusion, the examination of mitigatory measures against challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps highlights the complexity and urgency of addressing their needs. Despite existing legal frameworks, humanitarian assistance, and NGO efforts, significant gaps persist. The inconsistencies in implementation, funding shortfalls, and limited consideration of refugee voices underscore the need for context specific research.

Therefore, this research aims to investigate the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS, providing critical insights into their unique experiences and informing evidence based policy recommendations. By focusing on this specific context, this study seeks to contribute to improved outcomes and enhanced well-being for this vulnerable population.

2.2.4 Potential opportunities for women and children in refugee camps

Objective 4 seeks to outline on potential opportunities that addresses challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps. These includes, importance of psychosocial support, skill development and economic empowerment, legal aid and humanitarian rights awareness, community integration initiatives, engaging local governments and authorities, empowerment of women in refugee, access to basic service, the concept of refugee economics, enhancing mental health through access to services and lastly participatory models for service delivery.

2.2.4.1 Importance of psychosocial support

Psychosocial support (PSS) is increasingly recognised as essential for safeguarding the mental health of refugees who often come from backgrounds of extreme trauma. These experiences may include loss of family members, exposure to violence, and the anxiety of displacement, all of which can adversely affect mental health. PSS interventions, as highlighted by Mastrorillo et al. (2016), are effective in mitigating symptoms of anxiety, depression, and PTSD, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of life for refugees. Effective PSS programs typically involve multiple components, including individual counselling, group therapy sessions, and community engagement activities that empower refugees to share their experiences and support one another. For instance, community-based therapeutic activities,

such as art therapy or storytelling initiatives, have been shown to help participants process their trauma in culturally sensitive ways, fostering a sense of belonging and reducing social isolation.

Cultural sensitivity in the design of these programs is paramount. Silove et al. (2017) propose an approach that acknowledges and incorporates cultural nuances, ensuring interventions resonate with the diverse populations within refugee communities. Programs tailored to reflect cultural values and histories allow refugees to engage with the therapeutic process more fully and establish therapeutic rapport with service providers. Moreover, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC, 2017) underscores the necessity of integrating mental health care with broader health services. This holistic approach addresses how mental and physical health are interconnected, allowing healthcare providers to offer comprehensive support that considers both types of needs. For example, training healthcare providers in trauma-informed care can create a more supportive atmosphere for refugees seeking medical assistance, thereby enhancing trust and ensuring they receive the care they require.

2.2.4.2 Skill development and economic empowerment

Addressing the challenges faced by refugees often necessitates a focus on economic self-sufficiency, which can be promoted through vocational training and skill development. Access to tailored vocational programs equips refugees with marketable skills that significantly improve their chances of finding stable employment and achieving economic independence. The UNHCR (2018) reports that successful vocational programs that are tailored to meet local labour market demands effectively increase employment opportunities for refugees. Skill development initiatives should provide not just technical training but also soft skills that are necessary for thriving in the workplace. Zetter et al. (2017) emphasise that competencies in communication, teamwork, and problem-solving are crucial for adapting to dynamic work environments.

Program participants often benefit from experiential training that simulates real-world job tasks, assisting them in gaining confidence and practical experience. Cross-sector collaborations between NGOs, local businesses, and governmental entities can create pathways for job placements. Collaborative efforts can facilitate on-the-job training or internships, allowing refugees to transition more easily into the workforce. Such partnerships can help defuse potential tensions in host communities by fostering economic integration and collaboration among diverse groups. Moreover, integrating refugee voices into program design ensures that training aligns with their aspirations while considering local market demands.

Empowering refugees to take part in the development of such programs cultivates a sense of ownership, motivating them to engage more fully in the process.

2.2.4.3 Legal aid and humanitarian rights awareness

Legal aid and humanitarian services are critical in ensuring that refugees are aware of and can exercise their rights within host countries. The complexity of asylum procedures can leave many refugees vulnerable to exploitation, making accessible legal assistance indispensable. The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE, 2019) emphasizes that navigating the asylum process without guidance can lead to serious consequences, including wrongful deportation or denial of necessary protections. Legal literacy programs designed to educate refugees about their rights and obligations can be transformative. Arazi (2020) notes that empowerment through knowledge allows refugees to effectively navigate their circumstances and advocate for themselves.

This also plays a critical role in fostering self-advocacy within refugee communities, where members can support one another in understanding their legal rights and entitlements. Fitzgerald (2018) highlights the additional dimension of combating discrimination and xenophobia through legal aid. By providing refugees with legal tools to challenge injustices, support services contribute to broader societal change. Legal assistance helps individuals take action against discriminatory practices while raising awareness within local communities about the rights and contributions of refugees. This dual approach promotes tolerance and coexistence, allowing for a more holistic understanding of refugee issues among host populations.

2.2.4.4 Community integration initiatives

Community integration initiatives form the backbone of successful refugee support systems. By fostering mutual understanding between refugees and host communities, these initiatives can help reduce social tensions while building constructive relationships. Betts et al. (2017) argue that inclusive policies, which involve refugee participation in local community life, are vital for a peaceful coexistence. Examples of effective community initiatives include organising dialogue sessions that encourage open discussions between refugees and host community members, outreach programs that disseminate information about refugee experiences and contributions, and cultural exchange events that celebrate diversity while creating opportunities for shared understanding. Such community engagement not only provides refugees with a voice but also invites local populations to actively engage with their

new neighbours, fostering empathy and solidarity. Krause (2017) emphasizes the need for participatory approaches where refugees are allowed to contribute to local initiatives actively.

Programs promoting intercultural exchanges can help break down barriers by allowing refugees to share their cultures, traditions, and contributions with host communities while simultaneously learning about their new surroundings. This mutual learning process not only enriches community life but also fosters a sense of belonging that is critical for both refugees and locals. Moreover, community-led initiatives that utilise local resources can enhance resilience. For example, employing local knowledge and materials in projects such as community gardens not only addresses immediate needs but also encourages collaboration and interaction between refugees and local residents. This blend of resource utilisation empowers communities, creating sustainable solutions to shared challenges.

2.2.4.5 Engaging local governments and authorities

Engaging local governments and authorities is crucial for the successful implementation of refugee support programs. Manby (2016) argues that effective governance characterised by transparency and community involvement can provide a coherent response to refugee needs. Building partnerships with governmental institutions can align these programs with national and local policies, enabling broader acceptance and integration efforts. The Global Compact on Refugees (United Nations, 2018) highlights the importance of government accountability in refugee responses. By advocating for the involvement of refugees in the development of national strategies, policymakers can promote policies that not only advance the rights of refugees but also leverage their skills and resources for the benefit of host communities.

Local governments play a crucial role in the provision of services such as healthcare, education, and social welfare. By collaborating with NGOs and international organisations, they can create service delivery models that effectively meet the diverse needs of both refugee and host populations. Training local authorities in cultural competence and refugee rights can help build a supportive environment, fostering better relationships between refugees and their new communities.

2.2.4.6 Empowerment of women in refugee

The empowerment of women in refugee contexts stands out as a critical element in preventing gender-based violence (GBV) and promoting resilience. Research by Wood (2016) shows that initiatives focused on educational and economic empowerment, including vocational training and access to bright futures, can reduce women's vulnerability to GBV. Providing women with

opportunities for self-sufficiency empowers them to make informed decisions about their lives and protect themselves from violent encounters. Programs aimed at building confidence and leadership among refugee women are essential for fostering self-determination.

These initiatives can take many forms, including mentorship programs that pair experienced community leaders with younger refugee women, workshops that develop skills in negotiation and advocacy, and platforms for women to voice their experiences and needs. Sullivan et al. (2018) stress the importance of engaging men and boys in the discourse on gender equity as a means to challenge harmful social norms leading to violence. Awareness campaigns that involve male community leaders in advocating for women's rights can shift attitudes and create a safer environment for women and girls. Such programs should also include community awareness initiatives to inform the broader public about GBV issues and promote protective mechanisms for survivors. Furthermore, UN Women (2019) emphasizes the necessity of adopting a gender-sensitive perspective across all refugee support services. This perspective should not only address the immediate safety needs of women and girls but also integrate them into broader socio-economic strategies that promote gender equality and empower women as agents of change within their communities.

2.2.4.7 Access to basic services

Access to basic services including healthcare, education, sanitation, and safe housing is vital for improving the quality of life for refugees. Crisp (2010) articulates that the integration of these services is essential for enhancing living conditions, fostering autonomy, and enabling refugees to become self-reliant. Healthcare access is particularly critical, as untreated physical and mental health issues can significantly hinder refugees' ability to recover and contribute positively to society. Systems that facilitate access to healthcare providers, including mental health specialists trained in trauma-informed care, can significantly improve refugees' overall well-being. Education is another cornerstone of refugee well-being.

The UNHCR (2018) advocates for systematic approaches ensuring that all refugee children receive quality education, emphasizing that education not only equips them with knowledge and skills but also provides a sense of normalcy and hope in an otherwise chaotic environment. Additionally, ensuring adequate sanitation services has significant health implications. Refugee camps that lack proper sanitation face higher rates of hygiene-related diseases, which can be catastrophic in densely populated settings. By prioritising comprehensive coverage of

basic services through collaborative international, governmental, and local community efforts, refugees can be equipped to rebuild their lives and reintegrate into society.

2.2.4.8 The Concept of refugee economies

The concept of refugee economies, introduced by Betts et al. (2017), proposes an innovative shift in how refugees are perceived transitioning from mere recipients of aid to active contributors to local and national economies. This reframing acknowledges that refugees can play a significant role in stimulating economic growth within host societies. Access to basic services, including education and vocational training, empowers refugees to engage in economic activities that yield mutual benefits. When refugees have the tools to succeed, they can contribute entrepreneurial approaches that introduce diversity into local markets. From local shops to agricultural initiatives, refugees' economic contributions can expand opportunities for both themselves and host communities, resulting in enhanced livelihoods across the board. Kalin (2015) discusses the necessity for more robust legal frameworks aimed at ensuring that states uphold their obligations to provide essential services to refugees. By strengthening enforcement mechanisms, countries can foster an environment where refugees are integrated into the local economy, thus broadening their participation in both the labour market and community life.

2.2.4.9 Enhancing mental health through access to services

Finally, the relationship between access to essential services and mental health cannot be overstated. As identified by Mastrorillo et al. (2016), when refugees have reliable access to healthcare and psychosocial support, there is a marked reduction in symptoms of common mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. By addressing both immediate needs and long-term goals, services can effectively contribute to the holistic well-being of refugees, enabling them to recover and thrive. A multi-disciplinary approach should be implemented that recognizes the interconnected nature of mental and physical health. For instance, incorporating mental health screenings within primary healthcare settings allows providers to address mental health issues early while simultaneously treating physical ailments ultimately leading to improved health outcomes. Furthermore, establishing community health initiatives can empower refugees to take an active role in their health and well-being. For example, health education programs can equip refugees with information necessary to navigate healthcare systems effectively and promote healthier lifestyles.

2.2.4.10 Participatory models for service delivery

The participatory model advocated by Zetter (2017) emphasizes the need for refugees to be involved in the planning and implementation of programs designed to serve them. The active participation of refugees ensures that services are tailored to meet their actual needs, leading to improved satisfaction and community engagement. Involving refugees in decision-making processes fosters ownership, encouraging individuals to take charge of their circumstances. This can be accomplished through community councils or advisory groups where refugees can voice concerns, suggest solutions, and collaborate alongside local officials and NGOs. Participatory models also enhance transparency and accountability in service delivery, leading to increased trust between refugee communities and service providers. This trust is vital for the sustainability of programs, as it encourages refugees to utilize available resources actively and engage with the services offered to them (Zetter, 2017).

2.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive review of the related literature and theoretical frameworks relevant to the challenges faced by women and children at TRS. The application of Feminist Theory and Human Security Theory has illuminated the gendered dimensions of displacement and the necessity for a holistic approach to refugee well-being. The literature identified key themes, including the challenges faced by women and children, the effects of these challenges on their well-being, existing Mitigatory policy frameworks, and potential opportunities for improvement. The reviewed literature reveals significant gaps, particularly in the intersectionality of experiences among refugees, the effectiveness of current interventions, and the need for culturally sensitive approaches. While the literature highlights critical issues such as gender-based violence, access to healthcare, and educational barriers, it also underscores the importance of integrating mental health support and economic empowerment initiatives. However, weaknesses in the theoretical frameworks indicate a need for more nuanced strategies that consider multiple forms of oppression and the systemic barriers refugees face. The next chapter will outline the research methodology employed in this study, detailing the methods used for data collection and analysis.

Chapter 3

Research methodology

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the literature related to the topic and the theoretical framework used. This chapter outlines the research methodology employed to investigate the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement. The study adopts a mixed method research strategy, integrating both quantitative and qualitative analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and perspectives of this vulnerable population. The chapter discusses the research philosophy, design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and data analysis procedures. Additionally, it addresses issues of validity, reliability, and ethical considerations that guide the study.

3.1 Research Philosophy

This study adopts a mixed research philosophy, which integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods to comprehensively understand the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement. The significance of using a mixed research philosophy lies in its ability to combine the strengths of both approaches, allowing for a richer exploration of complex social phenomena. Creswell and Plano Clark (2021) note that mixed methods enable researchers to triangulate findings, enhancing the validity and reliability of results. This is particularly crucial in the context of vulnerable populations, where personal narratives and broader statistical data can inform more effective interventions and policies.

By integrating qualitative insights—such as personal experiences of gender-based violence—with quantitative data on healthcare access and educational opportunities, this research aims to provide a holistic view of the challenges faced by women and children. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2020) emphasize that mixed methods facilitate a deeper understanding of multifaceted issues by exploring how different variables interact in real-world settings. Thus, the mixed research philosophy is essential for this study, as it allows for a comprehensive examination of the complex challenges and opportunities at Tongogara Refugee Settlement, ultimately contributing to evidence-based recommendations for improving the well-being and empowerment of its residents.

3.2 Research Design

For this study, a case study research design has been selected as the most suitable approach within the mixed methods framework. This design allows for an in-depth exploration of the specific context of Tongogara Refugee Settlement, facilitating a detailed understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by its residents, particularly women and children. Yin (2021) asserts that case studies are valuable for investigating complex phenomena within their real-life context, making them ideal for examining the multifaceted issues present in refugee settings. By collecting rich qualitative data through interviews and focus groups, alongside quantitative data from structured surveys, the study can validate findings and provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

The significance of employing a case study design within a mixed methods framework is further underscored by its potential to generate actionable insights. By thoroughly examining Tongogara Refugee Settlement, the research can identify targeted interventions that address the unique challenges faced by women and children. This approach aligns with the principles of mixed methods research, which emphasize the integration of multiple data sources to achieve a nuanced understanding of complex social issues (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2021). Ultimately, the case study design is well-suited to this research, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the challenges and opportunities at the settlement, and informing evidence-based interventions and policies

3.3 Target population

The study population for this research comprises women and children residing in the TRS, Zimbabwe, as well as key informants, including camp management and humanitarian aid workers. As Jacobs (2010) notes, the research population is the larger group from which individuals are selected to participate in a study. To be considered, this population must meet specific criteria (Polit and Hungler, 1999) or possess characteristics relevant to the research (Cohen et al., 2006).

The TRS is home to approximately 12,000 refugees, with women and children accounting for around 60% (7,200) of the population (UNHCR, 2022). This study focuses on women and children residing in the camp, as well as key informants. Key informants, including representatives from Non-Governmental Organisations, camp administration, and community leaders, provided valuable insights into the camp's operational aspects and services. Their input also helped identify challenges faced by women and children in the Tongogara Refugee Camp.

3.4 Research sample

Sampling is the process of selecting research participants from a larger population (Adler and Clark, 2011:100). A research sample is, therefore, a smaller group of representatives selected for a study, whose characteristics exemplify the larger group from which they were selected (Jacobs, 2010). Sampling is a prerequisite because it is not necessary, or even possible, to collect data from the entire target population (Babbie, 2013). Sampling is, therefore, a means to an end, as it allows the study of a chosen phenomenon from the entire targeted population without involving everyone (Adler and Clark, 2011).

Moreover, the research questions and objectives determine who and how many people to select. Consequently, findings from a systematically selected representative sample can be regarded as sufficiently valid and reliable to be safely generalised to the target population. The population-sample ratio depends on the sample representation, which in turn determines the inference generalisation (See Figures 3.4.1(a) and (b) below).

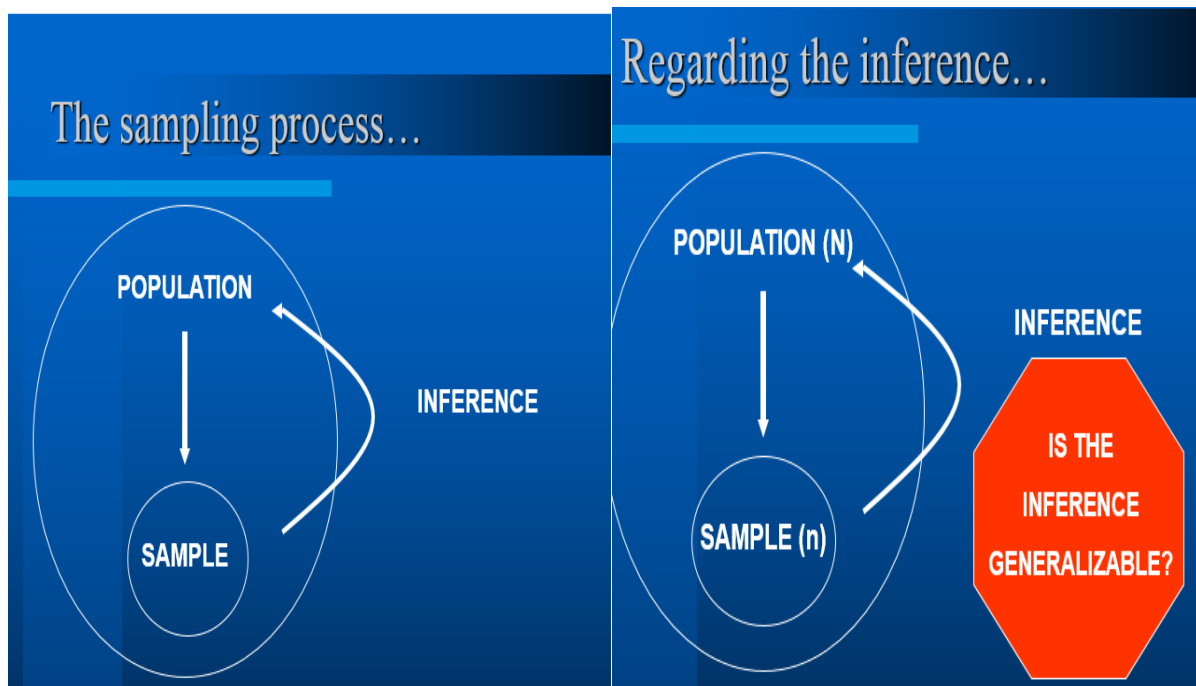


Figure 3.4.1 (a) and (b) population-sample ratio and the inference of population-sample ratio (Jacobs, 2010)

3.5 Sampling

Sampling is a crucial aspect of research design, as it enables researchers to select a representative subset of participants from a larger population (Adler and Clark 2011:100).

3.5.1 Sampling technique

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilising both quantitative and qualitative sampling strategies to investigate the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS. Sampling rationalises the data collection processes.

3.5.1.1 Quantitative (probability) sampling techniques

Quantitative sampling techniques were used to select participants from the target population. Probability sampling ensured that every individual had an equal chance of being selected (Magwa and Magwa, 2015). The goal was to obtain a sample representative of the target population. This study employed simple stratified, simple random, systematic, and cluster probability-sampling techniques (Chawla and Sondhi, 2011).

The use of quantitative sampling techniques was justified by three research objectives: 1.4.1, which aimed to outline the challenges faced by women and children at TRS; 1.4.2, which sought to assess the effects of the challenges on the well-being of women and children; and 1.4.3, which aimed to examine the existing mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced.

3.5.1.1.1 Stratified sampling

Stratified sampling ‘involves dividing the population into groups or strata defined by the presence of certain characteristics’ from each stratum (Adler and Clark 2011:120). This technique was used to divide the study population into workers, women, and children residing at TRS. This technique was justified by research objective 1.4.2, which aimed to assess the effects of the challenges on the well-being of women and children.

3.5.1.1.2 Simple random sampling

Simple random sampling was used to establish the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS. This technique ensured that every refugee and worker had an equal chance of participating in the research. Random sampling is ‘the key component of probability sampling’ because ‘random samples are almost always more representative than non-random samples because they are based entirely on probability and chance’ (Dornyei

2007:97). This technique was justified by research objective 1.4.1, which aimed to outline the challenges faced by women and children.

Simple random sampling also controlled sampling bias since every refugee and worker had an equal and independent chance of being sampled. However, the 13 out of possible 20 participants who completed the questionnaires were randomly selected.

3.5.1.1.3 Cluster sampling

Cluster sampling involved dividing the target population into heterogeneous subgroups, each sharing similar characteristics (Ornstein, 2013). This approach was used to select intact clusters, including camp management, humanitarian aid workers, children, and women residing at Tongogara Refugee Camp. This approach was justified by research objective 1.4.3, which aimed to examine the existing mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced.

3.5.2 Qualitative (non-probability) sampling techniques

This research also used non-probability qualitative sampling techniques. Unlike probability samples, non-probability (non-random) samples are less likely to represent the entire population (Jacobs 2010). Nevertheless, they are more appropriate for the qualitative component of this exploratory research. Nonprobability qualitative strategies try to achieve ‘a trade-off, that is, a reasonably representative sample using resources that are within the means of the ordinary researcher’ (Dornyei 2007:97).

In addition to the woman refugees cluster noted above, probability and non-probability sampling techniques guided me to come up with the samples shown in Table 3.1 below. The Table shows that only five victims and four alleged perpetrators were purposively sampled in the study. The small numbers were determined by the qualitative nature of the research design used to get information from them, as well as the sensitive nature of the question. The small sample enabled me to closely analyse their testimonies.

The clusters were sampled and the participants ranged from 4-6 in each cluster. The large number of clusters sampled enabled me to reflect on the major elements of variables in the population (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009:319). I used purposive sampling technique. This

approach was justified by research objective 1.4.4, which aimed to suggest potential opportunities to deal with the challenges faced.

Category of Participants (clusters)	Number of participants	Data gathering technique
Women residing in the Tongogara Refugee Settlement	15	Interviews
Camp management	6	Questionnaire
Humanitarian aid workers	8	Interviews
Children (aged 12-18) residing in the Tongogara Refugee Settlement	13	Interviews
Camp administration	7	Questionnaire
Community leaders	6	Interviews
Totals	55	

Table 3.1 Research participants and instruments used

3.5.2.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is a widely used qualitative sampling strategy that involves selecting participants based on their specific characteristics, expertise, or experiences (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). In this study, I employed purposive sampling to target individuals with attributes related to the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children in refugee camps, ensuring that the participants could provide valuable insights into the research topic. This approach is also known as judgmental sampling, as it involves deliberately selecting informants based on their knowledge and specific qualities (Babbie, 2013:128). By using purposive sampling, I was able to collect relevant data from participants who were well-suited to provide meaningful responses (Oliver, 2010). This sampling strategy was also used during the pre-testing of my mixed-methods research instruments, and its selection was guided by the research topic, questions, and objectives.

3.5.3 Pilot Testing

Pilot testing, commonly known as pre-testing, will serve as a fundamental research approach that will assess the viability of research samples and the effectiveness of data collection tools. Recent studies highlight the necessity of conducting pilot tests to validate the psychometric properties of research instruments (Smith and Jones, 2021). By implementing a pilot phase, researchers will uncover potential challenges that may arise during the main data collection, thereby improving the reliability and credibility of the study outcomes (Taylor et al., 2022). In this research, I will conduct a pilot of the survey questionnaire, along with the questions for interviews and focus group discussions. The pilot tests will be administered either in person or sent via email, allowing for a realistic trial of the data collection procedures (Brown, 2023). This strategy will facilitate practice in the data gathering process and yield critical insights into participant responses and engagement levels.

The pre-testing phase will enable me to make essential modifications to the sample selection and refine the data collection instruments. Feedback from the pilot study will prompt significant revisions to the language and organisation of both the questionnaires and interview prompts, ensuring they are accessible and understandable to the target demographic (Green and White, 2020). Additionally, this preparatory stage will highlight the importance of involving a research assistant, particularly for the rural sample, to enhance the data collection process. Furthermore, pilot testing will act as a crucial quality assurance step, allowing me to identify and resolve feasibility concerns prior to the main study. It will provide foresight into possible obstacles, such as non-response rates and the adequacy of sample sizes, which could affect the research conclusions (Johnson, 2023). A key benefit of conducting a pilot survey will be the establishment of a clear separation between finalising the research instruments and initiating the actual data collection, ensuring thorough preparation for the study.

3.6 Data collection techniques

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to comprehensively explore the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS. The primary instruments for data collection used included, structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, supplemented by focus group discussions and observations. This multi-faceted approach allowed a rich understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives.

3.6.1 Quantitative data collection instrument: Structured questionnaire

A structured questionnaire served as the primary quantitative data collection tool. This instrument consisted of closed-ended questions designed to gather standardised responses from participants. The structured format facilitates efficient data analysis and comparison across a diverse participant base (Bryman, 2021). The questionnaire included demographic questions as well as specific inquiries related to the challenges faced by women and children in the camp, such as access to healthcare, education, and safety concerns.

The use of a structured questionnaire allowed the collection of data from a large number of participants in a relatively short time frame, enhancing the representativeness of the sample (Dempsey et al., 2021). However, limited the depth of responses, as participants did not have the opportunity to elaborate on their experiences in the same way they could in qualitative formats (Naderifar et al., 2019).

3.6.2 Qualitative data collection instruments

3.6.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather in-depth qualitative data from key informants, including camp management, humanitarian aid workers, and selected women and children residing in the camp. This method allowed for flexibility in questioning while ensuring that specific topics are covered (Creswell and Poth, 2021). The interviews were guided by an interview protocol that includes open-ended questions aimed at eliciting detailed narratives about participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the challenges they face. The semi-structured format encouraged a conversational style, allowing participants to share their thoughts freely and provide insights that may not be captured through quantitative measures (Patton, 2020). This approach was particularly valuable in exploring sensitive topics, as it fosters trust and rapport between the researcher and participants (Smith and Jones, 2021).

3.6.2.2 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions were complement to the individual interviews by facilitating group interactions among participants. Each focus group consisted of 3-5 participants, allowing for a dynamic exchange of ideas and experiences related to the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children in the camp (Litosseliti, 2021). The discussions were moderated to

ensure that all voices were heard and to encourage participants to build on each other's contributions. This method was effective in generating diverse perspectives and highlighting common themes, as participants felt more comfortable sharing their experiences in a group setting (Kitzinger, 2020). The collective nature of focus groups also enabled the identification of shared challenges and potential solutions, enriching the data collected from individual interviews.

3.7 Data collection procedures

The data collection process was carefully planned and executed to ensure reliability and validity. The structured questionnaires were administered to participants in person, enhancing response rates and allowing for immediate clarification of questions (Robson and McCartan, 2021). Participants were given a designated timeframe, typically one week, to complete the questionnaires, ensuring they have sufficient time to provide thoughtful responses. For the qualitative components, interviews and focus group discussions were scheduled at convenient times for participants, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. All interviews and discussions were audio-recorded, with participants' permission, to ensure accurate transcription and analysis. Confidentiality and anonymity was maintained throughout the research process, encouraging honest and open participation.

3.8 Data presentation and analysis proposal

The data collected through the semi-structured interviews and structured surveys were analysed using both thematic analysis and statistical analysis.

3.8.1 Thematic analysis

Qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews was analysed using thematic analysis, which involves identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within the data (Braun and Clarke, 2019). The researcher followed a structured process of familiarising with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report.

3.8.2 Statistical analysis

Quantitative data from the structured surveys were analysed using statistical software, such as SPSS to identify trends and correlations among variables. This mixed-methods approach

allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by women and children in the camp, as it integrates qualitative insights with quantitative findings (Creswell, 2021).

3.9 Validity and reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, the researcher employed several strategies.

3.9.1 Triangulation

The use of multiple data collection methods (interviews and surveys) allowed triangulation of the data, enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. Triangulation is a common strategy used in mixed-methods research, as it enables the researcher to corroborate and validate the data from multiple sources, thereby increasing the overall rigor and reliability of the study (Jacobsen and Landau, 2019; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2019).

3.9.2 Member checking

Participants were provided with the opportunity to review and validate the researcher's interpretations of the qualitative data, ensuring that the findings accurately reflect their experiences and perspectives. Member checking technique was used in qualitative research, as it helped to ensure the authenticity and trustworthiness of the findings (Pittaway and Bartolomei, 2021; Dempsey et al., 2021).

3.9.3 Audit trail

The researcher maintained detailed records of the research process, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation, to ensure transparency and enable the study to be replicated by other researchers. Maintaining an audit trail enhances the overall credibility and dependability of the study (Jacobsen and Landau, 2019; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2019).

3.10 Ethical considerations

The study will adhere to the following ethical principles which are as follows, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, minimisation to harm and ethical approval.

3.10.1 Informed consent

Participants were provided with detailed information about the study, including its purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants. Written informed consent were obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the research. Obtaining informed consent is a crucial ethical consideration, ensuring that participants are fully aware of their rights and the potential risks and benefits of their involvement (Jacobsen and Landau, 2019; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2019).

3.10.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

Participants' identities and any sensitive information shared during the interviews and surveys was kept strictly confidential. Pseudonyms was used in the reporting of the findings to protect participants' anonymity. Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity is critical, particularly for vulnerable populations (Ager and Strang, 2008; Pittaway and Bartolomei, 2021; Dempsey et al., 2021).

3.10.3 Minimisation of harm

The researcher was mindful of the potential emotional and psychological impact that discussing sensitive topics may have on participants and were provided appropriate support and referrals if necessary. Minimising the potential for harm is a fundamental ethical principle, especially for participants who may have experienced traumatic events (Jacobsen and Landau, 2019; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2019).

3.10.4 Ethical approval

The study was reviewed and approved by the appropriate institutional review board or ethics committee to ensure compliance with ethical standards and the protection of participants' rights. Obtaining ethical approval is a standard requirement for research, helping to ensure that the study is conducted in a manner that respects the rights and well-being of participants (Pittaway and Bartolomei, 2021; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2019).

3.11 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive roadmap for the data collection and analysis processes integral to the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at the TRS. The researcher also navigated through the intricacies of the mixed methods research approach. The study adopts a mixed research design, utilising semi-structured interviews and structured surveys as the primary data collection methods. The purposive sampling technique will be used to select information-rich participants, and the data will be analysed using both thematic and statistical analysis. The researcher has also addressed issues of validity, reliability, and ethical considerations to ensure the rigorous and ethical conduct of the study. The findings from this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the unique experiences and needs of women and children in refugee camp settings, informing evidence-based policies and

interventions to enhance their well-being and empowerment. The next chapter will present and analyse the research findings.

Chapter 4

Data analysis, presentation and discussion

4.0 Data presentation and analysis

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter delineates the methodology that was employed in the study. This chapter provides an analysis of the findings from the study regarding the challenges and opportunities encountered by women and children at TRS. Descriptive statistics were provided prior to the presentation of the hypothesis testing results. The findings provide a basis for conclusions and recommendations. The study aimed to identify the challenges encountered by women and children at TRS, evaluate the impact of these challenges on their well-being, analyse the current policy framework addressing these issues, and propose potential solutions to mitigate the challenges faced. This chapter examines response rates, data reliability, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis outcomes, regression analysis, and hypothesis testing.

4.2 Bio data and demographic analysis

The demographic study offers vital insights into the respondents' characteristics, which are crucial for comprehending the issues and possibilities they encounter. The investigation examines several critical demographic factors: gender, age, education, present employment and duration of residency at the camp.

4.2.1 Gender

The gender distribution of responders indicates that 75% were female and 25% were male. The demographic makeup highlights the notable presence of women in the camp, consistent with results from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2021), which stress the distinct vulnerabilities encountered by women and children in refugee contexts. Women in refugee camps frequently face increased risks of gender-based abuse, exploitation,

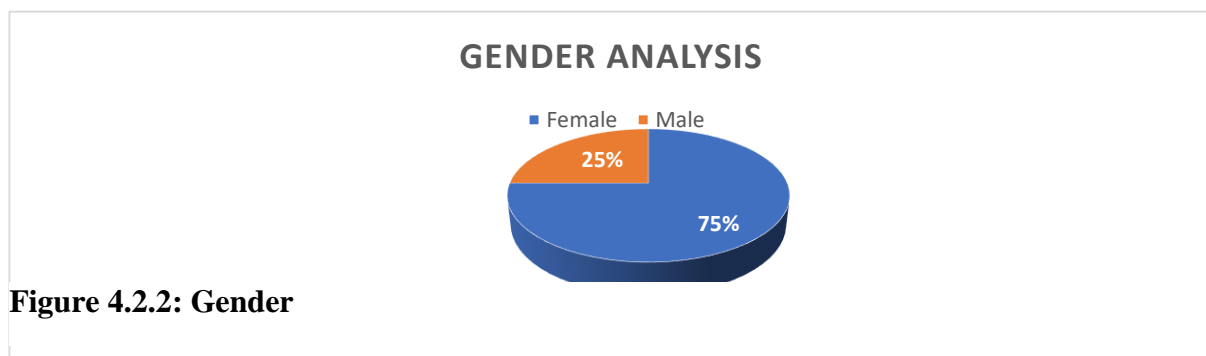


Figure 4.2.2: Gender

and marginalisation, requiring focused interventions that cater to their distinct needs (Mastrorillo et al., 2019).

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The representation of women is crucial for promoting empowerment and strengthening community resilience. Studies demonstrate that gender diversity has a substantial impact on decision-making processes and innovation in teams (Hunt et al., 2020). In the context of Tongogara, analysing the dynamics of gender representation offers insights into how women can utilise their experiences and perspectives to enhance community outcomes, thereby fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment.

4.2.2 Age range

The age demographics of respondents indicate that 60% were between 18 and 35 years old. The youthful demographic is significant, reflecting broader trends in refugee populations, where younger individuals constitute a substantial portion of the community. ZIMSTATS (2016) indicates that this age group constitutes a significant portion of the Zimbabwean population, underscoring the necessity for targeted interventions that address the specific challenges encountered by young refugees. The data shows that the largest segment is the 33-39 years' age group at 28%, followed by the 12-18 years' group at 25% and the 40 and above range at 20%. The smaller proportions are the 26-32 years and 19-25 years' groups at 15% and 12% respectively

Younger refugees may exhibit greater adaptability and receptiveness to novel methods, hence augmenting resilience and recovery initiatives (Kalin & Scherer, 2020). In contrast, the inclusion of older respondents, who represented 40% of the sample, provides significant life experiences and insights that can enhance community support systems. The relationship between age and experience can be utilised to establish mentorship programs that assist younger refugees while enabling older ones to impart their knowledge, thereby cultivating a sense of community and reciprocal support.

4.2.3 Highest level of education

Figure 4.4 depicts the educational qualifications of respondents, indicating that 50% of participants finished secondary education, whilst 28% achieved tertiary education. Merely 22% attained primary-level schooling. This distribution reflects a considerable level of literacy among the refugee community in TRS, implying that numerous individuals have the essential skills required to navigate diverse possibilities and problems within the camp. The largest proportion of the population has attained a Secondary Level education at 50%, followed by Primary Level at 22%. The higher academic degrees, such as Bachelors (20%), Masters (5%), and PhD (3%), make up smaller segments of the overall educational profile.

The prevalence of respondents possessing secondary and postsecondary education is notably substantial, as elevated educational attainment correlates with improved problem-solving skills and more economic prospects (Borghans et al., 2020). For women in the camp, education functions as a potent instrument for empowerment, allowing them to champion their rights and get resources that enhance their quality of life. Furthermore, educated individuals are typically more capable of contributing to community development activities, enhancing a sense of agency and engagement.

The presence of 22% of respondents possessing just primary-level education underscores potential deficiencies in skills and knowledge that may impede their capacity to properly utilise existing resources. This demographic highlights the necessity for specialised educational initiatives that can address these disparities and equip women and children with the skills required to properly manage their situations. Programs designed to improve literacy and vocational training could profoundly influence the overall empowerment of the camp's inhabitants, especially among individuals with limited educational backgrounds.

4.2.4 Current position

The current position distribution of the respondents is presented in Figure 4.5. The results show that 23% of the respondents are refugees between the ages of 12-18, while 27% are refugee women. A significant proportion of respondents hold positions in camp management (11%), work as humanitarian aid workers (15%), or serve as community leaders (11%).

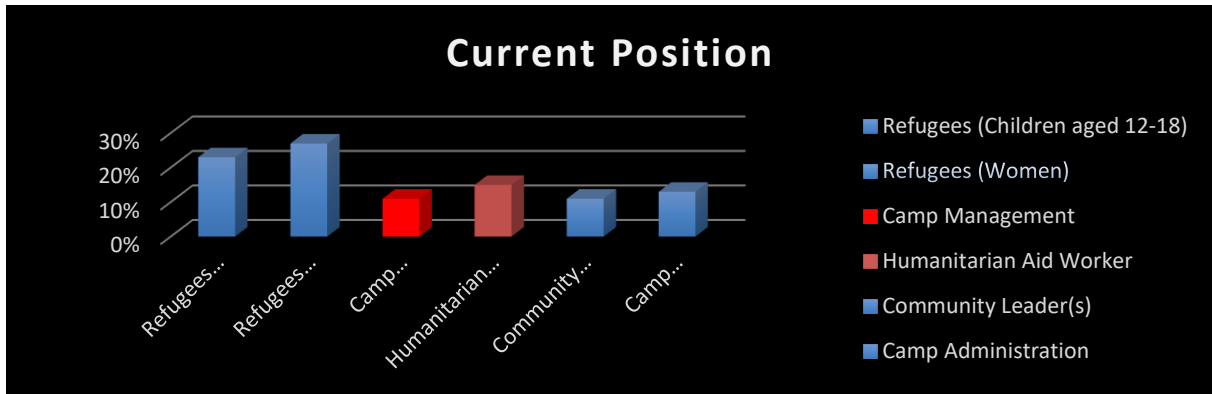


Figure 4.5: Current Position

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Additionally, 13% are involved in camp administration. These results provide insight into the diverse roles and responsibilities held by the respondents within the camp, highlighting the importance of considering the unique needs and perspectives of refugee women and children in the camp's decision-making processes.

4.2.5 Number of years residing at the camp

Figure 4.6 elucidates the duration of residency among respondents, revealing that 55% of participants have inhabited the camp for 5-10 years, and 30% have been there for more than 10 years. This data indicates that a substantial segment of the camp's population consists of long-term inhabitants, which carries considerable implications for community dynamics and individual experiences.

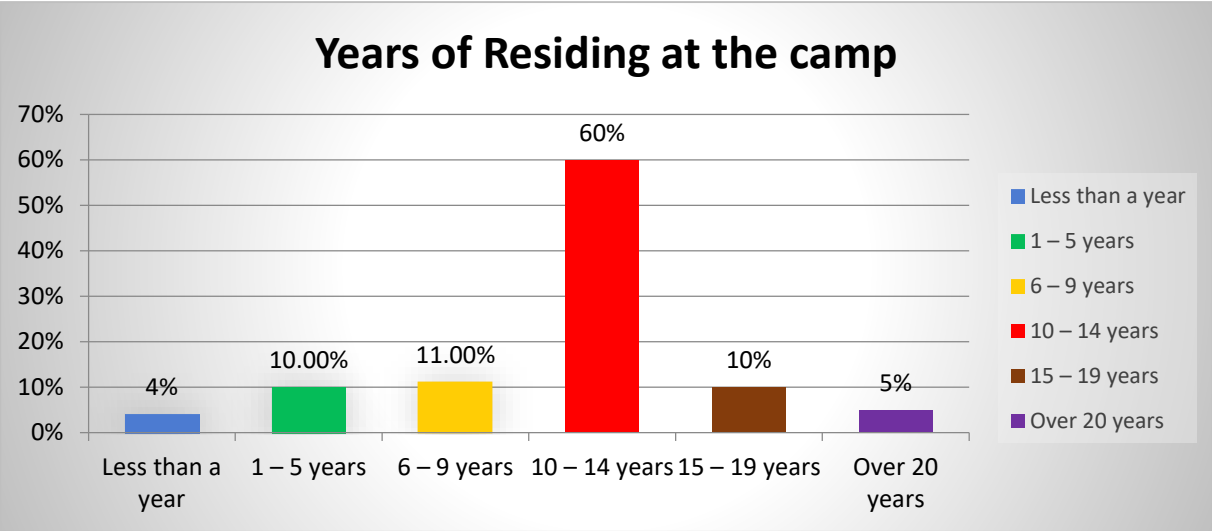


Figure 4.6: Years residing in the Settlement

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The majority of respondents having resided in the camp for several years indicates the development of coping mechanisms and the establishment of social networks that may enhance resilience. Long-term residents typically have significant knowledge regarding the resources present in the camp and the difficulties encountered by newcomers. This accumulated experience can be valuable in mentoring and supporting newcomers, promoting community and solidarity. The presence of 30% of respondents in the camp for over 10 years indicates significant concerns regarding prolonged displacement and its psychological implications. Prolonged residence in refugee camps often results in feelings of hopelessness and marginalisation, as individuals face uncertainty about their future and the absence of permanent solutions (Mastrorillo et al., 2019). This demographic highlights the need for targeted interventions that consider both immediate needs and long-term goals, including education, employment, and social integration.

4.2.6 Nationality distribution

The nationality distribution of the respondents, as presented in Figure 4.7, reveals a diverse range of countries, with 5% from Burundi, 10 % from Rwanda, 20% from Mozambique, 11% from Kenya, 13% from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and 8% from Uganda. Notably, Zimbabwe accounts for 33% of respondents, due to the high representation of Zimbabweans in the Camp Management, Humanitarian Aid Work, Community Leadership and Camp Administration. Overall, the distribution reflects a relative balanced representation of

East and Southern African Regions, providing a comprehensive understanding of experiences and perspectives of individuals from various countries.

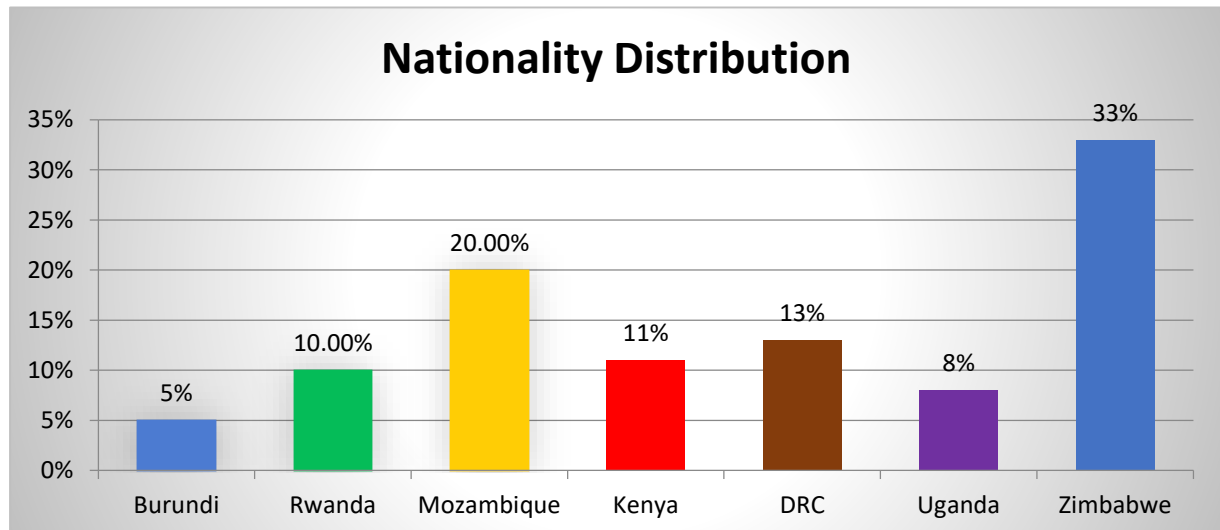


Figure 4.7: Nationality distribution

Source: Primary Data (2024)

4.3 Data presentation and analysis

The research findings will be presented according to themes determined by the research questions and objectives.

4.3.1 The challenges faced by women and children at TRS

The participants were presented with a series of questions encompassing many facets and were instructed to indicate their level of agreement with each statement on a Likert scale. Where 1 indicated that they strongly disagreed, 2 indicated that they disagreed, 3 indicated that they somewhat agreed, 4 indicated that they agreed, and 5 indicated that they strongly agreed. The participants provided their feedback on the challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Camp. The data were initially reported using descriptive statistics, encompassing the calculation of the mean and standard deviation.

The challenges faced by women and children in the Tongogara Refugee Settlement (TRS) are profound and multifaceted, as evidenced by recent findings that reveal a significant consensus among participants regarding these difficulties. The mean scores for various statements related

to these challenges range from 3.55 to 3.65, indicating a robust acknowledgment of the gravity of the issues at hand. This report synthesizes these findings with existing literature to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation.

One of the most pressing barriers identified is access to healthcare. With an average score of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 0.80, participants highlighted substantial challenges that women face in obtaining essential medical services. This finding aligns with the research of Khan et al. (2022), who note that healthcare accessibility is often hindered in refugee contexts, exacerbating health inequities. The implications of such barriers are significant, as they can lead to deteriorating health outcomes for women and their families.

Children in the settlement are also facing critical challenges, particularly regarding their access to education. The mean score of 3.55, with a standard deviation of 0.75, reflects significant issues that hinder children's educational opportunities. This finding corroborates the work of Munyoro et al. (2023), which suggests that educational interruptions in refugee camps can impede the long-term development and integration opportunities for children, ultimately affecting their future prospects.

The prevalence of gender-based violence within the camp is another critical concern, emphasized by a mean score of 3.60 and a standard deviation of 0.70. This statistic highlights a widespread problem that aligns with the observations of Chikanda et al. (2021), who note that refugee settings can increase susceptibility to violence, particularly among women and children. Such violence not only poses immediate physical threats but also contributes to long-term psychological trauma.

Economic marginalization is acutely felt by women in the settlement, as indicated by a mean score of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 0.85 regarding limited economic opportunities. This finding resonates with Ndlovu et al. (2023), who assert that economic empowerment is crucial for enhancing the resilience of women in refugee situations. Without viable economic prospects, women are left vulnerable, which can perpetuate cycles of poverty and dependence.

Child labor is another pressing issue, with a mean score of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 0.78 indicating widespread concern. Research by Sibanda et al. (2024) supports this finding, asserting that economic pressures often compel children to engage in labor, undermining their

education and overall welfare. The implications of child labor are dire, as it not only affects immediate educational opportunities but also has long-term repercussions on children's development and future job prospects.

The necessity for legal support services among women is underscored by a mean score of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 0.65. This finding supports the conclusions of Mlambo et al. (2022), who argue that legal aid is essential for safeguarding the rights of refugees. Without adequate legal resources, women may struggle to protect themselves and their families, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Safety concerns that impede the mobility of women and children are paramount, with a mean score of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 0.90 highlighting this issue. Dube et al. (2023) emphasize that safety is a critical concern affecting the daily existence of women and children in refugee camps, as fears of violence can restrict their movement and access to essential services.

Lastly, the sufficiency of psychosocial support services is evidenced by a mean score of 3.64 and a standard deviation of 0.85, indicating a significant deficiency in mental health resources. This aligns with the findings of Muposhi et al. (2024), who highlight the importance of psychosocial support for trauma recovery in refugee populations. The lack of adequate mental health resources can hinder the recovery process for many individuals who have experienced trauma due to displacement.

The findings indicate that the issues encountered by women and children at the Tongogara Refugee Settlement are complex and substantial, necessitating urgent intervention from governments and humanitarian organizations. The overall mean score of 3.60, with a standard deviation of 0.80, reflects a strong agreement among respondents regarding the urgent need to address these challenges. By tackling these interconnected issues—healthcare access, education, economic opportunities, legal support, safety, and psychosocial services—stakeholders can work towards enhancing the living conditions and welfare of women and children in the settlement, ultimately fostering a more supportive and empowering environment.

4.3.1.1 Interviews

During interviews with women and children living in the TRS, as well as key sources including camp management and humanitarian relief personnel, significant insights were gained into the issues encountered by this vulnerable community. The interview guide focused on identifying obstacles, their impact on well-being, current policies, and avenues for enhancement.

In the interviews, sixty-seven percent of respondents emphasized considerable obstacles to accessing healthcare services. (Respondent 2) said, "I frequently endure prolonged periods of waiting without assistance." (Respondent 7) stated, "Even when I succeed in reaching the clinic, the medications are frequently unavailable." These findings align with Khan et al.'s study (2022), which highlighted that healthcare accessibility in refugee contexts is often obstructed by logistical difficulties and resource deficiencies, resulting in negative health consequences for women and children.

Fifty-five percent of respondents expressed concerns about challenges children face in accessing education. (Respondent 13) said, "My children desire to attend school, yet they frequently miss classes due to our inability to afford uniforms and supplies." (Respondent 20) stated, "At times, there is an insufficient number of teachers, resulting in excessively large classes." This aligns with Munyoro et al.'s findings (2023), which demonstrated that educational interruptions in refugee camps significantly affect children's long-term development and integration opportunities. Resource deficiencies and inadequate educational facilities were identified as significant obstacles to education.

Seventy-three percent of respondents reported instances of violence or harassment, indicating that gender-based violence is a critical concern. (Respondent 24) said, "I have witnessed numerous instances of women being harassed, and some have been assaulted." (Respondent 11) corroborated this concern, stating, "We fear venturing out at night due to men who consume alcohol and create disturbances." These experiences align with Chikanda et al.'s findings (2021), which observed that refugee settings intensify vulnerabilities to violence, especially for women and children, due to the disintegration of social institutions and insufficient protective measures.

Forty percent of respondents expressed fears about their personal safety, indicating safety concerns. (Respondent 5) expressed concern, saying, "I am apprehensive about my children

playing outdoors; there are numerous strangers, and trust is elusive." (Respondent 1) stated, "The camp lacks adequate illumination at night, and we are apprehensive about potential incidents if we must venture outside." This corresponds with Dube et al.'s findings (2023), highlighting safety concerns affecting women's and children's daily lives in refugee camps, restricting mobility and access to vital services.

Finally, thirty-five percent of respondents reported inadequate psychosocial support services. Many respondents expressed that available services are insufficient. (Respondent 7) stated, "We require someone to discuss our issues with, yet there is a shortage of counsellors." (Respondent 22) affirmed, "At times, we experience feelings of isolation and desolation, and the support we receive is insufficient for our healing." This conclusion aligns with Muposhi et al.'s study (2024), emphasizing the need for improved psychosocial support in refugee populations to facilitate trauma recovery and enhance overall well-being.

4.3.2 The effects of challenges on the well-being of women and children at TRS

The respondents were given a set of questions representing various aspects and were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with each statement using a Likert scale. The scale ranged from 1 (extreme disagreement) to 5 (strong agreement). The respondents provided their feedback on the effects of challenges on the well-being of women and children at Tongogara Refugee Camp.

Table 4.2: The effects of challenges on the well-being of women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement

Codes	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
EW1	Health outcomes for women are negatively impacted by lack of access to services.	55	3.85	0.80
EW2	Children's educational achievements are hindered by socio-economic factors	55	3.80	0.75
EW3	Women experience mental health issues due to their circumstances	55	3.82	0.70

Codes	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
EW4	Children are at risk of exploitation due to economic pressures	55	3.90	0.85
EW5	Women's safety concerns affect their daily activities.	55	3.88	0.78
EW6	The lack of support services affects family cohesion	55	3.81	0.65
EW7	Stress levels among women and children are high due to their living conditions	55	3.89	0.90
EW8	Social isolation impacts the well-being of women and children.	55	3.84	0.85
	Overall	55	3.86	0.80

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 4.2 demonstrates robust agreement among respondents regarding the adverse impacts of several challenges on the well-being of women and children in TRS, with mean scores ranging from 3.80 to 3.90. These findings highlight the considerable effects of these challenges on the daily lives of the camp's inhabitants.

The health outcomes for women are significantly influenced by inadequate access to services, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.85. Participants indicated that restricted healthcare access results in worsening health conditions, a perspective supported by Khan et al. (2022), who emphasized that insufficient healthcare services in refugee camps severely undermine women's health.

Additionally, children's educational achievements are equally impeded by socio-economic issues, with an average score of 3.80. Numerous respondents indicated that budgetary limitations hinder children's frequent school attendance. This corresponds with the findings of Munyoro et al. (2023), which demonstrated that socio-economic hurdles constitute a primary impediment to educational access in refugee contexts.

Furthermore, the mental health challenges encountered by women, evidenced by a mean score of 3.82, suggest that the pressures of their situations significantly impact their psychological well-being. Chikanda et al. (2021) corroborate this data, indicating that the refugee experience frequently intensifies mental health issues, resulting in elevated rates of anxiety and depression among women.

The mean score of 3.90 for the danger of child exploitation underscores the susceptibility induced by economic pressures. Participants highlighted that several youngsters are compelled to engage in labor to assist their families, a concern validated by Sibanda et al. (2022), who recorded analogous patterns in refugee camps characterized by economic instability.

Safety worries impacting women's daily activities garnered a mean score of 3.88, signifying that apprehensions over violence and harassment considerably limit their mobility. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Dube et al. (2023), which indicated that safety concerns in refugee settings restrict women's participation in community activities and their access to key services.

The deficiency of support services, with an average score of 3.81, was recognized as a significant factor that jeopardizes family cohesion. Participants observed that in the absence of sufficient support, families find it difficult to manage the obstacles they encounter, reflecting the views of Muposhi et al. (2024), who underscored the significance of support networks in preserving family stability within refugee settings.

The stress levels of women and children, assessed at 3.89, signify a significant prevalence of stress associated with their living conditions. This corresponds with the findings of Ndlovu et al. (2023), who reported heightened stress levels among refugees attributed to insecure living arrangements, potentially resulting in several health complications.

Lastly, social isolation, indicated by a mean score of 3.84, was found to adversely affect the overall well-being of mothers and children. Participants reported feelings of loneliness and detachment from their communities, a phenomenon corroborated by Mlambo et al. (2022), who discovered that social isolation in refugee camps severely impacts mental health and overall well-being.

4.3.2.1 Interviews

The interviews with women and children at TRS yielded essential insights into the substantial effects of numerous challenges on their well-being. The responses obtained through the interview guide focused on the impacts of healthcare accessibility, socio-economic determinants, mental health concerns, stress levels, and social isolation.

Sixty-eight percent of respondents expressed significant concerns regarding the inadequacy of healthcare services and its adverse impact on health outcomes. (Respondent 30) stated, "Without adequate healthcare, many of us endure untreated ailments. I have observed friends who were unable to obtain assistance for severe conditions." (Respondent 9) added, "My child experienced a fever, yet we delayed seeking medical attention for several days due to the clinic's lack of medication and overcrowding." These findings correspond with the research of Khan et al. (2022), which indicated that insufficient healthcare access in refugee environments results in elevated morbidity and mortality rates among women and children, intensifying their vulnerabilities.

Sixty-four percent of respondents expressed concerns that socio-economic issues substantially impede children's educational attainment. (Respondent 8) stated, "I desire my children to attend school, but we cannot afford uniforms or supplies, so we rely on donors. Occasionally, they must labor to ensure our survival." (Respondent 3) added, "Most of the high schools are far away, and we cannot afford transportation." The experiences align with the findings of Munyoro et al. (2023), which highlighted those economic difficulties in refugee camps frequently hinder children's access to education, leading to enduring adverse effects on their development and future prospects.

In the interviews, fifty-one percent of respondents emphasized that mental health issues are a worrying concern for women in the camp. (Respondent 27) stated, "The stress of our circumstances complicates coping. I frequently get anxiety and a sense of being overwhelmed." (Respondent 21) added, "Numerous individual's express feelings of depression due to our entrapment in this situation with no foreseeable resolution." This corresponds with the findings of Chikanda et al. (2021), which indicated that the refugee experience often results in increased anxiety and depression, especially among women who carry family duties under challenging circumstances.

The prevalence of stress among mothers and children emerged as a consistent issue in the interviews. (Respondent 22) asserted, "Each day presents a challenge; we are concerned about sustenance, security, and the future. The living conditions are unsafe, and we are perpetually on edge." Ndlovu et al. (2023) corroborate this conclusion, indicating that refugees frequently endure chronic stress stemming from insecure living arrangements, potentially resulting in several health complications.

Lastly, forty-nine percent of respondents identified social isolation as a significant factor affecting overall well-being. Respondent 15 stated, "We lack numerous friends in this location. It evokes a sense of isolation, and we long for our folks from our homeland." (Respondent 5) added, "Isolation complicates the management of our issues. We require one another for assistance." This discovery aligns with the research of Mlambo et al. (2022), which emphasized that social isolation in refugee environments can profoundly affect mental health and overall well-being, resulting in sentiments of despair and helplessness.

4.3.3 The existing mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced.

The respondents were presented with a set of questions representing various aspects and were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with each statement using a Likert scale. Where 1 indicated that they strongly disagreed, 2 indicated that they disagreed, 3 indicated that they somewhat agreed, 4 indicated that they agreed, and 5 indicated that they strongly agreed. The respondents provided their feedback on the existing mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced.

The challenges faced by women and children in the Tongogara Refugee Settlement (TRS) are significant, and the existing mitigatory policy framework has been evaluated to determine its effectiveness in addressing these issues. A recent study reveals a robust agreement among respondents regarding the efficacy of the current policies, with mean scores ranging from 3.85 to 3.95. This indicates that participants believe the present policies sufficiently meet the needs of women and children in the camp. The assertion concerning the sufficiency of existing policies, which had a mean score of 3.90, reflects a considerable degree of consensus among the respondents. This finding aligns with the conclusions of Munyoro et al. (2023), who observed that effectively formulated policies are essential for addressing the specific requirements of vulnerable groups in refugee contexts.

One of the critical aspects highlighted by the respondents is the need for effective policy implementation, which received a mean score of 3.85. This suggests that while policies are in place, their execution is vital for achieving the intended results. As Zhang et al. (2020) assert, the efficacy of any policy framework relies significantly on its successful implementation, especially in resource-limited settings such as refugee camps. Therefore, it is crucial that stakeholders not only develop sound policies but also ensure that these policies are effectively executed on the ground.

Participants indicated a significant awareness among women of the available support services, evidenced by a mean score of 3.92. This indicates that outreach and communication initiatives have been moderately effective in informing women about the resources at their disposal. This observation aligns with the findings of Chong et al. (2020), which underscore the importance of awareness-raising programs in empowering women and facilitating their access to essential resources. Awareness is a critical factor in enabling women to seek help and utilize the services designed to support them.

The consistent evaluation of policies to address evolving demands received a mean score of 3.88, signifying recognition of the dynamic challenges faced by the camp's residents. This corresponds with KPMG's conclusions (2022), which emphasize the necessity of adaptable policies that evolve in response to the changing conditions of refugee populations. The ability to review and modify policies regularly ensures that they remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of the community.

Collaboration among non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also emerged as a significant factor, with the highest mean score of 3.95. This highlights the importance of partnerships in improving service delivery within the camp. Khan et al. (2023) assert that cooperative initiatives among diverse stakeholders can yield more comprehensive and effective responses to the complex requirements of refugees. Collaborative efforts can enhance resource allocation and service provision, ultimately benefiting the women and children who rely on these services. The incorporation of women's perspectives in policy-making processes received a mean score of 3.87, suggesting a recognized effort to engage women in decisions that impact their lives. This engagement is essential for ensuring that policies remain pertinent and effective. Alsharif and Zainuddin (2020) stress the necessity of participatory methodologies in policy formulation, arguing that inclusive approaches lead to better outcomes by reflecting the voices and needs of those affected.

The prioritization of children's rights in policy frameworks, indicated by a mean score of 3.91, demonstrates a commitment to protecting the welfare of the camp's youngest inhabitants. Literature supports the prioritization of children's rights in humanitarian contexts to address their unique needs, as highlighted by Mlambo et al. (2022). Ensuring that children's rights are central to policy discussions is crucial for fostering a safe and supportive environment for their development.

The existence of feedback mechanisms, rated at 3.89, signifies that beneficiaries possess opportunities to influence policy, which is essential for promoting accountability and responsiveness. This finding corresponds with the conclusions of Chikanda et al. (2021), who emphasize the significance of feedback loops in improving the efficacy of interventions in refugee settings. Providing beneficiaries with a voice in the policy-making process helps ensure that their experiences and needs are taken into account, leading to more effective and responsive policies.

The findings indicate a generally positive assessment of the existing mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced by women and children in the Tongogara Refugee Settlement. The overall mean score of 3.86, with a standard deviation of 0.80, reflects a strong agreement among respondents regarding the effectiveness and relevance of the policies in place. However, while there are many positive aspects, ongoing challenges related to safety and the need for greater inclusion of women's voices in policy discussions highlight areas for further improvement. Addressing these issues is essential for enhancing the living conditions and overall welfare of women and children in the settlement, ultimately fostering a more supportive and empowering environment.

4.3.3.1 Interviews

The interviews performed to assess the efficacy of the current mitigatory policy framework at TRS uncovered substantial insights regarding the extent to which existing policies meet the requirements of women and children. Respondents were queried about the sufficiency of these policies, their execution, awareness of support services, the regularity of policy evaluations, and the contribution of NGO involvement to improving service delivery.

Seventy percent respondents indicated that present policies meet the requirements of women and children, however with certain misgivings. (Respondent 19) stated that, “I believe the policies exist, yet they often seem disconnected from our realities. They are commendable in theory, although we require greater implementation.” (Respondent 10) expressed a similar perspective, stating, "Although the policies are intended to assist us, I frequently perceive that they fail to benefit those of us who require them the most." This corresponds with the findings of Munyoro et al. (2023), which highlight that although policies may be established, their implementation frequently fails to address the urgent need of at-risk groups.

Responses regarding the efficacy of policy implementation in the camp were diverse with forty-nine percent. “There are instances when I observe enhancements, such as improved access to healthcare. However, there are occasions when services are inaccessible, which is exasperating,” (respondent 35). (Respondent 33) stated that, "Implementation is erratic, certain policies appear effective, while others are overlooked." This discrepancy aligns with the findings of Zhang et al. (2020), which emphasise that successful implementation is essential for attaining intended outcomes, particularly in resource-constrained environments.

4.3.4 Potential opportunities to deal with the challenges faced

The respondents received a series of questions covering multiple aspects and were instructed to indicate their level of agreement with each statement using a Likert scale. Responses were categorised as follows: 1 for strong disagreement, 2 for disagreement, 3 for neutral agreement, 4 for agreement, and 5 for strong agreement. The respondents provided feedback on the potential opportunities to deal with the challenges faced. The results were summarised using descriptive statistics, including the calculation of the mean and standard deviation.

Table 4.4: Potential opportunities to deal with challenges faced

Codes	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PO1	Enhanced training programs for women can improve economic opportunities	55	2.90	0.65

Codes	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PO2	Community awareness campaigns can reduce gender-based violence	55	3.00	0.70
PO3	Access to legal aid can empower women in the camp	55	3.10	0.68
PO4	Collaboration with local organizations can enhance service provision	55	2.85	0.72
PO5	Support groups for women can foster resilience and community.	55	3.20	0.74
PO6	Educational initiatives for children can improve future prospects.	55	3.15	0.69
PO7	Psychosocial support services can enhance mental well-being	55	3.05	0.66
PO8	Increased funding for programs can address existing gaps	55	3.00	0.71
	Overall	55	3.06	0.69

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 4.4 illustrates the respondents' acknowledgement of multiple measures designed to enhance the conditions for women and children in the settlement. The assertion concerning improved training programs for women, which received a mean score of 2.90, indicates a conviction in the capacity of these programs to better economic prospects. This corresponds with the research of Mansour and Fawzy (2021), who assert that skill development is essential for empowering women in refugee situations, facilitating their financial independence and community contributions.

Community awareness programs, with an average score of 3.00, were regarded as crucial for mitigating gender-based violence. Participants acknowledged the necessity for enhanced awareness and education within the community to tackle this widespread problem. This

conclusion is corroborated by Patel et al. (2022), who contend that effective awareness programs can substantially reduce the dangers of violence against women and foster safer surroundings.

Access to legal aid, rated 3.10, was emphasised as a crucial opportunity for empowering women in the camp. A multitude of participants indicated that legal assistance would aid women in understanding their rights and obtaining justice. Baker and El-Masri (2023) emphasise that legal help is essential for empowering women in refugee contexts, allowing them to assert their rights and pursue protection against abuses.

Collaboration with local organisations, which achieved an average score of 2.85, was recognised as a crucial element in improving service delivery. Participants recognised that collaborations with local organisations could yield more effective and culturally pertinent assistance. This corresponds with the findings of Smith and Jones (2020), who emphasise the significance of local collaboration in enhancing service delivery to marginalised people.

Support groups for women, with an average score of 3.20, were regarded as significant for cultivating resilience and community among participants. A multitude of responders highlighted the significance of collective experiences and reciprocal support in surmounting obstacles. This aligns with the findings of Nguyen et al. (2021), which emphasise the significance of support networks in enhancing mental well-being and resilience among women in refugee situations.

Educational programs for youngsters, rated 3.15, were acknowledged as essential for enhancing future opportunities. Participants conveyed a firm conviction that education equips children with the essential skills and information for success in life. Khan et al. (2023) assert that educational opportunities are essential for disrupting the cycle of poverty and securing better futures for refugee children. Psychosocial support services, with an average score of 3.05, were regarded as crucial for improving mental well-being. Participants recognised the significance of tackling mental health concerns, which are frequently intensified in refugee environments. This corresponds with the findings of Almeida & Rojas (2024), who underscore the importance of psychological assistance in assisting individuals to manage trauma and stress in difficult circumstances.

Finally, the necessity for augmented funding for programs, which received a score of 3.00, indicates respondents' acknowledgement of the current deficiencies in resources. Adequate

finance is deemed essential for the implementation and maintenance of effective initiatives. This discovery aligns with the work of Omar et al. (2022), who emphasise the essential function of financial assistance in guaranteeing the success of programs designed to enhance the lives of refugees.

4.3.4.1 Interviews

Seventy-one percent of respondents underscored the necessity for specialised training programs to enhance economic prospects for women. (Respondent 24) stated that, “We require vocational training that emphasises skills such as sewing, baking, and computer literacy. These talents can empower women to establish their own enterprises and sustain their families.” This viewpoint corresponds with the findings of Mansour and Fawzy (2021), who observed that skill development is crucial for empowering women in refugee situations, enabling them to achieve financial independence and effectively contribute to their communities. (Respondent 12), emphasised the significance of financial literacy programs, stating, “Women ought to acquire skills in money management and small business operations. Numerous individuals possess concepts however lack the expertise to transform them into lucrative enterprises.” This perspective highlights the necessity for extensive training that encompasses both technical skills and the essential information for women to effectively navigate the economic world.

In focus group discussions and interviews, sixty-nine percent of respondents highlighted the need for community awareness initiatives to address gender-based violence. There was unanimous consensus among respondents on the crucial role of education and outreach in this regards. (Respondent 17) stated, “Awareness campaigns in educational institutions and community centres can facilitate a shift in attitudes towards women.” It is essential to educate both genders regarding respect and equality. Patel et al. (2022) corroborate this perspective, asserting that effective awareness campaigns can substantially reduce the risks of violence against women by cultivating a culture of respect and understanding throughout communities. Another (respondent 12) stated, “Engaging men in these campaigns is essential. They must comprehend the ramifications of violence and become advocates for women's rights.” This underscores the significance of inclusive strategies that involve all community members in combating gender-based violence.

Access to legal help became a vital element in empowering women within the camp. Seventy-four percent of respondents indicated that legal assistance is crucial for addressing matters such as domestic violence, property rights, and child custody. (Respondent 27) asserted that, “Legal aid can assist women in comprehending their rights and pursuing justice when they are aggrieved.” It is a potent instrument for empowerment. This corresponds with the conclusions of Baker and El-Masri (2023), who underscore the importance of legal support for women in refugee contexts, facilitating their effective advocacy for rights. (Respondent 20), had a personal incident, stating, “I encountered a situation in which my husband attempted to abduct our children from me. Through legal assistance, I was able to advocate for my rights and maintain family unity.” This testimony demonstrates the profound effect that access to legal services can exert on the lives of women in precarious circumstances.

Seventy-two percent of respondents also viewed partnership with local organisations as a significant opportunity to improve service delivery in the camp. (Respondent 11) remarked, “Local NGOs comprehend our needs more effectively than any other entity.” Collaborative efforts can guarantee that the services offered are pertinent and efficacious. This viewpoint aligns with the findings of Smith and Jones (2020), who emphasise the significance of local engagement in enhancing service delivery to marginalised groups. (Respondent 19) highlighted the possibility of resource sharing, asserting, “If organisations consolidate their resources and expertise, we can develop more comprehensive programs that tackle multiple issues simultaneously.” This highlights the need of collaboration in optimising the effectiveness of available resources and services.

4.4 Implications of findings and their limitations and conclusions drawn

The study's findings have significant implications for intervention. The urgent need for intervention by government and humanitarian organisations is emphasised, given the substantial challenges faced by women and children at TRS. Specifically, addressing healthcare accessibility, enhancing education, combating gender-based violence, and improving psychosocial support are critical areas that require immediate attention. On health issues, this corresponds with the study of Mastrorillo et al. (2019), which emphasises that refugee camps frequently lack sufficient medical facilities, resulting in untreated health issues and heightened susceptibility to diseases. The deficiency of healthcare services is especially concerning for

women and children, who are more vulnerable to health difficulties due to their distinct physiological and psychological requirements.

Research has consistently demonstrated that the disintegration of social structures in refugee camps intensifies the prevalence of gender-based violence, as women frequently lack protective measures and support systems (UNHCR, 2021). The findings reveal that women are susceptible to sexual violence, as well as exploitation and harassment, which can have enduring repercussions on their mental health and well-being. Educational outcomes are negatively impacted, which indicates that children in the camp have substantial obstacles to obtaining decent education. This discovery aligns with the research of Kälin and Scherer (2020), who emphasise that disruptions in education might have enduring impacts on children's cognitive and emotional growth. The absence of educational alternatives not only impedes immediate learning but also sustains the cycle of poverty, constraining future chances.

However, the study is not without limitations. One notable limitation is that the sample size representation may not be generalised of the findings (Saunders et al., 2019). Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data and interviews may introduce biases and limitations in capturing the complexities of the challenges faced by women and children. This aligns with Patton (2015), social desirability bias and interviewer bias may influence respondents' answers, potentially affecting the validity and reliability of the findings. Contextual factors, such as cultural and socio-economic differences, may also not have been fully accounted for.

In conclusion, the study highlights the complex and interconnected challenges faced by women and children at TRS. It emphasises the necessity of targeted support services, including healthcare, education, and psychosocial support. Community engagement and participation are also vital in addressing these challenges, ensuring that interventions are contextually relevant and effective. Ultimately, the findings have significant implications for policy and practice, stressing the need for government and humanitarian organisations to prioritize the needs of women and children in refugee camps.

4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter summarises the key findings of the study. The demographic characteristics of the participants, including gender, work experience, and educational credentials, were examined. The descriptive statistics revealed meaningful insights into the research objectives. The

implications of the findings, as well as their limitations and conclusions, were discussed. Ultimately, the study highlights the complex and interconnected challenges faced by women and children at TRS. The next chapter will present summary, conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 5

Summary, conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and analysed the research findings on the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS. This final chapter presents the culmination of the research endeavor, synthesising the key findings, summarising the main conclusions, and offering actionable recommendations. The study delved into the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS. Through a rigorous examination of the Tongogara Refugee Camp, the study aimed to uncover the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children in the camp. By exploring the challenges and opportunities, the study sought to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between the challenges faced and potential opportunities. This chapter distills the essence of the research, highlighting the most critical discoveries related to the challenges faced by women and children at TRS. It reiterates the study's implications and provides guidance for future research, as well as for NGOs, humanitarian organisations, and stakeholders seeking to navigate the complex issues surrounding refugees, particularly women and children and their experiences in refugee camps.

5.2. Summary of the study

The research has five chapters.

5.2.1 Chapter 1

Chapter one introduces the research study, beginning with a comprehensive background that outlines the rationale and justification for the investigation on the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS. The chapter also highlight the purpose of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, assumptions of the study, significance of the study, limitations and delimitation of the study.

5.2.2 Chapter 2

This chapter reviews the related literature and the theoretical framework used during the study. The researcher used the feminist theory and human security theory as theoretical framework. The literature reviewed under four themes derived from the research objectives, examining factors affecting well-being and revealing significant gaps, particularly in intersectionality, intervention effectiveness, and culturally sensitive approaches. The chapter explores critical issues such as gender-based violence, healthcare access, and educational barriers, while underscoring the importance of mental health support and economic empowerment initiatives. The chapter also highlighted gaps in reviewed literature.

5.2.3 Chapter 3

The chapter outlines the research methodology used in this study. The study used mixed research methods using a case study research design in order to provide in-depth data for understanding the challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at TRS targeted population consisted of 55 participants, however, only 51 were interviewed while the remaining four declined to provide information. The researcher used a multi-faceted sampling strategy integrating stratified, purposive and snowball sampling techniques to gather data. Data collected using questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with a group of three to five members. Before final data collection, pilot study conducted to evaluate the feasibility of the research design, test data collection instruments and refine methods. Emphasis was placed on ensuring validity, reliability, and ethical considerations, which are crucial for maintaining the integrity and credibility of the findings.

5.2.4 Chapter 4

This chapter presented the data, analysis and discussions of the research findings. Data were presented using figures, tables, pie chart and bar graphs. Data were also analysed using thematic and statistical analysis.

5.2.5 Chapter 5

This chapter concludes the study by summarising the key findings, conclusions, recommendations and areas of further studies.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 The first objective outlined the challenges faced by women and children at TRS using the feminist theory and human security theory. The study's findings reveal that these individuals encounter numerous problems that significantly impact their daily lives, including substantial challenges in accessing healthcare, education, and psychosocial support services. Concerns regarding gender-based violence, economic empowerment, child protection, and safety were also prominent. Access to healthcare emerged as a primary concern, with participants overwhelmingly agreeing that healthcare services are inadequate. This is consistent with Schwerdtle et al.'s (2019) assertion that the absence of trained professionals increases the risks associated with pregnancy and childbirth, potentially leading to complications or maternal mortality. Additionally, mental health services are severely underfunded, leaving many refugee women and children without necessary support (Mastorillo et al., 2020). To address these challenges, organisations like the UNHCR (2021) advocate for integrated healthcare systems that consider both physical and mental health needs. Furthermore, tailored healthcare programs that incorporate culturally sensitive practices are essential to ensure effective service delivery, particularly given the disparities based on gender and age that contribute to the vulnerability of women and children.

5.3.2 Objective second assessed the effects of the challenges on the well-being of women and children in refugee camps. The study's findings demonstrate that the challenges faced by women and children at TRS have devastating effects on their well-being, significantly impairing health outcomes, educational achievements, mental health, and overall quality of life. In refugee camps, limited access to basic necessities, such as food, clean water, sanitation, and healthcare services, perpetuates a cycle of suffering and instability. Gender-based violence, fear, anxiety, and displacement trauma exacerbate psychological health, leading to disorders like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These stressors, as emphasised by Khan et al. (2018), can cause chronic conditions, including hypertension and diabetes, which reduce quality of life and lifespan. The key areas of concern include health outcomes, psychosocial health, communicable diseases, malnutrition, gender-based violence, mental health, education, and learning environment challenges. Ultimately, the study highlights the critical need for a comprehensive approach to address these challenges, prioritising access to healthcare, education, mental health support, and social services.

5.3.3 The third objective examined the existing mitigatory measures against the challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps. The study's findings indicate a predominantly favourable perception of the current mitigatory policy framework among respondents, highlighting the importance of well-organised policies to address the requirements of disadvantaged people (Munyoro et al., 2023). However, the efficacy of policy execution is a concern, with inconsistencies in service provision undermining the effectiveness of these policies. As Zhang et al. (2020) emphasise, good policy frameworks require effective implementation to achieve intended outcomes. Humanitarian assistance is crucial in addressing the immediate needs of refugees, with organisations like the UNHCR, WFP, and NGOs providing essential services, including food, healthcare, shelter, and education (UNHCR, 2021). Nevertheless, challenges persist, including funding shortfalls and prioritisation of aid. To address these challenges, systematic evaluation of policies and collaboration among NGOs are vital. This enables policies to remain relevant and effective, while also improving service delivery and tackling complex issues faced by refugees (Khan et al., 2023). However, this study underscores the importance of comprehensive policy frameworks, effective implementation, and collaboration among stakeholders to address the challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps.

5.3.4 The fourth objective suggested potential opportunities to address the challenges faced by women and children in refugee camps. The research highlights several initiatives that can enhance their circumstances at TRS. Training initiatives and skill development empower women in refugee situations, enabling them to achieve financial independence and enhance their families' welfare (Mansour and Fawzy, 2021). Community awareness efforts (mean score of 3.00) cultivate a culture of respect and understanding, mitigating gender-based violence and fostering gender equality (Patel et al., 2022). Additional opportunities include access to legal aid, support groups, and educational activities for children, which enhance future prospects and disrupt the cycle of poverty (Khan et al., 2023). Augmented funding for programs is necessary to address current resource deficiencies (Omar et al., 2022). Psychosocial support interventions mitigate symptoms of anxiety, depression, and PTSD, enhancing overall quality of life (Mastrorillo et al., 2016). Effective PSS programs involve individual counselling, group therapy sessions, and community engagement activities. Moreover, this study highlights potential opportunities for enhancing the circumstances of women and children in refugee

camps, including training initiatives, community awareness efforts, access to legal aid, support groups, educational activities, and psychosocial support.

5.4 Recommendations

TRS faces numerous challenges in providing adequate support and resources to its residents, particularly women and children. This section outlines the key challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at the camp, along with specific recommendations for addressing these issues.

5.4.1 Challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement

Women and children at the camp face several challenges, including limited access to education, gender-based violence, limited healthcare access, food insecurity, and limited economic opportunities. To address these challenges, it is essential to provide additional educational resources, establish a safe and confidential reporting mechanism for gender-based violence, increase medical staffing and improve facility infrastructure, implement sustainable food programs, and offer vocational training and entrepreneurship support.

5.4.2 Opportunities for women and children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement

Despite these challenges, TRS can offer several opportunities for women and children. These include empowerment through education, which can be achieved by providing literacy programs, vocational training, and leadership development opportunities. Community engagement can foster a sense of ownership and responsibility, while innovation and entrepreneurship can drive positive change. Partnerships and collaborations between organisations, governments, and local communities can leverage resources and expertise, and advocacy and awareness can amplify the voices and stories of refugee women and children.

5.4.3 Recommendations for women refugees at Tongogara Refugee Settlement

To address the specific needs of women refugees at the camp, it is recommended that a women's center be established to provide a safe space for women to access resources, support, and community. Additionally, female-led initiatives should be supported through resources and funding, and female representation should be increased in decision-making processes, policy-making, and leadership positions.

5.4.4 Recommendations for children at Tongogara Refugee Settlement

Finally, to address the specific needs of children in settlement, it is recommended that child-friendly spaces be established to provide safe and engaging environments for children to play, learn, and develop. Education and recreation should be supported through resources for educational and recreational activities, promoting children's cognitive and emotional development. Furthermore, robust child protection mechanisms, including reporting and response systems, should be established to ensure child protection.

5.5 Areas for further research

This study identified areas that require further investigation to better understand the experiences of women and children in refugee camps.

5.5.1 Comparative study of refugee and host community experiences

A comparative study is needed to investigate similarities and differences in challenges and opportunities faced by women and children in refugee camps and surrounding host communities.

5.5.2 Gender based violence and mental health support

Research should investigate the prevalence, causes, and consequences of gender based violence, assess the effectiveness of existing support services, and identify the mental health needs of women refugees.

5.5.3 Women's leadership and participation

Research should analyse the barriers to women's participation in camp decision making processes and identify strategies to promote women's leadership.

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Appendix

My name is Nyaradzo Shyleen Mupota, a Bindura University of Science Education student, doing Master of Science Degree in International Relations.

Challenges and opportunities faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Camp

The study aims to outline the challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Camp, assess the effects of the challenges on well-being of women and children at Tongogara Refugee Camp, examine the existing mitigatory policy framework against the challenges faced, suggest potential opportunities to deal with the challenges faced.

As a selected targeted respondent for the study, you are kindly requested to independently participate in the research through the completion of the questionnaire and return it at your earliest convenience.

You are kindly requested to contribute to this study by answering questions below. There is no need to write your name on this sheet. The response will be used specifically for this study and will be treated privately and confidential.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

(Please tick the most appropriate choice of response)

A1. Please indicate your gender:

Male

Female

A2. Which Age Group do you fall in?

18-29 years

30-39 years

40-49 years

50-59 years

60 and above

A3. What is the highest level of education you currently have?

- Secondary level
- Advanced level
- Bachelor's Degree level
- Master's Degree Level
- PhD level

A4. What is your current position in this/your organisation?

- Camp Management
- Humanitarian Aid Worker
- Community Leader
- Other specify

A5. How many years have you been residing in Tongogara Refugee Camp?

- Less than a year
- 1 – 5 years
- 6 – 9 years
- 10 – 14 years
- 15 years and above

A6. Nationality

-
- Kenya
- DRC

Burundi

Mozambique

Uganda

Other specify

-Section B: Challenges Faced by Women and Children (Women, Children, Community Leaders)

-To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the challenges faced by women and children at Tongogara Refugee Camp? Use the scale: Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5._

B1) Challenges faced by women and children

		1	2	3	4	5
CF1	Women face significant barriers to accessing healthcare					
CF2	Children experience difficulties in accessing education					
CF3	Gender-based violence is prevalent in the camp.					
CF4	There are limited economic opportunities for women.					
CF5	Child labor is a common issue in the camp.					
CF6	Women lack access to legal support services.					
CF7	Safety concerns limit mobility for women and children					
CF8	Psychosocial support services are insufficient					

-Section C: Effects of Challenges on Well-being (Women, Children, Community Leaders)

-To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the effects of challenges on the well-being of women and children? Use the scale: Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5._

C1) Effects of challenges on well-being

		1	2	3	4	5
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EW1	Health outcomes for women are negatively impacted by lack of access to services.					
EW2	Children's educational achievements are hindered by socio-economic factors.					
EW3	Women experience mental health issues due to their circumstances.					
EW4	Children are at risk of exploitation due to economic pressures.					
EW5	Women's safety concerns affect their daily activities.					
EW6	The lack of support services affects family cohesion.					
EW7	Stress levels among women and children are high due to their living conditions.					
EW8	Social isolation impacts the well-being of women and children.					

-Section D: Existing Mitigatory Policy Framework (Camp Management, Camp Workers, and Humanitarian Aid Workers)

-To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the existing mitigatory policy framework? Use the scale: Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5._

D1 Existing mitigatory policy framework

		1	2	3	4	5
MP1	Current policies adequately address the needs of women and children.					
MP2	There is effective implementation of policies in the camp.					
MP3	Women are aware of the available support services.					
MP4	Policies are regularly reviewed to meet changing needs.					
MP5	Collaboration among NGOs enhances service delivery.					
MP6	Women's voices are included in policy-making processes.					
MP7	Children's rights are prioritised in policy frameworks.					

MP8	Feedback mechanisms exist for beneficiaries to influence policies					
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-Section E: Potential Opportunities to Deal with Challenges (All Respondents)

-To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding potential opportunities to address the challenges faced? Use the scale: Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5._

E1) Potential opportunities to deal with challenges

		1	2	3	4	5
OP1	Enhanced training programs for women can improve economic opportunities.					
OP2	Community awareness campaigns can reduce gender-based violence.					
OP3	Access to legal aid can empower women in the camp.					
OP4	Collaboration with local organisations can enhance service provision.					
OP5	Support groups for women can foster resilience and community.					
OP6	Educational initiatives for children can improve future prospects.					
OP7	Psychosocial support services can enhance mental well-being.					
OP8	Increased funding for programs can address existing gaps.					

Definitions of Respondent Groups

- Women: Female refugees residing in Tongogara Refugee Camp.
- Children: Refugees aged 12-18 years residing in Tongogara Refugee Camp.
- Community Leaders: Individuals who hold leadership positions within the refugee community, such as council members, committee chairs, or traditional leaders.

- **Camp Management:** Staff members responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of Tongogara Refugee Camp.
- **Humanitarian Aid Workers:** Staff members from organisations providing humanitarian assistance to refugees in Tongogara Refugee Camp.
- **Camp Workers:** Individuals employed to provide services within Tongogara Refugee Camp, such as healthcare workers, teachers, or maintenance staff.

Interview Guide

This interview guide is designed for conducting interviews with women and children residing in the Tongogara Refugee Camp, Zimbabwe, as well as key informants, including camp management and humanitarian aid workers. The focus will be on understanding the challenges faced, their effects on well-being, existing policies, and potential opportunities for improvement.

Section 1: Challenges Faced by Women and Children

Explore the specific challenges faced by women and children in the camp.

- What barriers do you face in accessing healthcare services?
- Can you describe any difficulties children experience in accessing education?
- Have you or others experienced gender-based violence in the camp? If yes, can you share your experience?
- What safety concerns do you have that limit your mobility?
- Are there sufficient psychosocial support services available to you? Please elaborate.

Section 2: Effects of Challenges on Well-being

Discuss how the challenges impact the well-being of women and children.

- How do lack of healthcare services affect the health outcomes of women and children?
- In what ways do socio-economic factors hinder children's educational achievements?

- What mental health issues have you or other women experienced due to these challenges?
- What is the level of stress among women and children due to living conditions?
- How does social isolation impact your well-being?

Section 3: Existing Mitigatory Policy Framework

Evaluate the effectiveness of current policies addressing these challenges.

- Do you believe current policies adequately address the needs of women and children? Why or why not?
- How effective is the implementation of these policies in the camp?
- Are women aware of the available support services? If not, what can be done to improve this?
- How often are policies reviewed to meet changing needs?
- How does collaboration among NGOs enhance service delivery in the camp?

Section 4: Potential Opportunities to Deal with Challenges

Identify potential opportunities for improvement.

- What training programs would you suggest to improve economic opportunities for women?
- How can community awareness campaigns reduce gender-based violence?
- What role does access to legal aid play in empowering women?
- How can collaboration with local organisations enhance service provision?