Mixed Migration Centre

4Mi Cities:

Data Collection on Urban Mixed Migration

Nairobi City Report

July 2022

Mixed Migration Centre

DRC DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

MMC Mayors Migration Council

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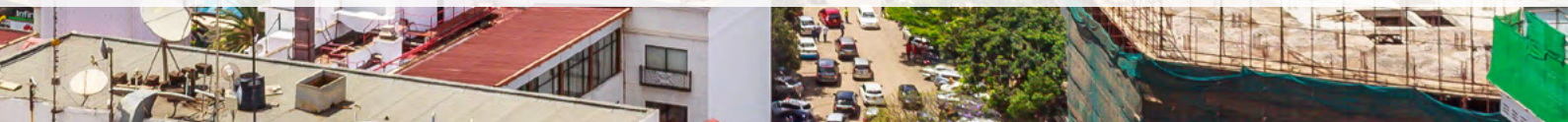

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Mid-day skyline landscape photography of Nairobi, November 2019.

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About this report

This city report presents the work carried out by the Mixed Migration Centre and the Mayors Migration Council (MMC²) in Nairobi, as part of a pilot of the 4Mi Cities project.

In close partnership with city governments at the frontline of refugee and migrant reception and inclusion, 4Mi Cities collected data on the needs, assets and aspirations of urban migrants and refugees as they interact with local policies and services in three East African cities (Arua, Kampala and Nairobi). Data collected will be used by city governments involved in the project, as well as humanitarian and development actors, to improve their current migration policies and responses at city level.

The research methods, data sources and analysis structure are aligned across the project cities, to allow comparisons between the specific situation of refugees and migrants across locations. The other reports can be found here:

4Mi Cities: Data Collection on Urban Mixed Migration - Arua City report
4Mi Cities: Data Collection on Urban Mixed Migration - Kampala City report

The 4Mi Cities pilot project in East Africa was supported by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom. The views expressed herein should however not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of FCDO. Responsibility for the content of this report lies entirely with the Mixed Migration Centre and the Mayors Migration Council.

About the Mixed Migration Centre

MMC is a global network engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy and programmatic development on mixed migration, with regional hubs hosted in DRC regional offices in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, and a small global team in Geneva.

MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise. MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

MMC is part of and governed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). While its institutional link to DRC ensures MMC's work is grounded in operational reality, it acts as an independent source of data, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration for policy makers, practitioners, journalists, and the broader humanitarian sector.

For more information visit: www.mixedmigration.org
and follow us at: @Mixed_Migration

About the Mayors Migration Council

The Mayors Migration Council (MMC) is a mayor-led organization that helps cities shape national and international action on migration and displacement. Its mission is to ensure that global responses to pressing challenges—from pandemics to the climate crisis—both reflect and address realities on the ground for the benefit of migrants, displaced persons, and the communities that receive them.

To fulfil its vision, the Mayors Migration Council secures cities' formal access and representation to national, regional, and international policy deliberations; builds cities' diplomatic, advocacy, and communications skills so they can effectively influence decisions; unlocks technical and financial resources to cities so they can deliver better outcomes on the ground; and helps cities implement local solutions efficiently and at scale to accelerate global commitments.

Created by mayors for mayors, the Mayors Migration Council is a nimble team of political advisors and urban practitioners led by a Leadership Board composed of the mayors of Amman, Bristol, Dhaka North, Freetown, Kampala, Los Angeles, Milan, Montevideo, Montreal, and Zürich. It is managed as a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors and operate with the institutional support of Open Society Foundations, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the Robert Bosch Stiftung, in addition to other project-based donors.

For more information on the Mayors Migration Council visit their website: www.mayorsmigrationcouncil.org

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List of acronyms

DRA	Department of Refugee Affairs
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
KII	Key informant interviews
IO	International organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
GoK	Government of Kenya
NCCG	Nairobi City County Government
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RAS	Refugee Affairs Secretariat
RSD	Refugee status determination
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Summary and key findings

This report aims to fill information gaps on the experience of refugees and migrants in Nairobi. It is based on survey data, key informant interviews and secondary sources. After a short introduction on the city's mixed migration dynamics and local responses to these movements, the report presents the main findings of the project. The report concludes by specifying the implications of the findings for policy and programming, and recording the outcomes of the project: the city's uptake of the evidence and their commitments on policy and programming responses for refugees and migrants.

Key findings from the surveys administered in Nairobi include:

1. **Nairobi is a safe haven of opportunities for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.** Most respondents identified as refugees and asylum seekers and said they left their countries due to violence insecurity and conflict. But beyond refuge, respondents considered that Nairobi was able to offer something more to them and their families, including better access to healthcare (65%) and education (61%), as well as the opportunity to establish a livelihood or access employment (38%). The majority of respondents (62%) had been living in Nairobi for more than five years; many had lived in the city for more than ten years.

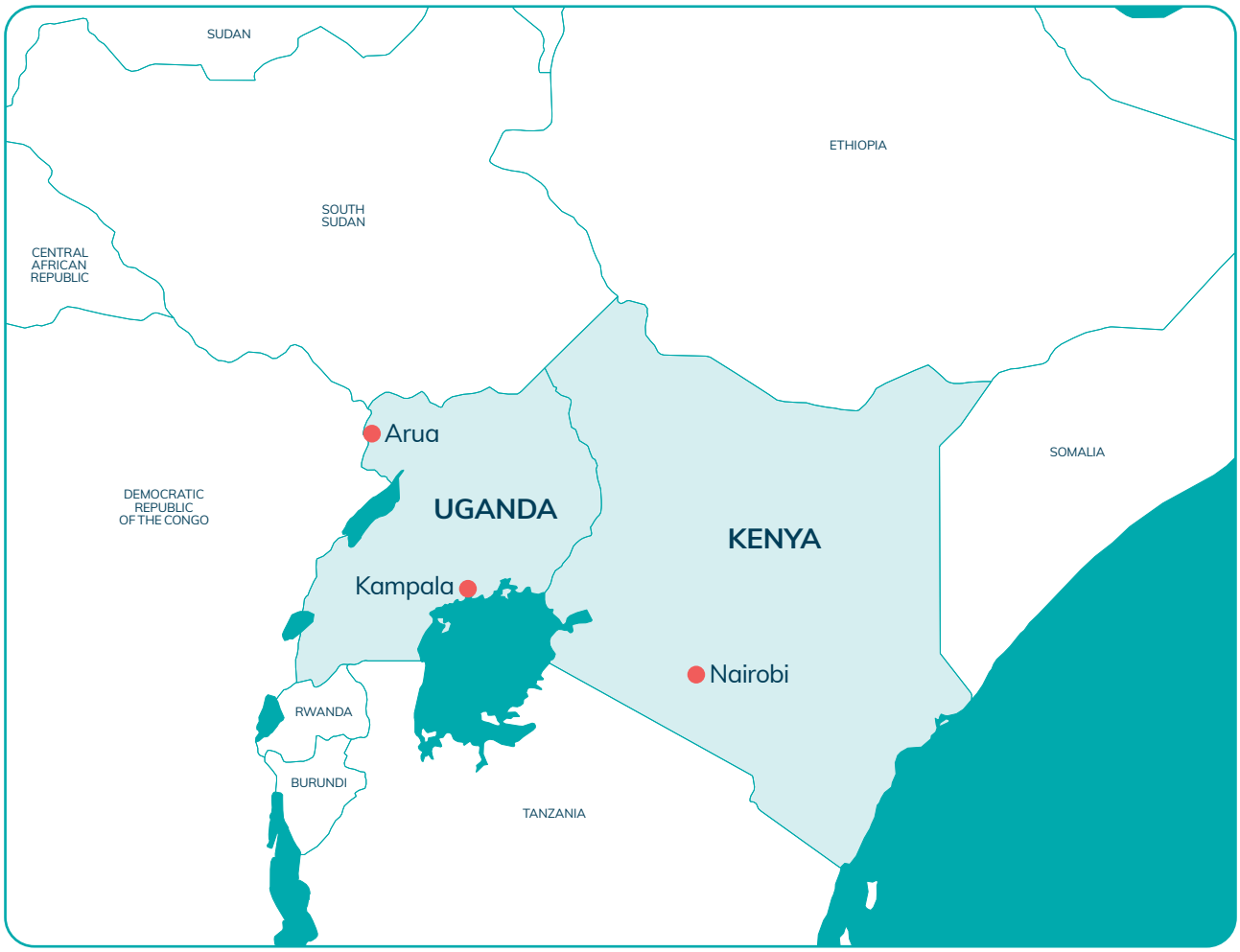
2. **While most respondents earn a living in Nairobi,** often through running a small business or casual work, **financial stress was high.** 59% of respondents' households rely on one income and 37% of respondents reported that their household income is *never* enough to cover their basic needs, while 47% of respondents can cover the household's basic needs *only sometimes*. To cope, respondents often resorted to cutting their expenditure on non-essential (but still critical) items, borrowed money or reduced food portions.

3. **Despite feeling safe within their neighbourhoods and workplaces, refugees and migrants tend not to engage with authorities within the city.** This leads to limited access to justice: of those respondents who were victims of a crime or attempted crime, 41% reported it, with mistrust in police being cited as a major reason for not doing so. Respondents also expressed a low level of participation and civic engagement in local decision-making processes: 48% of respondents chose not to participate in decision-making processes at either the neighbourhood or the city level.

4. **Healthcare services and access to education for children were accessible to most who required them, but at a cost**. Most respondents requiring medical attention, including pregnant women (66%) and school-aged children (72%), were able to access health and education services through the public system. However, respondents often had to pay for services in medical facilities, even public ones, and for administrative fees in schools (e.g. uniforms), which created barriers to access.

5. **Support for long-term socio-economic inclusion remains a major gap.** Assistance provided by humanitarian organizations is designed to provide ad hoc, emergency response**:** half of respondents have received assistance since they arrived in Nairobi, primarily medical care (64%), legal or asylum advice (56%), food (43%) and access to education (27%). While some efforts have been made to provide livelihood support and guidance on employment or entrepreneurship, this remains limited.

Map 1. Project locations



About the 4Mi Cities project

Localized data and analysis on migration are often limited, hampering city government decisions and policy development. The Mixed Migration Centre and the Mayors Migration Council (shortened to MMC², given the matching acronyms), working in close partnership with three city governments, have designed and implemented a pilot data collection project, 4Mi Cities. MMC developed and applied a new 4Mi toolkit to find out specifically about refugees' and migrants' urban experiences in a way that can support improved policy and service provision at the city level. The East Africa component of this pilot, which focused on Arua, Kampala and Nairobi, follows a similar study on three cities in Latin America (Medellín, Barranquilla and Mexico City).

What is 4Mi?

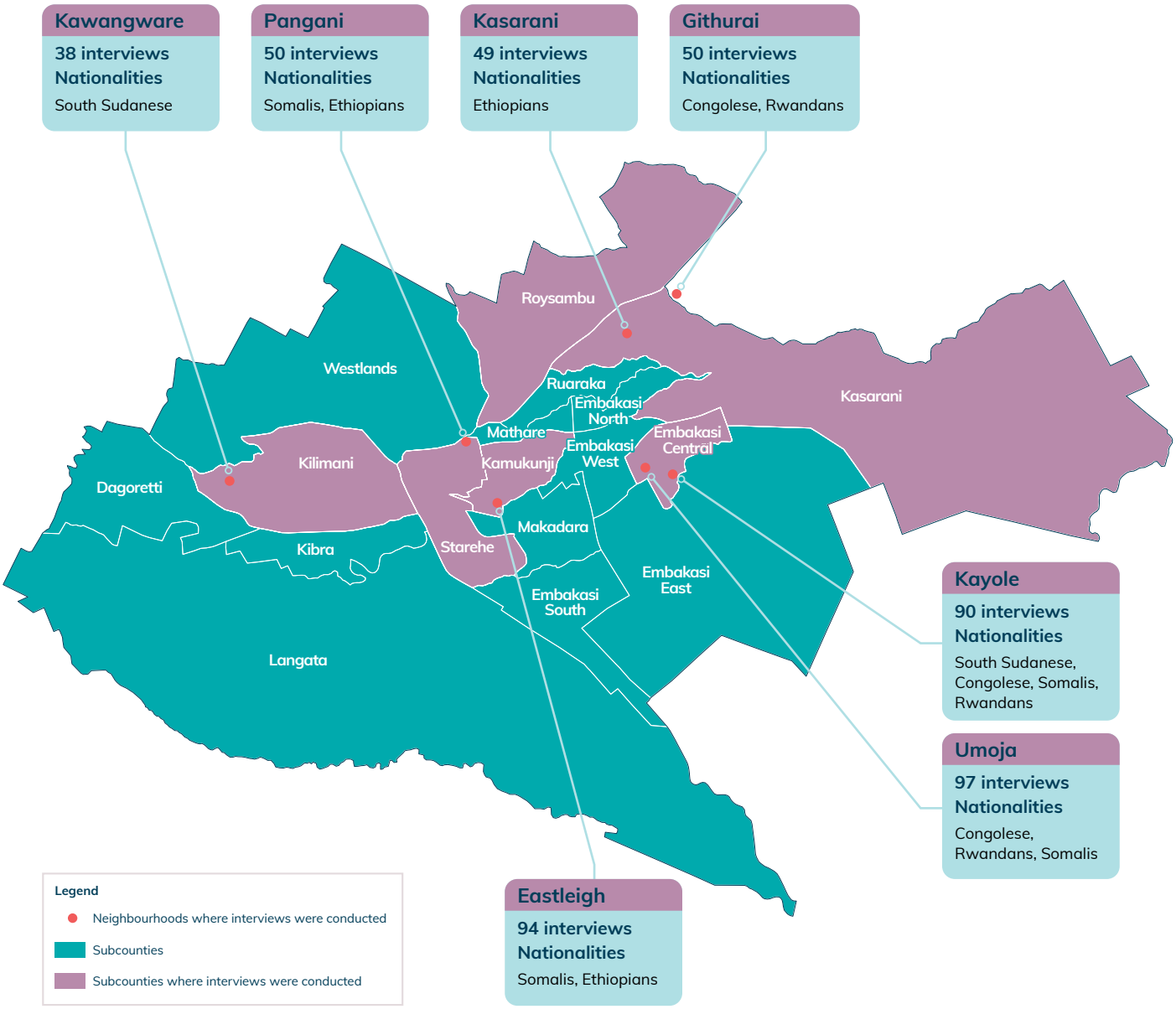
Set up in 2014, 4Mi is a unique network of field enumerators situated along frequently used mixed migration routes and in major migratory hubs. It aims to offer a regular, standardized, quantitative and globalized system of collecting primary data on mixed migration. 4Mi predominantly uses a closed-question survey to invite respondents to anonymously self-report on a wide range of issues, which results in extensive data relating to individual profiles, migration drivers, means and conditions of movement, the smuggling economy, aspirations and destination choices. 4Mi data allows MMC and its partners to inform migration policies, debates and protection responses for people on the move through the production of high-quality quantitative analysis.

Like many other urban centres, the three cities included in this pilot – Arua, Kampala and Nairobi – all host refugee and migrant populations. Whether they represent an intended, or final, destination or not, the cities offer economic

opportunities, access to services and a diaspora community, but at the same time, barriers such as xenophobia and lack of knowledge regarding available services and programmes persist. In addition, access to services is often tied to regular immigration status, which can be difficult to obtain outside of a camp setting in Kenya. Access to livelihoods can also be a challenge, along with housing. City governments have made efforts to meet refugees' and migrants' needs by developing policies, and designing assistance programmes, but gaps persist.

4Mi Cities aims to build evidence to better inform local responses to mixed migration in cities and create a strong case for national and international legal, fiscal and policy frameworks that enable cities to provide necessary services to refugee and migrant populations. The data collected will be used by city governments involved in the project, as well as humanitarian and development actors, to improve their current migration policies and responses at city level.

Map 2. Nairobi and data collection locations



1. Methodology

The research questions that the 4Mi Cities project set out to answer are:

1. What are the profiles of refugees and migrants in Nairobi?
2. What are the reasons behind their decision to choose Nairobi as a destination?
3. What are the protection risks and challenges they face in the city?
4. What are the opportunities that refugees and migrants encounter?
5. What access do they have to services in the city?
6. Are refugees and migrants satisfied with their decision to migrate to Nairobi and what are their future intentions?

The 4Mi Cities project took a mixed-methods approach, including a context analysis, key informant interviews, quantitative research as well as several consultation and validation workshops. The project in Nairobi was conducted between August 2021 and March 2022 and was based on the following activities:

- **Urban context analysis**, largely based on secondary sources and a limited number of key informant interviews with Nairobi City County Government staff and sector actors.

- **Three workshops with mixed migration actors.** Experts from the public and private sector, IOs, NGOs and UN agencies participated in: i) a mapping workshop to determine key locations where the target population lives and gathers and to identify sites for data collection; ii) a survey workshop to ensure that the information to be collected by the project would fill gaps and meet the needs of local actors and iii) a validation workshop to discuss results with city government staff and other local actors.

- **468 surveys with refugees and migrants** across refugee- and migrant-hosting sub-county locations in Nairobi, conducted by 10 4Mi Cities enumerators, 3 of whom were Nairobi City County staff.

The 4Mi Cities survey covered six main themes relating to the research questions: demographic and migration profiles; housing; access to services (healthcare, mental health, and education); livelihood opportunities and challenges; safety and security and life in the city (interactions with the local population, with city government and NGOs, access to public places and transportation, among other topics). The closed-question survey of 91 questions was answered only by refugees, asylum seekers and migrants (18 years and older) residing in Nairobi.

Several limitations to the data are worth noting. As the 4Mi Cities sampling process was not randomized and seven specific data collection sites were prioritized, the survey responses are not representative of the entire refugee and migrant population in Nairobi. Additionally, the responses of participants in the 4Mi Cities survey cannot be independently verified, although they were triangulated with existing studies and primary qualitative data, and there may be response bias. Nonetheless, the findings from the survey can provide important insights into the life of refugees and migrants in Nairobi.

In terms of research ethics, informed consent and anonymity were communicated clearly with participants before, during, and after the surveys. Enumerators were trained on safety guidelines and validation procedures; data protection and research ethics, consent and safeguarding. MMC's data protection guidelines are based on the EU GDPR, the strongest data protection instrument worldwide, and involve informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality of data. Data management guidelines cover the validation, cleaning and safe storage of data, and adhere to strict data-sharing agreements.

The next section of the report will present the context overview, based on the secondary data review and key informant interviews. The report then presents analysis of the survey results, according to the themes in the research questions.

2. Context overview

2.1 Mixed migration dynamics in Nairobi

As of 2020, Nairobi city's population was estimated at 4.39 million[1] with a growth rate of 3.93%. Nairobi's economy generates over 60% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and it was recently ranked as the sixth wealthiest city in Africa.[2] Many employment opportunities in Kenya (and East Africa) are concentrated in Nairobi, as are some of the key services and the organizations assisting refugees and migrants. The city is a major destination for internal migrants, as well as refugees and asylum seekers from around East Africa and the Great Lakes, and migrants looking to stay or transit through Kenya.[3] This, and its strategic location, make the city a key point on all mixed migration routes from or through East Africa.[4] Nairobi serves as a transit city for refugees and migrants intending to migrate towards the Gulf countries and the Middle East, as well on the southern route towards South Africa, and the route towards North Africa and Europe.

It has been well documented that refugees are present in Kenya, given its hosting of some of the largest refugee settlements on the continent, however there is a paucity of data on the broader mixed migration dynamics in the Kenyan capital. The latest available figures on the number of registered refugees and asylum seekers in Nairobi are only available from 2018, with estimates placed at 75,742 (see Table 1 below, although the nature of the estimates mean the figures do not add up to the total cited here).[5]

Table 1. Profile of urban refugees in Nairobi by country of origin

Country of origin	Estimated number	Area within Nairobi
Democratic Republic of the Congo	~28,980	Dispersed Githurai, Kasarani, Kayole and Umoja
Somalia	~22,588	Concentrated: Eastleigh
Ethiopia	~10,721	Concentrated: Eastleigh
South Sudan	~5,858	Concentrated: Eastleigh and Kawangware
Burundi	~3,237	Concentrated: Umoja/Kayole
Eritrea	~1,607	Concentrated: Eastleigh

Sources: Government of Kenya and UNHCR, Kenya Statistics Package, 31 October 2021, https://www.unhcr.org/ke/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/11/Kenya-Statistics-Package-31-October-2021.pdf. Areas within Nairobi sourced from the key informant interviews.

Refugees arriving in Nairobi either transit through Dadaab or Kakuma refugee settlement before resettling in the capital or arrive directly in Nairobi after entering Kenya. Although the Government of Kenya's (GoK) encampment policy restricts access to assistance outside of camps, refugees are increasingly settling in urban areas. The nature of movement is dynamic as refugees move between the city, camps and their country of origin. However, settling in other cities in Kenya is restricted. The Kenyan government's focus on camp management means that mainly those refugees with resources are able to pursue life outside camps as, in effect, most who do so lose access to assistance.[6] This has created a situation in which refugees become 'less visible' in urban areas.[7]

The average stay for an urban refugee in Kenya is 7 years; despite this Nairobi is increasingly perceived as a transit

1 Nairobi City County Government (2020). Nairobi County Annual Development Plan 2021/22.
2 AfrAsia Bank (2018). Wealth Report 2018.
3 Mixed Migration Centre (2020), Urban Mixed Migration – Nairobi case study
4 Daghar, M (30 July 2019). Kenya now a key transit point for south bound migrants. ENACT Observer
5 After 2018, the UNHCR Kenya Statistics Package 31 Oct 2021 cumulatively tracks the number of refugees and asylum seekers in Nairobi, Nakuru and Mombasa, making it difficult to assess the change in displacement numbers over the last 4 years in Nairobi only. Based on figures across the 3 urban areas from 2019-2021, there was a 6.2% increase in the number of recorded refugee and asylum seekers.
6 This is with the exception of refugees who are registered to live in settlements who have temporarily settled in Nairobi to seek medical treatment or pursue tertiary education. Bonfiglio (2020) Student, refugee or both? Exploring refugee agency and mobility through tertiary education in Kenya, South Africa and Uganda.
7 IIED (2019). Dismantling barriers to health and wellbeing for Nairobi's refugees. Briefing. June 2019; Dix, S. (2006). Urbanisation and the social protection of refugees in Nairobi. International Rescue Committee.

hub, with refugees planning to leave Kenya and resettle elsewhere. 96% of households in a 2021 World Bank SES survey[8] expressed a wish to leave Kenya to seek a solution in a third country, though very few (less than 1%) plan on returning to their country of origin. North America and Europe are seen as the most desirable destinations for resettlement. One-sixth (15%) require information to guide their movement choices.

Nairobi continues to host migrants, some of whom are likely eligible for refugee status but who are not registered as refugees, and these numbers are likely to have increased since the Covid-19 pandemic, following the suspension of the refugee registration process. Registration may be motivated by aspirations for resettlement (only registered refugees are eligible for resettlement).[9] From the 4Mi Cities data, most migrants without refugee registration (68%) had no immediate intentions of leaving Nairobi. Refugees and asylum seekers, in contrast, more often intended to move to a different country, at 50% compared to 24% of those without refugee status.

2.2 Local responses to migration

There has been significant focus in the last decade on the urban dimension of Kenya's refugee and migrant population and the need for adequate policy responses to meet the needs of the people and the host communities. However, there is a disproportionate amount of research on Nairobi's refugee population to the detriment of other groups, including irregular migrants and trafficked persons.[10]

Refugee services and policies remain geared toward camps, impacting the ability of urban refugees to access employment and services or develop effective relationships with Nairobi City County Government (NCCG). Even though the number of urban refugees is continually rising, the GoK has continued to promote the encampment policy that was established in the country in 2014, which requires all refugees to reside in the two designated settlements in Kenya, Kukuma and Dadaab, which each constitute a complex of camps .[11] Refugees risk losing documentation and entitlements if they move out of these camps. A new Refugee Act, however, setting out greater provision for refugee self-reliance, including the potential for refugees to access land and work permits, came into effect in February 2022, although implementation is slow.[12]

City government policies and programs have not always followed national policy. For example, in Nairobi, the City Council acknowledged the benefits of greater economic integration of refugees earlier, and allows them to register businesses. Indeed, developing relationships with local government actors strengthens the protection of urban refugees, especially those at risk. The Nairobi County government has coordinated with humanitarian organisations to facilitate broader assistance. For example, relationships established with District Commissioners responsible for areas with a large refugee presence have helped raise awareness of rights and challenges, creating opportunities for UNHCR to participate on district boards or support efforts to enrol refugee children in schools. City government authorities are also involved in identifying non-registered refugees.[13]

There is a need to pay more attention to the intersection between urbanisation and mixed migration, which highlights the commonalities in experiences between refugees and migrants regardless of migration status, including the opportunities and risks.[14] A 2018 IOM report recommended, "the Government of Kenya and concerned stakeholders should make explicit linkages between urban planning and migration in both policy and programming."[15]

The Nairobi City County Integrated Urban Development Master Plan (NIUPLAN)[16] seeks to provide a framework for coordinating urban development to align with the Kenya Vision 2030 goal of providing a high quality of life to all citizens. Specifically, it seeks to address rapid urbanisation, infrastructure challenges, poor living conditions, transportation issues and the demand for low-income housing driven by newly arriving populations. The Nairobi City County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2018-22[17] aims to implement its vision of "The City of Choice for All to Invest, Work and Live In" by enhancing service provision and security through a community participation approach.

8 Unpublished.
9 Resettlement in Kenya.
10 Mixed Migration Centre (2020), Urban Mixed Migration – Nairobi case study.
11 Ramos, M. and Njoka, N. (2021). Livelihoods of Somali urban refugees in Eastleigh, Nairobi. Refugee Law Initiative.
12 Kenya law; VOA news, (2022) Refugees in Kenya Gain Employment Rights as New Law Takes Effect.
13 Koizumi, K. and Hoffstaedter, G. (2015) Urban Refugees: Challenges in Protection, Services and Policy. Routledge Research in Place, Space and Politics; Kamau, D. M. and Mwenda, M. N. (2021). Empowerment of Urban Refugee Youths in Nairobi County, Kenya: A Socio-Economic Perspective. European Journal of Business and Management Research. Vol 6(1). p142-148.
14 Mixed Migration Centre (2020), Urban Mixed Migration – Nairobi case study.
15 IOM (2018). Migration in Kenya: a country profile 2018, p191.
16 Nairobi City County (NCC) (2014). The project on Integrated Urban Development Master Plan for the City of Nairobi in the Republic of Kenya.
17 Nairobi City County (2017). County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2018-2022.

3. Profile of 4Mi Cities respondents

3.1 Survey respondents

468 refugees and migrants were interviewed for this project: 53% of respondents were men and 47% women. The majority of respondents were 18-34 years old (54%) and were refugees (66%) or asylum seekers (19%). Respondents' education levels varied: 29% had completed primary school and 27% had completed secondary school, while 19% had not completed any schooling. Over half (51%) of respondents were married, and 38% were single.

Respondents from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (65%), Somalia (54%) and South Sudan (51%) more often had lived in a rural area in their home country, while those from Ethiopia (66%) and Rwanda (62%) had more often come from an urban area.

The average household consisted of approximately 5 people; in total the survey gathered data on 2,316 people. Most households included at least one child and the average number of children per household was 3.5. Only 15% of respondents were in Nairobi alone. A third (34%) of households had at least one person with specific needs, 39% of them being breastfeeding women and 38% being people with disabilities (n=160).

Table 2. Profile of respondents

Country of nationality	Women	Men	Total
Democratic Republic of the Congo	36	50	86
Eritrea	3	0	3
Ethiopia	71	51	122
Republic of the Congo	1	4	5
Rwanda	32	49	81
Somalia	46	45	91
South Sudan	29	43	72
Sudan	3	5	8
Total	**221**	**247**	**468**

4. Results: Life in Nairobi[18]

Nairobi is sought as a safe haven. 81% of respondents said they left their countries due to violence insecurity and conflict, while 25% of respondents cited a lack of rights and freedoms in their country as a reason for departure, among others. Most respondents self-identified as refugees (66%) or asylum-seekers (19%). Only 5% of respondents said they were in Kenya irregularly and had no documentation to support their stay in the country.

Beyond refuge, **most respondents considered that Nairobi offers something to them and their families.** When asked about which opportunities Nairobi offers, 65% of respondents mentioned that they were able to access better health services, and 61% mentioned better access to education. The opportunity to establish a livelihood or access employment was also commonly cited (38%). Respondents who had arrived in Nairobi more recently more frequently mentioned livelihoods as an opportunity. Only 9% of respondents consider that the city had not offered them anything.

> *"I found that this country has more opportunities for work than other countries I have been in. Though the life is not easy but at least it's better here compared to other countries."*
> **37-year-old male refugee from DRC**

> *"I came to Kenya expecting to get better education and good work plus experience of life and still new so am looking forward for positive results and about my journey since I didn't have any documentation it was very hard because we were spending more days to arrive in Kenya than usual."*
> **20-year-old female asylum seeker from Somalia**

Most respondents had been in the city for an extended period. 62% of respondents had been living in Nairobi for more than five years (n=292), of which 50% had lived in the city for more than ten years. 45% of respondents also said that they intended to stay within the city for the foreseeable future.

However, **expectations about life in the city do not often line up with reality.** 55% of respondents said that life in Nairobi was more difficult than they expected, 35% said it was as they expected and only 9% said it was easier than they had expected. For the 220 respondents who planned to move on, respondents were in search of: a better job (86%), a safer place to settle (79%), better housing (52%), better access to health care (48%) and better education (36%).

4.1. Documentation and regularization

87% of respondents said that they had documentation to support their stay in Kenya, corresponding to the high number of refugees and asylum seekers in the sample. 57% said that all members of their household had supporting documentation and 28% said that some, but not all, members of their households had documentation. Living in the city without documentation either for respondents or their household (n=194) appeared to increase the risks of arrest (82%), harassment (62%) and deportation (61%).

However, surveys and key informant interviews revealed that despite having the authorisation to be in Nairobi, refugees often face harassment by authorities, as their refugee documentation is issued with a camp address in Dadaab or Kakuma. Moreover, because immigration is governed at a national level, city authorities are often unaware of the rights of refugees and migrants and are unsure about how to interact with them. Delays in processing refugee documentation also makes it difficult for refugees to access services that would otherwise be available to them.

18 For more information, consult Appendix 1, which includes a profile of 4Mi Cities' respondents, data disaggregation and more results.

"My biggest challenges in Kenya have been a lack of freedom of movement and unemployment, due to my lack of documentation. Without this, all other things remain stagnant and there is no growth at all, just problem after problem."
29-year-old female asylum seeker from Ethiopia

4.2. Income, livelihoods and financial inclusion

64% of respondents in Nairobi were able to earn a living, largely through owning a small business or engaging in casual work**.** This was consistent among most nationality groups, except South Sudanese respondents (n=72),[19] where 74% said they were not earning an income. Disaggregated data also show a **gendered element to income generation**. 43% of women (n=221) were not earning an income compared with 28% of men (n=247). While an almost equal proportion of men and women respondents expressed that this was due to unemployment (48% of women and 49% of men), for women the next most mentioned factor was that were taking care of the home/children (28%), while for men this was because they were students (19%).

"In every East African country, the rate of unemployment is very high. I found that Kenya is the best country to live in because there are many opportunities for self-employment."
35-year-old male refugee from Rwanda

Challenges to accessing decent and safe employment or starting up a business persist. A lack of opportunities (82%) and lack of proper documentation (69%), such as basic identity documents, work permits and/or business permits, were the most reported issues, followed by discrimination based on nationality (39%), competition with the local population (30%) and a lack of resources to buy business inputs (28%).

Financial stress is high among respondents. 59% of respondents' households rely on just one income. 37% of respondents report that household income is *never* enough to cover their basic needs, while 47% of respondents can cover the household's basic needs *sometimes*. Disaggregated data indicate that 26% of respondents who are employed are always able to cover the needs of the household, and this drops to 14% and 6% among respondents who own a business or engage in casual work, respectively. Respondents from the Democratic Republic of the Congo most often said that their earnings are never enough to cover basic needs, at 57%.

Household coping strategies when in financial distress include reducing payments for less urgent expenses such as utilities, rent and clothes (48%); borrowing money (48%) and reducing food portions for all household members (31%). When in need, women were more likely to borrow money, at 53% compared to men at 43%.

Mobile money is the dominant financial service. 74% of respondents said they were able to access financial facilities though a mobile money service. Only 7% of respondents were able to access formal banking services and 4% said they were not able to access any facilities. Most respondents reported that their households had no access to loan services, and despite the high penetration of mobile money services, just 12% of respondents said they had access to mobile money loans.

Access to savings is limited. 76% of respondents are unable to save after covering their household's basic needs and 72% say that their households do not have access to a savings institution or initiative. Men saved less often than women (72% versus 80%, respectively) and less often had access to a savings institution (70% versus 75%).

4.3. Access to public services

School enrolment is high. 80% of respondents reported that all their children were enrolled in school, and a further 13% reported that some of their children attend school. The majority were enrolled in public government schools (72%), and 34% were attending private schools. For those not attending school, expense was the main barrier (78%).

19 The same was also prevalent among Sudanese and Eritrean respondents, but the overall sample sizes of these groups were too small to analyse.

Healthcare services were accessible to most who required them, but at a cost. Most respondents were able to get treatment at a public hospital/facility (66%), followed by private facilities (32%) and by using a pharmacy (31%). Almost all pregnant women were able to access medical care, however less than half of people with disabilities were able to access services. 85% of respondents had to pay for medical services, a figure which remained high even for those accessing services at public facilities. Cost and a lack of medical insurance were commonly cited barriers among those who were not able to access health services. With the necessary identification documents, refugees are eligible to register for the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) at a monthly cost of KES 500 (about 5 USD) paid by UNHCR. Despite this being a progressive policy, it does not ensure healthcare access to unregistered migrants and to those whose applications are stuck in the long and complex registration process.

> *"Accessing healthcare without a National Health Insurance Fund card is difficult for refugees."*
> **38-year-old male refugee from DRC**

Access to adequate care for mental health is very low, despite the needs. 66% of respondents have experienced adverse mental health symptoms (depression, anxiety, stress or mood swings) since arriving in Nairobi, but just 11% received professional support. The majority seek help from friends or family members, and churches/mosques, while 9% have not sought any support.

4.4. Housing

Most respondents live in a home with their families only, although 41% share housing with other families. Respondents in single-member households more frequently live in shared housing (26% versus 8% with family). Most respondents had access to piped water inside their houses at 67%, however 46% said it was not sufficient for their needs. Electricity was constantly available for 46% of respondents, 41% had occasional blackouts, 10% had frequent blackouts while the rest had no electricity.

New arrivals are more prone to living in overcrowded conditions compared to refugees and migrants who have spent a longer period in Nairobi. Of the respondents who have been living in Nairobi for less than 5 years, 60% said there was only one room exclusively for sleeping in their accommodation, which is low for the household size.

Average housing tenure: Almost all respondents (99%) were paying for their housing monthly (versus more precarious arrangements, such as weekly or daily payment), yet 70% relied on an informal lease agreement (verbal) to secure their stay in their homes, potentially exposing them to losing their accommodation. This is however not unique to refugees and migrants as locals in informal settlements also face the same challenge.

Lack of resources is the biggest challenge in finding a place to live. While 43% of respondents experienced no obstacles in finding a place to live, a lack of resources (48%), a lack of documents (26%) and lack of a guarantor (20%) were frequently mentioned as barriers. There were no major observable differences across neighbourhoods.

> *"Since I arrived in Kenya I have not gotten a stable place to stay I go from house to house to look for a good place."*
> **22-year-old female migrant from Ethiopia**

4.5. Safety and security

Nairobi tends to be a safe place for refugees and migrants to live. Most respondents said that they and their families felt safe in their neighbourhoods, and most respondents also said that neither they nor their families had been a victim of (attempted) crime. **Where crime was experienced (n=175), however, the majority did not file a report to authorities (58%)**. The most common reason for non-reporting was a feeling of mistrust in police/institutions (70%), followed by a perception that they would be discriminated against as foreigners (45%) and for fear of being detained or deported (33%).

4.6. Coexistence, integration and inclusion

Perceived discrimination against refugees and migrants is relatively high: 45% of respondents have felt discriminated against, mainly because of their nationality. The places where they most perceived discrimination included the street/public places and in the workplace.

At the same time, most respondents have good relations with the local (Kenyan) population in both their neighbourhood and in their workplace, although their engagement with local decision-making processes is low. 48% of respondents said that they do not participate in discussions about their neighbourhood or the city. For those who did take part, 25% said that their opinions were sometimes considered, and a further 10% said it was always.

> *"So far it has been good. Kenyan people are friendly and I have made different friends who have become family, My children are happy and they are being educated."*
> **57-year-old male migrant from South Sudan**

4.7. Local actors providing assistance

There is an awareness of assistance programs. Most respondents were aware of assistance programs offered by either governmental institutions (51%) or non-governmental organisations (68%). Assistance programs from NGOs and UN agencies were the most well-known, followed by those of refugee/migrant-led organisations. Where respondents were aware of government assistance programs, this was mostly related to regularisation/legal status programs (30%), health programs (30%) and food programs (16%)

Half of the respondents interviewed had received some sort of assistance since arriving in Nairobi, primarily medical care (64%), legal or asylum advice (56%), food (43%) and access to education (27%). Some efforts are also made to offer promote self-reliance and inclusion: 19% of respondents had received livelihood support and 18% had received guidance on employment or entrepreneurship. The **assistance received by respondents** was **mostly provided by UN agencies and NGOs** (95%), followed by **government institutions** (37%) and **churches** (32%). Newer arrivals were less often aware of available services, and a higher proportion of refugees and asylum seekers had received assistance (57% and 44%, respectively) compared to people with an irregular status (12%).

5. Conclusions

The 4Mi Cities project has shown the value of data collection at the city level in partnership with city governments, and the potential of including data collection and analysis as an integral part of the policy and programming process. In Nairobi, data collection and analysis has shown that most refugees and migrants were able to access public services such as education, healthcare and public spaces while exposing the gaps that remain to be filled.

While most refugees and migrants were able to engage in a small enterprise to sustain themselves and their families, financial stress was high and respondents were often not able to cover their basic household needs. The adoption of negative coping mechanisms, such as getting into debt, cutting non-essential services, or even food portions for household members in some cases, could potentially increase the vulnerability of households. The availability of and access to education and health services was high, particularly for public facilities, but cost remains a barrier for many. Moreover, there was a lack of specialized services for disability- and mental health-related needs. Finally, in the case of housing, verbal contracts, limited financial resources and a lack of documentation expose refugees and migrants to losing their accommodation and the risk of homelessness.

This report has shown the vital importance of including refugees and migrants in city-level data collection exercises on all the populations residing within its boundaries. Such an 'inclusive city approach' enables local authorities to understand the opportunities and challenges faced by all residents and any specific displacement or migration-related challenges faced by refugees and migrants, such as a lack of clarity on the right to work and challenges with mental health. These insights can assist local government officials in designing programs and services or sharing information in a way that is more inclusive and less likely to marginalize specific groups of residents.

6. Evidence uptake for policy and programming

By working in close partnership with city governments and other local actors throughout the project's cycle, MMC[2] ensured that 4Mi Cities produced relevant and useful city-level data and analysis. It has produced information on the extent to which refugees and migrants are integrated in Nairobi and the main barriers they face in accessing services, which can guide the city government to develop and strengthen city policies. Detailed information on the needs and priorities of refugees and migrants in Nairobi, especially on topics that are often not prioritized in emergency response, can also support humanitarian and development organizations in adjusting and consolidating their programming.

The Nairobi City County Government has identified concrete next steps based on the knowledge produced by 4Mi Cities and plans to:

1. **Increase awareness of and access to city-led services for refugee, migrant and marginalized receiving communities** while seeking to allocate government expenditure to address key service gaps, such as business permits for entrepreneurs and fees related to accessing public schools and hospitals.

2. **Undertake research and utilize any existing data** to inform the development and implementation of the Nairobi Integrated Urban Development Masterplan (NIUPLAN) and the 2022 – 2026 County Integration Development Plan (CIDP), elevating actions that intentionally benefit host vulnerable groups including migrant and refugees while enhancing the participation of these communities in the political, social and economic development of Nairobi City County.

3. Finance programs which promote the **involvement and employment of migrants, refugees and receiving communities in the environmental and economic sustainability** of Nairobi's most marginalized areas, such as promoting businesses within the city's green economy, working with other organizations to improve public spaces, and investing in private sector innovation.

4. Collaborate with Directorate of Refugees Services to **register refugees locally** within Nairobi and better connect them to services critical to their long-term socioeconomic inclusion, for sustainable livelihoods programs, and programs specifically focusing on women, children and youth and persons living with disabilities.

MMC is a global network engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy and programmatic development on mixed migration, with regional hubs hosted in DRC regional offices in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, and a small global team in Geneva.

MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise. MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

MMC is part of and governed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). Global and regional MMC teams are based in Brussels, Geneva, Dakar, Nairobi, Tunis, Bogota and Dhaka.

For more information visit:
mixedmigration.org and follow us at @Mixed_Migration

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