

Influence of refugees on dadaab

Business, Strategy



Every year, thousands of refugees are forced to leave their countries of origin and are hosted by their neighboring countries. However, very little is known about the impact of these refugees on the local economy and its inhabitants. Dadaab town experienced natural vegetation comprising of trees, shrubs and grasses that sustained the pastoral economy before the settlement of refugees. However, most of the natural vegetation that was previously found in the Dadaab area has experienced the devastating effects of the refugee settlement.

With the refugee settlement, which has continued to grow in size, there have been increased bush clearing activities in order to create more space, indiscriminate harvesting of natural vegetation for various uses, and the general pressure on available natural resources. Nonetheless, there are instances when the refugee settlement has increased the value of land as well as natural vegetation. Despite the area being used by pastoralists, the refugee settlement has given the land more value. In this respect, it is apparent that settlement of refugees have two sides, positive and negative impacts. Notably, there has continued to be conflicts between the government allowing the refugee settlement and the host communities. Whereas the host communities believe that the effects of refugee settlement have been devastating on them, the government continues to assure them of the benefits associated with the refugee settlement.

Even though there has been adequate documentation of the effect of refugees on natural environment, very little has been done to establish how such aspects affect the host community. In other words, studies have generally looked at overall effects of refugee settlements without focusing on

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the hosts. What's more, the studies so far carried have always focused on a mono strategy, which is, leaning on only one research strategy. For instance, studies have focused more on providing quantitative understanding of the effects of refugee settlements. Concentrating on one method is likely to result into a number of limitations. Focusing on this gaps, the proposed study seeks to investigate the environmental effects of refugee settlements on host communities while adopting mixed research design or methodology.