

**CHALLENGES TO SHIFT FROM SURVIVAL TO SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS:
CASE STUDY OF REFUGEE WOMEN IN SUNNYSIDE, TSHWANE**

BY

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ABSTRACT

CHALLENGES TO SHIFT FROM SURVIVAL TO SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS: CASE STUDY OF REFUGEE WOMEN IN SUNNYSIDE, TSHWANE

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South Africa attracts thousands of refugees and is regarded as a key destination for migrants on the African continent (Knowledge, 2013:24). The country has enshrined refugee rights in its Constitution (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996) and ratified the United Nations Refugee Convention (1951) and the Organisation for African Union (OAU) Refugee Convention (2000). In order to domesticate these regional and international commitments, the government introduced the Refugee Act 130 of 1998. However, the country is faced by a huge gap between implementation, monitoring and coordination of the different refugee policies and legislation which has left many refugee women with enormous challenges to attain basic civil, social and economic rights. Research reveals that women refugees are the most deprived and constitute the majority of the displaced persons in the world (UNHCR, 2000 in Mulumba, 2005:28).

The goal of the study was to explore the challenges that refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies.

The qualitative research study was applied and exploratory in nature and utilised an instrumental case study design. The population for the study was all the refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 23 refugee women participants for the study. Data was collected through one-on-one interviews which were conducted according to a semi-structured interview schedule.

The findings show that most refugee women find it extremely difficult to find an adequate job despite being educated or having stayed in the country for a long period. If they do get a job, it is mostly part time, or more than one part-time job to make ends meet. Due to a lack of decent work, their income remains low, which in turn, influences their access to adequate health services, further education, education for their children, adequate shelter, and food security.

The researcher concludes that the socio-economic challenges that refugee women face, keep them trapped in poverty, expose them to discrimination, violence, exclusion, and humiliation.

The study recommends a strong national legal framework which includes full implementation and monitoring of the South African Refugee Act 130 of 1998 and support of other policies and strategies which will increase the provision of social protection and will promote basic civil, social and economic rights for refugee women.

KEY WORDS

Refugee Act 130 of 1998

Refugee

Refugee women

Survival strategies

Sustainable livelihoods

Sunnyside, Tshwane

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa attracts thousands of refugees and has been viewed as a key destination for migrants on the African continent (Knowledge, 2013:24). South Africa in particular became an attractive destination for migrants after Apartheid (Livesey, 2006:13). Available statistics reveal that South Africa hosted 57,899 legally recognised refugees in 2011 (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011:9). The new South African government has showed unwavering support and commitment to the welfare of refugees; this is evident from it being a signatory to the regional and international instruments that guide migration.

The country has enshrined refugee rights in its Constitution (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996) and ratified the United Nations Refugee Convention (1951) and the Organisation for African Union (OAU) Refugee Convention (2000). In order to domesticate these regional and international commitments, the government introduced the Refugee Act 130 of 1998. This Act was promulgated as public acceptance of refugees in South Africa and it outlines the mandate and obligation of the country to recognise the status of refugees and also to accord them socio-economic rights (Human Rights Watch, 2005:8-9).

Refugees are forced to move to nearby countries in search of security and peace; many of them usually escape from violence and civil wars, in search of a better life and safety (Livesey, 2006:3). However, most refugees find themselves in extreme poverty, financially vulnerable and economically and socially unstable (Bagula, 2011:12). Research reveals that women refugees are the most deprived and constitute the majority of the displaced persons in the world (UNHCR, 2000 in Mulumba, 2005:28).

Despite the Republic of South Africa having various pieces of legislation and policies to protect refugees, many refugee women are still struggling in the country due to a failure to secure meaningful employment (Women Refugee Commission, 2011:9). The high unemployment rate in South Africa, makes it very difficult for refugee women to find employment or to start their own small scale businesses (Bagula,

2011:4). This makes them financially vulnerable persons within already displaced groups (Bagula, 2011:12). Furthermore, refugee women encounter restrictive regulations that exclude them from legally attaining some of the basic human rights in South Africa, including, the right to food, clothing, education and shelter (Knowledge, 2013:24) and hence from attaining sustainable livelihoods.

The plight and dilemma of refugee women in South Africa goes beyond not having opportunities to work despite the Refugee Act 130 of 1998, stipulating that all legal refugees and asylum seekers are guaranteed the right to seek employment (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1998). Refugee women also have no legal protection and continue to be extremely vulnerable to exploitation and violence (Ayadurai, 2011:2). Yet the Refugee Act 130 of 1998 also guarantees them a recognised refugee status, the right to acquire an identity document and full legal protection (De Klerk, 2009:14). Hence, lack of adequate implementation of the Refugee Act 130 of 1998 poses legal protection challenges for many refugee women.

However, in their struggle to get work, refugee women resort to self-employment and in particular small scale income generating activities, which put them under risk of being harassed by the police (Ayadurai, 2011:8). As foreigners they encounter challenges related to lack of capital, high rental fees for their business premises, restrictions by municipal council regulations, lack of personal identification due to a long waiting process, a lack of or poor education, limited language skills and illiteracy that makes it difficult for them to cope economically (Ayadurai, 2011:7-11). This study focused on refugee women only; this entails women who are registered legally as refugees (Guemar, 2013:1).

Given the various constraints faced by refugee women, the study focused on the challenges refugee women in Sunnyside in the City of Tshwane encounter that hinder them to make a shift from survival strategies to sustainable livelihoods. While research has been done on economic and social challenges faced by refugee women (Addo, 2008; Keshavarzian, 2005), it did not bring about solutions to the particular challenges that they encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods as was the focus of the study.

The key concepts relevant to the study are as follows:

Refugee

In the context of this study a refugee is a woman who is not able to return to her country of origin due to fear of persecution, war and violence that would have caused her to flee to another country (Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), 2013:2). Furthermore, the women are legally registered as refugees, and over and above being refugees, encounter challenges of being exploited, experience violence and gendered forms of discrimination (Guemar, 2013:1). They also encounter challenges of attaining personal documents due to long waiting procedures, lack of legal protection and lack of survival opportunities (Ayadurai, 2011:8). However, despite many refugee women suffering, there are also some who are succeeding in being economically active, establishing businesses and are engaged in multiple or simultaneous livelihood strategies (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011:5).

Survival strategies

Survival strategies are the means in which refugee women live on a daily basis, with restricted access to ways of securing a livelihood (Crawley, Hemmings & Price, 2011:5). Within the context of the study, survival strategies focus on economic opportunities, gender sensitivity, education, shelter, food security, water and sanitation, and health care services.

Sustainable livelihoods

A livelihood comprises of people's capabilities, assets and the activities that are essential for a means of living (Sreekumaran, 2012:3). A livelihood is considered sustainable when "it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance capabilities and assets both now and in the future, without undermining the natural resource base" (Sreekumaran, 2012:3).

Sunnyside

Sunnyside is a middle class neighbourhood in the city of Tshwane with a population of 70 per cent foreigners (Le Riche, 2013). The area is located close to Hatfield and Arcadia under the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (Masonganye, 2010:4). As a capital city of South Africa, Tshwane is a political and economic centre that

comprises of business hubs and foreign embassies (Manganye, 2011:2). According to Jenkins and Nwabara (2013:1), the area has become a home to many.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) was a suitable theoretical framework for this study in that it enabled the researcher to understand, analyse and describe the aspects that have negative effects on refugee women's livelihoods (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:4-7). The SLA focuses on the accessibility of different types of assets to individuals; it values institutions, policies and organisations which shape individuals' livelihoods (Saab, 2009:4). The SLA also focuses on the different strategies that people choose in achieving their goals (Saab, 2009:4). According to De Silver (2013:4), the SLA further focuses on the initial causes of livelihood barriers and possible related strategic interventions. The SLA is guided by the following principles: it is people-centred, holistic, multi-level, dynamic, focused on equity, is responsive and participatory. It works with partnerships and is economical, institutional and social and also associated with environmental sustainability (Saab, 2009:3; De Silver, 2013:4).

The SLA was a relevant theoretical framework for this study as it focused on the challenges refugee women experience and on devising strategies that they can use to ensure sustainable livelihoods, which is core to this approach (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:7). Because the SLA is person-centred (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:8), it would facilitate empowerment of refugee women to find initiatives that would enable them to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods (Baumann, 2002:17). The SLA values participation, through which refugee women can further build their capacity, leading them to empowerment (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2013:11).

In this study the SLA enabled the researcher to connect with refugee women in their everyday experiences to explore their survival strategies and challenges in achieving sustainable livelihoods. In addition SLA created the framework for refugee women to utilise their capabilities to stand up for their socio-economic rights (Krantz, 2001:10).

1.3 RATIONALE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

As already indicated, the massive inflow of refugees into a country has negative implications that are related to economic, social, political and development factors for both the country of influx and for the refugees themselves (ESCWA, 2013:2). Research reveals that refugee women are the most at risk and constitute the majority of displaced persons in the world (Westendorp, 2001:1; Mench, 2008:5). Yet it seems there is still no sound solution in this regard since international assistance and policies have failed to improve the lives of refugee women (Mench, 2008:5). Their situation is worse when it comes to attaining sustainable livelihoods. Their vulnerability and marginalisation make it difficult to access education, employment, food security, health care services, adequate shelter, water and sanitation (Westendorp, 2001:2-3). Therefore, they remain surviving on the extreme margins of society (Grabska, 2005:81).

The researcher's interest in the topic stems from her passion for the empowerment of women in general, and for refugee women in particular. In addition, the researcher is a foreign national and hence understands some of the challenges that refugee women experience. Furthermore, the researcher's interest in the topic was influenced by her years of experience in the refugee sector, where she witnessed several refugee women struggling to attain sustainable livelihoods and the impact it had on them and in particular their ability to care for their children.

Against this background, the study sought to explore refugee women's livelihood strategies and the challenges that hinder them from attaining sustainable livelihoods. On a practical level, knowing the challenges based on research evidence would reveal what is needed to help refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods. It is envisaged by the researcher that the study could pave the way for adequate programmes to empower refugee women in order to improve their lives and enable them to attain sustainable livelihoods. Furthermore, it is envisaged that this study would assist NGOs who deliver services to refugee women to influence policy.

The guiding research question for the study was:

- What are the challenges that refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies?

The sub-questions that assisted the researcher in answering the research question were as follows:

- To what extent do refugee women have access to economic opportunities, education, adequate shelter, food security, water and sanitation and health care services?
- What strategies do refugee women use for survival?
- What resources and assets are available to refugee women to develop sustainable livelihood strategies?
- What strategies should be in place for refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods?

1.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The goals and the objectives of the study were as follows:

1.4.1 Goal

The goal of the study was to explore the challenges that refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies.

1.4.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To contextualise the situation and challenges of refugee women from a Sustainable Livelihoods Approach.
- To explore the extent to which access to education, employment, food security, health care services, adequate shelter, water and sanitation pose challenges for refugee women to attain sustainable livelihoods.
- To explore the strategies that refugee women use for survival.

- To explore resources and assets available to refugee women to develop sustainable livelihood strategies.
- To propose strategies for refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods.

1.5 Research methodology

The research methodology, including the research approach, type of research, research design, methodology, the measures that were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of data and the ethical considerations of the study will be presented in detail, in Chapter Three. Therefore the following discussion presents just a brief overview of the research methodology utilised for the study.

The study utilised a qualitative approach. The researcher sought to answer more “what” questions (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95), in particular what strategies refugee women use for survival and what their challenges are in achieving sustainable livelihoods. The research was explorative in nature and more specifically, an applied research study since it sought to encourage change in a situation that is troublesome (Neuman, 2000:23), namely refugee women’s challenges to attain sustainable livelihoods.

In alignment with the qualitative approach, a case study research design, more specifically, an instrumental case study, was utilised for the study (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:442). The population for this study was all the refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane who are service users of the NGO, Future Families. A non-probability sampling, in particular purposive sampling, was viewed appropriate for the study since the researcher wanted to use her own judgment to select a sample that represented attributes of the refugee women (Strydom, 2011:231; Rubin and Babbie, 2011:355).

The researcher utilised one-on-one interviews as a method of data collection, which was conducted according to a semi-structured interview schedule (Greeff, 2011:351). The thematic analysis model of Creswell (2009:185) was utilised to analyse the data.

1.6 Chapter outline of the research report

The research report will be divided into the following four chapters:

Chapter One consists of an introduction and general orientation of the study. It includes the definition of concepts, problem formulation, goals and objectives of the study and the research question. Furthermore, the chapter briefly indicated the theoretical framework of the study and also briefly presented the research methodology of the study.

Chapter Two comprises of the literature review. This chapter consists of a contextualisation of the situation and challenges of refugee women from a Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. The chapter focuses on the strategies that refugee women use for survival and sustainable livelihoods.

Chapter Three presents and discusses the empirical findings. The chapter includes a detailed discussion on the research methodology, including the research approach, research type, design, population and sampling method, data collection methods, data analysis and the pilot study. In addition, the ethical aspects relevant to the study are presented. Limitations of the study are indicated.

Chapter Four comprises of the key findings of the study, the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Refugee women experience excessive poverty, social instability, economic and financial vulnerability (Bangula 2011:12). Despite the fact that South Africa has introduced the Refugee Act 130 of 1998 as a policy that protects refugee's rights, many refugee women continue to struggle and encounter several restrictive legal regulations that exclude them from attaining basic human rights, such as food, shelter and education (Knowledge, 2013:24). Refugee women are also not able to secure decent employment (Women Refugee Commission, 2011:9), and are vulnerable to exploitation and violence because of lack of legal protection (Ayadurai, 2011:2) leaving them vulnerable to attain sustainable livelihoods.

As indicated in chapter 1, the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) was used as the theoretical framework for the study. Research reveals that refugee women encounter several challenges that hinder them from attaining livelihoods, let alone sustainable livelihoods (De Vriese, 2006:28). May, Brown, Cooper and Brill (2009:7) note that the SLA values the holistic picture of human beings, in particular their capabilities, skills, social networks, access to services and financial situations. The SLA encourages individuals to identify the available resources that they can utilise and underscores the importance of assets for people to attain a positive livelihood outcome (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:9).

This chapter starts with a presentation on the background of the SLA and its relevance as theoretical framework to the study. In the following section, the researcher critically analyses the challenges of refugee women in relation to policy and legislation in South Africa, as these challenges make it difficult for them to attain sustainable livelihood strategies. The next focus explores the available resources and/ or assets that are available for refugee women in South Africa. The following section discusses the strategies that help refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods. Finally, the chapter is summarised and conclusions drawn, from a

literature perspective, on the challenges that refugee women encounter in pursuit of a sustainable livelihood.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA), as the theoretical framework for the study. The SLA originated in the 1980s when it was influenced by the work of Robert Chambers (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:7). It was further developed in the 1990s after it was promoted by the Department for International Development (DFID) (De Haan, 2012:2). The SLA is viewed as an essential tool to understand, analyse and describe the aspects that have a negative effect on poor people's livelihoods (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:4).

Furthermore, the SLA is guided by principles that recognise poor people as role players in their development and encourages donors to be facilitators in the process to help people to identify the available resources (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:7). Hence, the SLA can be used as a guide to improve the lives of refugee women to attain sustainable livelihoods. According to Rakodi and Liloyd-Jones (2013:11), SLA values participation and partnerships which play an important role in building refugee women's capacity towards empowerment and sustainable development.

SLA is guided by the notion that assets are important for people to attain a positive livelihood outcome (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:9). Therefore the Approach can be linked to Sen's 'capability approach' (Grunfeld, 2007:4). Sen (1999:75) includes capabilities in sustainable livelihood which means "choosing a life one has reason to value and what a person is actually able to do". Capabilities are also viewed as the freedom of households or individuals to achieve various lifestyles and be able to attain their set objectives that will improve their quality of life (Sen, 1999:75). Hence, the approach provides a framework for refugee women to choose social and economic activities they believe are adequate to improve their quality of life and lead to sustainable livelihoods. The SLA therefore, emphasises the importance of linking social and economic development.

Serrat (2008:2) notes that the SLA helps to promote factors that increase livelihood opportunities. This is crucial to refugee women since they have limited livelihood opportunities and struggle to attain sustainable livelihoods. According to Njagi

(2005:12-13), SLA is utilised to reveal the impact of external factors on poor people and it is considered as a poverty reduction mechanism. This is significant for refugee women who reside in South Africa since they are affected by external factors underpinned by economic challenges, including unemployment, issues of xenophobia and a lack of adequate implementation of policies. This leaves many refugee women vulnerable and in poverty, and in need of poverty reduction strategies. Serrat (2008:2) points out that SLA relies on policies and legislation in order to have a positive impact on the lives of the poor. The next section will provide an overview of the policy and legislation framework pertaining to refugee women in South Africa.

2.3 POLICY AND LEGISLATION FRAMEWORK PERTAINING TO REFUGEE WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

Policy implementation that focuses on refugee women is important for them to have an improved self-reliant future that includes their hopes and expectations (Hopkins, 2014:2). A strong national legal framework that permits civil and socio-economic rights to refugees is vital to allow provision of social protection to refugee women (Makhema, 2009:39). Laws and policies can shape the way in which refugee women can support themselves (Women's Refugee Commission, 2009:16). Australia is one of the few countries that has a visa specifically for women at risk, and since 1989 it has managed to assist 13,000 women (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013:5). The particular visa was developed to recognise UNHCR's priority towards protecting refugee women and the visa caters for women with no access to formal education and who would have experienced trauma and torture (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013:5). The South African government does not provide the same priority to protect refugee women which leads to the current plight of refugee women in South Africa. Lucia (2011:36) argues that efficiency within the government can only be achieved if there is a national law that provides assistance and supports the rights of refugee women. Thus the South African government's efficiency can be recognised significantly if it manages to focus on humanitarian assistance which includes solving the challenges of refugee women by developing policies that meet their needs and protect their rights.

An adequate implementation of the South African Refugee Act 130 of 1998 is important, in improving the livelihoods of refugee women. The Refugee Act

guarantees refugees, basic civil, social and economic rights, which includes recognition of their refugee status, full legal protection, the right to identity documents, the right to seek employment and the right to primary education and basic health, as in the case of citizens of South Africa (De Klerk, 2009:14). The Bill of Rights enshrined in the South African Constitution, guarantees everyone residing in South Africa, unprecedented rights (Hlobo, 2004:41). Therefore the South African government is supposed to protect all refugee women, which includes supporting them to fully participate in improving their livelihoods.

South Africa is a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Therefore, the country is obligated to comply with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work and to provide “decent work” which is the organisation’s aim (Makhema, 2009:35). One of ILO’s fundamental rights is to eliminate discrimination in terms of employment and occupation among refugees, including refugee women (Makhema, 2009:35). Furthermore, refugee women are entitled to the right to work which was established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 23.1 and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 6 (United Nations Refugee Agency, 2011:5).

South Africa is also a signatory to international and regional instruments that protect refugee women, namely the 1951 United Nations (UN) Convention and the 1969 Organisation for African Union (OAU) Conventions (Makhema, 2009:18). The 1951 UN Convention, in its Article 24, emphasises the importance of social security in protecting refugees in South Africa (Makhema, 2009:19). Article 8 (1) (C) of the 1985 UN Declaration on the Human Rights of individuals of the country also stipulates that foreigners who are residing lawfully in a hosting country have the right to adequate health, social services, social security, education, rest and leisure, to help them participate economically (Makhema, 2009:19). The 1951 Refugee Convention, Article 16, expects the government to ensure that the country’s legal system is made available to refugees on an equal footing as nationals (Natukunda, 2008:26). Hence it is the government’s responsibility to ensure that refugee women receive adequate protection against any form of violence (Natukunda, 2008:26). Refugee women are in particular vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Research emphasises the need for government to implement laws that protect refugee women from sexual exploitation and trafficking (Committee for the Follow-up on Women's Issues, 2007:75). The Council of Europe (2014:2) recommends measures to prevent discrimination against refugee women and ways to support the victims through having a gender sensitive understanding, procedures and guidelines.

Although refugees in South Africa have a reasonable number of legal rights, there is a considerable gap between these rights and the actual life experienced by refugees (Co-ordinating Body of Refugee Communities Gauteng, [n.d.]:2). Hence, the law and justice system enforcement is still perceived as not favourable for refugee women, since they are still likely to be exposed to injustice and exploitation and have limited access to criminal justice (Knowledge, 2013:9). Therefore, there is need to improve the implementation of the current policies that pertain to refugee women in order to deal with the identified gaps that put the particular women at risk.

The need to improve the legal frameworks in order to promote local integration of refugee women is vital. Hlobo (2004:43) concurs that the available legal framework in South Africa does not ensure adequate room for refugees' integration since the Refugee Act 130 of 1998 is not clear regarding social services that pertain to refugees. Thus the legal framework is failing to provide an environment that is conducive to promoting local integration for many refugees. It is also contradictory, where the South African government's refugee policies are in support of local integration, that many refugee women encounter challenges of accommodation and end up homeless in South Africa, leaving them vulnerable to many forms of violence (People Opposing Women Abuse & AIDS Network, 2010:12). Hlobo (2004:90) found similar findings during a study in Johannesburg, supporting that refugees do not have an environment that is conducive to integration because they lack basic needs like food, accommodation, employment and education.

In addition, there are also several other gaps in the South African legislation that affect the legal protection of refugee women. This is supported by UNCHR (2014:1) indicating that although South African legislation for refugees is good, the Department of Home Affairs is failing to process Refugee Status Determination (RSD) causing high backlogs and human right challenges. Hence, it is difficult to

ensure the protection of refugee women since lack of adequate legislation poses many challenges for them to attain sustainable livelihoods.

However, despite the challenges in relation to lack of adequate legislation and the identified gaps in the various South African legal framework, the Women's Refugee Commission (2011:9) reports that current legislation policies supported Somali refugee women in South Africa to claim property and marital rights and not to lose their businesses and property after divorce which is unlike their Somali culture. Therefore, it is possible to implement policy and legislation to advance refugee women's position toward sustainable livelihoods.

2.4 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY REFUGEE WOMEN TO ATTAIN SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

The physical and psychological health of refugee women is affected by the lack of education, employment, food, and adequate water, sanitation, and health care services (Costa, 2007:1). In 2007, the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (2007:37) reported that the Department of Home Affairs has failed to provide identity documents for refugees, hence limiting their access to health services, education, housing, employment and other basic necessities. This limits refugees' right to identity, which is crucial for attaining sustainable livelihoods. This situation has not changed much. In 2015 the Department of Home Affairs acknowledged that providing refugee status and relevant documents is a challenging mandate (Department of Home Affairs, 2015:4).

Furthermore, when it comes to improving refugees' service delivery, there is a lack of adequate networking between different departments in South Africa, for instance, between the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Health and Department of Education (Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, 2007:37). In particular, the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Ms F. Chohan, acknowledged that there are major gaps in terms of funding, policy and the system which requires initiatives that strengthen partnerships with other departments; she further indicated that there are plans in place to try and reduce the challenges encountered by refugees (Department of Home Affairs, 2015:5). The undertaking by Home Affairs to attend to the above identified gaps is promising for improving the lives of refugee women in all spheres such as obtaining identity documents and

receiving refugee status will enable them to attain social protection and basic civil, social and economic rights. In the following sub-sections, specific key challenges that influence refugee women's livelihoods will be discussed.

2.4.1 Economic challenges

South African Statistics (2015:1) indicates that the level of unemployment recently rose to 26,4 per cent and that there are 36 million individuals in the country who are employable; yet only 15,5 million are currently employed while 5½ million are out of work, and the remaining 15 million are not economically active. Hence employment in South Africa continues to be a huge problem which limits the chances of refugee women obtaining formal employment. The current situation is the same as indicated in 2009 by Uwabakulikiza (2009:36) who reiterated that the level of unemployment in South Africa is reported to be very high and that it does not affect South Africans only but also refugee women that reside in the country.

The lack of employment encountered by refugee women affects their monthly income, to the extent that they struggle to meet their daily needs and as a result that exposes them to suffering and trauma in search of survival. Furthermore, refugee women are reported to be encountering complex challenges to attain work permits which allow them to work legally; this further adds to the challenges they encounter; namely getting decent work, overcoming language barriers, racism and xenophobia (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011:5). Research also highlights that even educated refugee women struggle to obtain employment (Kalitanyi & Visser, 2010:6). This is highlighted by Amisi (2006:11) who reveals that not all refugee women are uneducated, some managed to attain education in their countries of origin. Moreover, they struggle to get employment especially in the formal economy, due to lack of legal status and documentation (De Vriese, 2006:24, Addo, 2008:84). Their circumstances are complicated due to the fact that the current South African policies that are used to hire foreign nationals have been failing to protect them (Bagula, 2011:32). In addition, the Government puts strict penalties on employers who hire illegal foreigners which further increases the economic challenges faced by refugee women (Bagula, 2011:32).

Due to lack of job opportunities, many refugee women end up with huge debts (Jacobsen, 2012:5). The lack of finances further reduces their opportunities towards

sustainable livelihoods and development. Furthermore, their financial circumstances cause psychological effects such as low self-esteem (Uwabakulikiza, 2009:39). This leads to many refugee women experiencing a life full of isolation, and without hope for a better future (Uwabakulikiza, 2009:89). Unemployment also leads to lack of basic needs, lack of economic independence and lack of freedom. (Uwabakulikiza, 2009:91).

2.4.2 Gender-based violence, exploitation and sexual abuse

Gender-based violence, exploitation and sexual abuse affect many refugee women who end up living their daily lives in fear. Violation of the rights of non-citizens is increasing in most South African communities as these vulnerable foreigners continue not to receive relevant protection from the responsible authorities and law enforcement agencies (Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, 2007:9). Due to lack of adequate protection, many refugee women are at risk with regard to different forms of violation. De Vriese (2006:23) asserts that many refugees are vulnerable to risks of exploitation within the formal and informal sectors of the economy. This is supported by the Women's Refugee Commission (2008:3) that concurs that domestic work is easily accessible to refugee women which makes them vulnerable as many of them reported to be sexually abused, exploited and harassed while working in domestic services (Women's Refugee Commission, 2008:3). These incidents of violence in the refugee women's work places, clearly point out their vulnerability in their efforts to secure a livelihood.

Research indicates that many refugee women are scared of reporting incidences to the police because they are pressured by their families not to speak out in fear of losing their jobs, and hence they suffer in silence (Refugee Consortium of Kenya, 2008:19). They might even fear, that reporting can ruin or decrease their chances of getting refugee' status for themselves and their families (Refugee Council, 2009:8). Most incidents of violence are reported to happen on the street, and the perpetrators include the police, community and family members, and friends (Refugee Consortium of Kenya, 2008:25). Reporting of cases of violence is even more difficult for refugee women since it might involve individuals who are in authority, who are supposed to protect them.

Lack of adequate support and resources to protect refugee women from gender based violence, exploitation and sexual abuse emphasise how at risk they are of being exploited and abused. Refugee women, who are victims of violence are expected to pay for hospital assessments and treatment (People Opposing Women Abuse & AIDs Network, 2010:12). There are no adequate staff and support systems for victims; thus they have no option but to go through difficult reporting procedures; some of them having to travel long distances to report cases of violence (Women's Refugee Commission, 2008:5). It is further reported that, in South Africa, there are only a few safe houses that can accommodate vulnerable refugee women (Women's Refugee Commission, 2008:5). Therefore, without adequate support and resources, refugee women will continue to live in fear of violence, exploitation and sexual abuse.

2.4.3 Educational challenges

Refugee women who lack education and are illiterate are more vulnerable as they lack skills and the capacity to build a better future for themselves and their families. Keshavarzian (2005:28) concurs that refugee women's economic stability is highly influenced by illiteracy and lack of skills which contribute to poor living conditions (Keshavarzian, 2005:28). Hence improving refugee women's educational level can improve their production capacity (Kraatz, 2001:15), and hence opportunities towards income sustainability. Access to education is a huge challenge for refugees. Pittaway ([n.d.]:18) asserts that while education is viewed by refugee communities as key to their dream of gaining a better and secure future, access to education is difficult. Several refugee women are reported to be lacking institutional support from Southern African Development Community (SADC), African Union (AU) and United Nations (UN), hence failing to pursue their intended studies in South Africa (Mafukidze & Mbanda, 2009:10).

Many refugee women continue to struggle to gain access to tertiary education due to policy restrictions and financial instability. According to Global Education Magazine ([n.d.]:1), tertiary education in South Africa is not available for many refugees despite the international obligations that bind South Africa to assist them to improve their situations. Global Education Magazine ([n.d.]), further highlights that South Africa does not enforce any policy that promotes refugee tertiary education; thus refugees

are not able to benefit from the South African National Student Financial Aid Scheme which is a policy that was adopted to assist mainly marginalised and disadvantaged individuals to attain tertiary education. Therefore, despite many improvements towards refugee women's further education, lack of adequate tertiary education continues to hinder their achievement of sustainable livelihoods. Thus, alternative strategies are sought to limit educational impediments for refugee women.

On the other hand, many refugee women are unfortunately unable to continue furthering their studies due to having children and lacking adequate support from their families. United Nations Refugee Agency (2011:37) concurs that refugee women's access to further education is at times hindered by lack of day care centres and relatives to take care of the children of young mothers (United Nations Refugee Agency, 2011:37). Furthermore, most refugee women who reside in urban areas find it difficult to attend training opportunities because of lack of transport money to the training venues (Hopkins, 2014:9). Hence, refugee women's financial situation also limits their access to skills development. Pittaway ([n.d.]:19) summarises that lack of education limits work opportunities and prospects of advancing, developing and preparing oneself for the future.

The implications of a lack of education go beyond earning a livelihood, but also pose a huge obstacle to refugee women's social inclusion and opportunities to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods. However, as already indicated above, even educated refugees who have work experience, continue to struggle (Kalitanyi & Visser, 2010:6). It can therefore, be concluded that refugee women who are not educated are especially vulnerable and at risk in attaining sustainable livelihoods.

2.4.4 Insecure and inadequate shelter

Many refugee women struggle to find secure and adequate shelter for themselves and their immediate families. Circumstances that are beyond their control such as unfair treatment from landlords and unstable incomes, leave many of these refugee women without any options but to stay in accommodation that is unsafe and proper. Jacobsen (2004:5) indicates that refugees often pay higher rent compared to local South Africans. However, that makes their lives difficult since they are unemployed or earn low incomes. Furthermore, due to lack of permanent jobs, refugees are not able to get adequate housing which makes them vulnerable to exploitation such as

not being asked to sign accommodation contracts which mean that their shelter can be terminated any time, and also allow house owners to increase rentals as they please (Jacobsen, 2004:5). In addition, risk contracting diseases since they have to share accommodation with strangers (Jacobsen, 2004:5). Furthermore, sharing of a small space puts many refugees at risk of violence and crime; they are also sometimes forced to sleep according to shifts, affecting their physical and mental well-being (Consortium of Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, 2007:47). Moreover, they are forced to reside in insecure neighbourhoods where they are exposed to thieves and violence (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011:13). In such circumstances, refugee women's well-being, stability and security is affected and puts them at risk of violence and diseases.

In South Africa, many refugees are exposed to insecure and inadequate accommodation due to a lack of adequate housing policies to protect them. The Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (2007:8) highlights that refugees are not included in the national housing policies which makes them vulnerable to landlords who evict them without any notice, refuse to maintain their properties and thereby increasing their challenges to social and economic integration. Some shelters, meant for vulnerable women, are also reported to be refusing to accommodate refugee women even if they have documentation; this could be because of lack of clarity in the housing codes in differentiating between citizens and non-citizens (Makhema, 2009:37). Hence, lack of adequate shelter leaves many refugee women without any proof of residence which contributes to a lack of stability in their lives which they need to access adequate jobs.

2.4.5 Food security, water and sanitation challenges

Food, water and sanitation are basic human needs and human rights. That means many refugee women, such as in the case of many other citizens in South Africa, are deprived of their basic human rights. The Jesuit Refugee Service International Office (2014) indicates that there are several refugee women who are not certain if they will be able to provide food for themselves and their children. Yet the Social Relief of Distress Grant is there to assist anyone in desperate need of food support even without any identifying documents (CORMSA, 2009:104). UNHCR (2015:1) asserts that food is amongst the main needs of refugees in South Africa and hence the

organisation continues to assist refugees with food on a short-term basis until they manage to attain assistance from the government or other NGOs. However, despite this support, many refugee women continue to struggle without enough food for themselves and their families.

Doctors without borders (2010:1) observe that refugees who reside in abandoned buildings in Johannesburg do not have access to adequate food and basic water and sanitation. Apalata, Kibiribiri, Knight and Lutge (2007:18) report that refugees in South Africa find it difficult to access adequate water. The extent in which refugee women are struggling to access resources for their basic needs confirm their hardships toward obtaining sustainable livelihoods and access to services such as health care.

2.4.6 Health care services

Health care services are crucial for people's well-being and levels of production leading to sustainable livelihoods. However, research reveals that refugee women continue to be denied of their right to basic health services; this is despite the South African Constitution that is supposed to protect the rights of all individuals residing in the country (Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS), 2014).

Refugee women are encountering several challenges at many health care facilities which make their lives even more difficult. Refugees have been reported as not having access to emergency health care services in South Africa (Amisi, 2006:33). In addition to that, they are not treated well when they visit hospitals, leading to most of them not seeking any medical attention when they are sick unless if they manage to borrow money from friends and relatives to receive private medical attention (Amisi, 2006:33). Hence, the lack of adequate treatment and health care services puts many refugee women at risk and limits their capability of working, or even looking for a job.

In conclusion, the discussion above highlighted many challenges for refugee women that contribute to their hardships to make a living. They clearly need access to resources and assets to attain sustainable livelihoods which will be discussed next.

2.5 RESOURCES AND ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR REFUGEE WOMEN

According to Njagi (2005:21), the SLA perceives the poor as being vulnerable due to lack of assets which the author defines as resources that the poor can use to create livelihood strategies. Assets are crucial for attaining sustainable livelihoods. The following discussion focuses on assets which are divided into five categories, namely human assets, social assets, physical assets, financial assets and public assets (May, et al., 2009:12). Human assets emphasise the importance of labour, health and education; natural assets includes water and sanitation; physical assets capture shelter and food and financial assets are analysed in terms of economic opportunities. These assets will be discussed below in relation to refugee women.

2.5.1 Human assets

Human assets are important as they concentrate on what human beings need in order to attain sustainable development. According to Odero (2003:2), human assets focus particularly on people as the most important subjects and objects of development. For Serrat (2008:2), human assets consist of health, nutrition, education, knowledge and skills, capacity to work, and capacity to adapt. Human assets are important to help refugee women work and be able to meet their needs and change their lives. This is supported by Pradipta, Tapati and Subhrangsu (2015:1) who assert that human assets help individuals to participate in different livelihood activities and help them to achieve their set objectives. The authors further state that change in human assets in a family is determined by the presence of a male head of household, average family size, literacy rate and health (Pradipta, et al., 2015:2). However, these authors' referring to a male head only, emphasise the gender discrimination that women are exposed to. Female heads of households are just as able to change circumstances in their families and attain adequate human assets if they are given the opportunity, resources and support to do so.

Hopkins (2014:11) states that refugee women are discouraged to start businesses due to their lack of knowledge on who qualifies for micro-credit. Their business opportunities could be also limited by their illiteracy which hinders them from writing adequate business proposals and thereby limiting their business opportunities (Refugee Consortium of Kenya, 2008:38).

In addition to the above challenges, language barriers make it difficult for refugee women to attain human assets which reduce their ability to adapt (Benhadya, 2010:37). Benhadya (2010:37) states that language barriers were identified as the most significant settlement issue facing refugees. Many refugee women struggle to communicate in English resulting in challenges to access available social services and meeting basic needs. United Nations Refugee Agency (2011:36) points out that language barriers hinder refugee women from accessing health care services and adequate treatment. Benhadya (2010:37) highlights that despite the availability of English lessons to refugee women, however, only some women have access to such lessons and hence the issue of communication continues to be a challenge.

2.5.2 Social assets

Social assets are essential for individuals to attain sustainable livelihoods since they consist of social resources that can be utilised to support the refugee women. According to Serrat (2008:2), “Social assets consist of relations of trust, mutual understanding and support, formal and informal groups, shared values and behaviours, collective representation, mechanisms for participation in decision making, leadership, common rules and sanctions networks and connections which involves neighbourhoods and kinships” (Serrat, 2008:2). Robinson, Schumid and Siles (2002:2) views social assets as consisting of friends, family and community members who share information, norms, culture, networks and having a caring, organised and trusting relationship. Many refugee women encounter many challenges as they lack essential networks, people they trust and share resources with; thus making their lives difficult. Amisi (2006:17) points out that without family support, refugee women struggle to get accommodation when they arrive in South Africa for the first time, and also to integrate into society.

The issue of reintegration is compounded by the lack of trust that refugee women have, towards the local residents because of their past experiences of robberies, hatred, verbal and physical aggression (Amisi, 2006:42). Thus a lack of trust among refugee women makes it difficult for them to use the available social assets. Therefore, refugee women so desperately need the support of social services rendered by NGOs and organisations to help them cope with the different social and livelihood challenges they encounter. Some of these NGOs and organisations

include the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Catholic Women's League Family Life Centre, Lawyers for Human Rights, and Future Families. NGOs can also play an important role in assisting refugee women to gain trust within and among themselves, and to develop good relationships with the local community and service providers in order to promote adequate reintegration and generate support to improve their lives.

Social assets also consist of culture which is important, in the case of this study, for refugee women to belong, to be recognised and respected. SLA views culture as important because it influences the interaction between human beings and has a great impact on reducing poverty as it encourages individual skills and knowledge transformation (Petersen & Pedersen, 2010:15). Therefore, culture can impact on the way refugee women relate to others in their communities, thereby influencing their chances of attaining social assets, and in turn, limiting their economic progress.

Social assets are also influenced by language as inadequate communication with locals impacts on their social integration. Research (Jacobsen, 2012:5) also reveals that it limits the chances of attaining employment. The Maytree Foundation in Women's Economic Council (2011:10) points out the strong link between language skills and financial security. In conclusion, refugee women have a higher chance of increasing their access to employment opportunities, if they are well conversant with English and other local languages.

2.5.3 Financial assets

Financial assets are vital for refugee women to meet their needs and make progress in life. Financial assets refer to aspects that support livelihoods such as cash flow, investments and savings (Njagi, 2005:22). These particular assets are lacking among most refugee women; that is why they encounter several economic challenges that cause instability in their lives. In addition, financial assets are central to the functioning of the economy since it is the medium of exchange and thus vital when it comes to successfully utilising all the other forms of capital (Odero, 2003:2). Therefore, lack of financial assets among refugee women affects all the other spheres of their lives. The SLA encourages a shift from traditional approaches to poverty reduction which includes employment schemes and income generating activities, to new approaches that support poor people's financial services in order to

assist them to improve their livelihoods (Kadozo, 2009:69). Thus, the SLA encourages refugee women to improve their financial situations by attaining the necessary financial assets that can bring about sustainable livelihoods.

Employment amongst refugee women is vital in order to attain the needed financial assets which in turn, also promote their integration into the labour market. The SLA emphasises that economic benefits such as income, are vital for survival (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2013:11). However, financial assets among refugee women are limited due to high levels of unemployment, which contribute to their low self-esteem (Bloch, 2004:1), and impact on their livelihoods (see 2.4.1).

2.5.4 Physical assets

Physical assets are important to bring about financial stability among refugee women. As mentioned in 2.4.4 and 2.4.5 refugee women continue to struggle with getting secure accommodation, water and sanitation. This affects their opportunities of getting employment as they have to move regularly. Pradipta, et al. (2015:1) indicate that physical assets consist of aspects that support livelihoods; including basic infrastructure and 'producer goods' such as adequate water supply and sanitation, secure shelter and access to information. According to World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (2007:9), physical assets like roads, bridges, day care centres and school developments, improve access to other resources, save time, reduce changing vulnerability and improve people's well-being. WWF (2007:9) highlight that physical assets give women the opportunity to participate in socio-political and community managing roles with an effect of creating household and institutional income, protecting household and institutional property and promoting community mobilisation (WWF, 2007:9).

Natural causes and poor government infrastructure can also cause challenges for refugee women to attain adequate physical assets. Benedict, Bharwani, de la Rosa, Krittasudthacheewa and Martin (2009:8) indicate that, "flooding, drought, limited access of water, water-borne diseases or the quality of water are ways in which water resources may constrain or impact upon people's livelihood options and assets causing water-related poverty". A lack of clean water puts refugee women at higher risk given their living conditions and access to health facilities.

2.5.5 Natural assets

Natural assets are imperative for sustainable development. According to State of the Union Organisation (SOTU-Africa) (2013:35), the South African government approved a national action plan and strategy for sustainable development in 2011. As an integral part of the national and local development planning, Article 14 of the strategy is meant to promote the conservation of the environment and natural resources (SOTU-Africa, 2011:35). Article 6 promotes the development of adequate land use plans, national policies and promotes the conservation of soil and development (SOTU-Africa, 2011:36). In addition, SOTU-Africa further highlights that article 7 provides measures to prevent water pollution and guidance on water management. Thus adequate measures to guide the use of water, soil and the prevention of water pollution are essential for sustainable development. It is the view of Benedict, et al. (2009:9) that natural assets may include services that can be used to support livelihood outcomes and natural resource stocks.

Maphosa (2012:2) argues that lack of natural resources can trigger violent conflict and tension. Xenophobic violence in South Africa is one example that has been identified as an effect of violence caused by scarce natural resources which led to the undermining of sustainable development (Maphosa, 2012:7).

In summary, human, social, physical, financial and natural assets play an important role in sustainable development. These assets are interrelated and hence highly important to facilitate sustainable livelihoods for refugee women.

2.6 STRATEGIES FOR REFUGEE WOMEN TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Strategies to assist refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods, which will next be discussed, include, social protection, opportunities for capacity building, availability of a labour market, local integration and coping strategies (cf. Makhema, 2009; Brees, 2008; Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2008; Hlobo, 2004; Asasina, 2012; Amisi & Ballard, 2005; Women's Refugee Commission, 2008:11; De Klerk, 2009).

2.6.1 Social protection

The individual's human rights are addressed by social protection policies (Deacon, Oliver & Beremauro, 2015:11). The level of social protection that is provided to refugee women depends on the availability of social protection in a country (Makhema, 2009:6). Social Protection is defined by Makhema (2009:4) as, "All interventions from public, private and voluntary organizations and informal networks to support communities, households and individuals in their efforts to prevent, manage and overcome risks and vulnerabilities and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized".

As discussed (see 2.4.1), many refugee women in South Africa encounter economic challenges, with limited social protection. The Department of International Relations and Co-operation of the RSA and UN Systems in South Africa (2013:26) assert that there is no adequate social protection for the disadvantaged and that it should be increased to ensure efficiency and effective protection. Deacon et. al (2015:23) highlight that it is difficult for the government to provide assistance due to the rise of migrant women who are in search of employment and a better life. The Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Ms Fatima Chohan reported that many South African citizens have been lacking adequate basic health, education and housing for centuries and that adding huge numbers of refugee women to such figures, has put a magnitude of strain on local municipalities, especially in Gauteng Province (Department of Home Affairs, 2014).

Makhema (2009:6) questions whether social protection is based on protecting peoples' rights to health, happiness, life and dignity, or whether it is based on paying taxes and being able to vote, which automatically sidelines all non-citizens (Makhema, 2009:6). However, the South African Constitution, specifically in section 27(1)(c), states that every human being has a right to social security, whether the person is a citizen or non-citizen, and the right to appropriate social assistance if they are not able to provide for themselves and their dependants (Deacon et al., 2015:24). Hence, all refugee women are entitled to social protection to help them prevent and manage any risks and vulnerabilities that they might encounter in enhancing their lives.

Thus, it is vital for the government to put mechanisms in place to ensure that all refugee women receive adequate social protection. According to Makhema (2009:28), local governments such as Johannesburg and Cape Town municipalities have already started to implement their own programmes and measures to provide adequate social protection to refugees. Cape Town municipality drafted its own refugee policy, adopted on 29 May 2013, which is an events agreement with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in support of the city's provision of facilities and services to refugees who reside in Cape Town (Cape Town Municipality, 2013:4). The Johannesburg municipality created a help desk to assist foreigners, including refugee women, with advice concerning the attainment and determination of refugee status, basic needs, reference letters to employers, foreign consulate, and embassy details (Johannesburg Municipality, 2015:1). These provinces are providing the lead in putting adequate policies and measures in place for refugee women to receive adequate social protection in South Africa.

2.6.2 Opportunities for capacity building

Capacity building is essential when it comes to improving human capital of which vocational training is very relevant in this study as it provides refugees with educational goals and promotes community cohesion (Brees, 2008:6). It has been pointed out earlier in this chapter (see 2.4.3) that many refugee women lack adequate and relevant skills to help them to compete in the hosting country (Addo, 2008:84), and hence to be integrated into the labour market. As women continue to be among the most vulnerable and marginalised, the chances of refugee women lacking opportunities of capacity building are likely to continue and thus affect their attainment of adequate employment and financial opportunities.

Capacity building in terms of providing life skills to reduce risks of violence within communities is also essential for refugee women to help them participate fully within the labour market. The Women's Refugee Commission (2011:13) highlights the importance of linking livelihood projects and protection. In support the Food and Agriculture Organisation (2007:19) notes that, gender-based violence can affect the physical, psychological and social well-being of refugee women thereby affecting their livelihood production. Capacity building will therefore help refugee women to

protect themselves and also increase their chances of participating in the market in attaining sustainable livelihoods.

It is also essential for refugee women to know their rights within the hosting country because being informed can guide them towards attaining access to economic and social opportunities. The High Commissioner for Canada (2015) funded the Refugee Right Centre in Eastern Cape to provide training sessions on the rights and responsibilities of refugees and the government's obligation in terms of the International Legislations and Refugees and Immigration Act. This is one example of an information session that was provided to refugees to help create a just and right-based environment for them.

2.6.3 Accessibility of a labour market

Accessibility of a labour market is vital as it involves economic opportunities that are key to improving the life of refugee women. Economic opportunities improve women's chances of having more life options, ability to participate in decision making, increase their equity and to be more protected against gender based violence (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2008:1). As already discussed (see 2.4.1), access to employment for many refugee women remains very limited, with high chances of being exploited and discriminated (Lucia, 2011:34).

The South African labour market is reported to be highly characterised of marginalised groups. In addition it can be further highlighted that the minority that manage to access employment, find themselves in low paying jobs that make it difficult for the refugee women to improve their circumstances. South Africa comprises of a segmented labour market (International Relations and Co-operation of the Republic of South Africa and UN System in South Africa, 2013:12). Silubonde (2014:20) confirms the labour market segmented theory and highlights that it is divided into two main sectors which are the primary and secondary. The primary sector consist of jobs that have high wages, good working conditions, opportunities of upward mobility, job stability and security (Silubonde, 2014:20). The secondary sector consists of low wages, poor working conditions, few opportunities of upward mobility, high labour turnover and little job security (Silubonde, 2014:20).

Silubonde (2014:20) argues that women and other vulnerable groups that include migrants, are most likely to get jobs in the secondary sector because of discrimination, education, skills and experience. Fredman (2011:11) asserts that employers now prefer employing semi-skilled employees who work on part time basis since they can pay them low wages, do not have to provide social protection, and can thus exploit them because they have fewer opportunities to educate and train themselves. Employers now also prefer to cut labour costs, and avoid regulations required for employment thus they end up employing many migrant women in this sector to avoid labour regulations (Fredman, 2011:11). Hence access to the labour market continues to be a challenge that can be resolved by increasing adequate support in terms of policies and legislation for refugee women.

2.6.4 Local integration

Local integration can be a solution to the challenges encountered by refugee women. Asasira (2012:9) states that local integration among refugees improves their chances of establishing sustainable livelihoods. However, for successful integration, NGOs and the government should be fully involved in all segments of the refugee women's lives. Local integration is described as a process that involves three dimensions namely economic, legal and social cultural (University of Cape Town Refugee Right Unit, 2011:26). It also links to various other aspects for instance, the government creating a conducive environment which entails availability of markets, income generating activities, opportunities of employment and study, citizenship, access to health services, adaptation to the local languages, culture and promoting refugee women's rights (Hlobo, 2004:35; 88). The University of Cape Town Refugee Right Unit (2011:26) alludes to the importance of legal aspects in integrating refugees, including rights and entitlement pertaining to access to education, freedom of movement, labour opportunities, health provisions, and identity documents.

However, local integration can be affected by social challenges that are encountered by refugee women. These challenges include an increase in the crime rate which is reported to be a factor that causes clashes and tension between refugees and locals (Fielden, 2008:5). Lack of access to documentation has also been reported (see 2.4 and 2.6.1) as a hindrance to local integration (Uwabakulikiza, 2009:40). As discussed before the particular challenge might be resolved by increasing social

protection for refugee women, to ensure efficiency and effective protection. Moreover, major gaps in the Department of Home Affairs, in terms of funding, policy and the system should be reduced to help change the current challenges of refugees.

In summary, the success of local integration of refugee women depends on strategies that will facilitate legal, economic and social support. While these are important to develop, refugee women should be assisted with mechanisms to cope with the challenges that they face on a day-to-day basis.

2.6.5 Coping strategies

Coping strategies comprise of support from family and friends, services from local NGOs and other stakeholders, to help refugee women meet their needs which is vital in order to assist them to improve their circumstances. According to De Klerk (2009:17), refugee women use social networks made up of friends, relatives, members of the same religion, and ethnic groups to create relationships that help them to meet their needs and build or rebuild their livelihoods. Through building of relationships and networks, refugee women can be assisted with information about jobs and available resources. Lucia (2011:34) emphasises social capital as essential for refugee women to attain sustainable livelihoods which can be increased by residing in urban areas and having access to community based organisations. Community based organisations can further assist with material and emotional support (see 2.5.5). Social capital increases trust within refugee women and improves their working relationship which will comprise of reciprocity (Women's Refugee Commission, 2008:11). Refugee women can also make use of social networks that have a strong link to social capital and can be necessary for promoting a sense of security and safety among them. In addition, networks are regarded as support mechanisms to refugee communities, providing members with knowledge, monetary assistance and accommodation for new comers and encouragement to help each other overcome difficult challenges within the hosting country (Amisi & Ballard, 2005:11). Hence, social networks can make the life of refugee women a lot easier to manage.

Referring refugee women to relevant stakeholders that can provide adequate assistance can also help to lessen their burdens. This is highlighted by the Women's

Refugee Commission (2008:11) which concurs that a strong and adequate referral system by UNHCR and its partners and donors should be created and can also be used as a coping mechanism by refugees, for instance linking refugee women with employment opportunities through different agencies. Refugee women can be involved in refugee community groups like Amnesty Centre of Peace, which is in Soweto, Johannesburg, helping refugee women to cope with crime and xenophobia (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011:10). Groups like these, have already established networks and thus can be an advantage when it comes to promoting peace (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011:10). Being involved in such community groups can help refugee women to attain adequate support, basic needs, create beneficial relationships, increase their ability to access jobs, information and share resources (see 2.5.2).

In summary, social networks, social capital, referral to existing community groups and relevant stakeholders, and access to community based organisations are essential coping mechanisms for refugee women to improve their livelihoods in South Africa.

2.7 Summary

Refugee women experience excessive poverty, social instability, economic and financial vulnerability. They encounter gender based violence, exploitation and sexual abuse which lead them to live a life of fear. Despite South Africa being a signatory to international and regional treaties and having instruments and policies and legislation in place to protect refugees, refugee women encounter various challenges. Economic challenges impact on financial stability and food security. Their economic stability is further influenced by educational challenges. Insecure and inadequate shelter put refugee women at risk by affecting their well-being, health and security. Other challenges that confirm refugee women's hardships towards achieving sustainable livelihoods, are water and sanitation and access to health care services.

The relevance of the SLA as the theoretical framework for the study was explained by means of the guiding principles that recognise poor people as role players in their development. SLA values principles of participation and partnerships which play an important role in building refugee women's capacity towards empowerment and

sustainable development. SLA also promotes factors that increase livelihood opportunities such as assets that are viewed as important for people to attain a positive livelihood outcome and policies and legislation in order to have a positive impact on the lives of the poor

Resources and assets that are relevant for refugee women to attain sustainable livelihoods, include human assets, social assets, financial assets, physical assets, and natural assets. Human assets comprise of health, nutrition, education, knowledge and skills. Social assets consist of social resources that can be utilised to support refugee women. Financial assets constitute aspects that support livelihoods like savings and cash flows. Physical assets comprise of secure accommodation, water and sanitation. Natural assets are made up of soil, water and land.

Strategies for refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods include social protection, opportunities for capacity building, access to labour markets, local integration, and coping strategies. The next chapter will present the research methodology and the research findings of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, EMPIRICAL STUDY AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the empirical study that was undertaken to explore the challenges of refugee women to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies. The research was guided by the following research question:

- What are the challenges that refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies?

The sub-questions that assisted the researcher in answering the research question were as follows:

- To what extent do refugee women have access to economic opportunities, education, adequate shelter, food security, water and sanitation and health care services?
- What strategies do refugee women use for survival?
- What resources and assets are available to refugee women to develop sustainable livelihood strategies?
- What strategies should be in place for refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods?

This chapter discusses the research approach, type of research, the research design, methodology, the pilot study and the ethical aspects related to the study and the empirical research findings of the study. The empirical study focused on refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane who are service users of the NGO, Future Families.

3.2 Research approach

The researcher utilised the qualitative research approach since she intended to explore and understand, from the viewpoint of the participants (refugee women in Sunnyside), how they could shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies (Babbie, 2011:414). The researcher aimed at answering several “what” questions (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95), in particular what strategies refugee women use for survival and what their challenges are in achieving sustainable livelihoods.

The flexibility of the qualitative research approach and its unstructured nature enabled the researcher to attain the required information on their lived experiences in an in-depth manner (Kumar, 2005:12; Creswell, 2007:37-39).

3.3 Type of research

The exploratory and applied research study addressed a problem in practice (Neuman, 2000:23). The researcher aimed at building a knowledge base on what is required for refugee women to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods (Buscher, 2013:2). This included adding value to the social work profession, in the sense of minimising and addressing immediate challenges encountered by practitioners in the refugee sector (Babbie, 2011:362). The envisaged outcome was to promote social work practice and research, that could guide and influence refugee policies (Babbie, 2011:362).

3.4 Research design

In line with a qualitative approach, a case study research design, more specifically, an instrumental case study, was utilised for the study (Fouché & Schurink, 2011:321). An instrumental case study was viewed relevant since it sought to explore in-depth, the challenges encountered by refugee women in shifting from survival to sustainable livelihoods (Fouché & Schurink, 2011:321). An instrumental case study involves an exploration of a single case with the purpose of gaining new knowledge which may be used to influence policies (Fouché & Schurink, 2011:321). This design was found to be appropriate since refugee women have been experiencing survivalist strategies for decades, which is now a persistent phenomenon that needs an in-depth exploration that could be achieved by a qualitative research design (Babbie, 2011:67).

3.5 Research methodology

This section will highlight the study's research methodology, including the study population, sampling and data collection methods, data analysis and trustworthiness of the study.

3.5.1 Study population and sampling method

The population for this study was all the refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane who are clients of Future Families. Since 1 January 2014, Future Families has been assisting 403 refugee women in Pretoria and approximately 100 refugee women in Sunnyside (Ngubeni, 2014). The researcher requested social workers, auxiliary social workers, team leaders and child care workers from Future Families who work with refugee women, to identify prospective participants from their database who met the criteria below. They also assisted with calling the refugee women and informing them in time, that the researcher would contact them to ask whether they wanted to participate in the study. Non-probability sampling, in particular purposive sampling, was appropriate for the study where the researcher pre-determined the criteria she utilised to select a sample that represented attributes of the refugee women (Strydom, 2011:231; Rubin and Babbie, 2011:355). The researcher used the following sampling criteria to select 23 refugee women who were willing to participate in the study.

The participant was expected to be a refugee woman:

- Who had a legal refugee status;
- That had been residing in Sunnyside for at least six months;
- Who understood and was able to speak English; and
- Was involved in activities and initiatives to ensure a better living for herself and her family. This included social services and own initiatives such as self-employment, income generating projects, and trading.

3.5.2 Data collection method

The researcher utilised one-on-one interviews to collect data and the interviews were guided by a semi-structured interview schedule (Greeff, 2011:351). This data collection method enabled her to attain in-depth information about the challenges that refugee women that reside in Sunnyside Tshwane experience in shifting from survival to sustainable livelihoods. The semi-structured interview schedule (see Annexure A) included a set of questions which guided the researcher to attain the data relevant to the research objectives (Greeff, 2011:351). The collection of data using a semi-structured interview schedule was advantageous in that it allowed

flexibility and presented an opportunity to the researcher to make follow-ups on collected data as necessary (Greeff, 2011:351).

The flexibility allowed the researcher to explain important aspects that helped to create a conducive environment for the interviews for instance, issues of confidentiality, debriefing of participants and obtaining informed consent (see section 3.5). Furthermore, the researcher was also able to probe for clarity during the particular interviews. A random selection according to the availability of the participants was used to choose the particular participants that were involved in follow-ups on the collected data.

Although semi-structured one-on-one interviews are often regarded as lacking “objective data”, the researcher managed to attain a positive aspect in that the interviews were discursive and focused which helped to determine the ‘individual participant’s opinions, perceptions, facts and forecasts’ (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:348). In addition, the researcher continued to interview women until saturation of data was obtained (Greeff, 2011:360). Moreover, the researcher decided to do the interviews herself using her knowledge and technical interviewing skills gained in her social work practice. This made it easier for her to plan adequately in order to call participants in advance and prepare them for the interviews.

A disadvantage of one-on-one interviews is that they take a lot of time due to the preparations and the actual interviewing process, which was scheduled for approximately 60 minutes for each interview. However, the allocated time was adequate to obtain sufficient data needed to answer the research questions of the study. The interviews were conducted at the offices of Future Families. A private office was utilised to ensure confidentiality during the interview process. However, the office was located close to the social workers’s offices which made it difficult to avoid disturbances like noise and movements.

3.5.3 Data analysis

The researcher made systematic plans for recording and analysing data (Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:404). Data analysis was done in and out off the field (Schurink, et al., 2011:399). During the interview, the researcher would use the interview schedule as a guide to check whether all the questions were answered.

With the permission of the participants, the researcher used a tape recorder during the data collection process to avoid losing any important data (Schurink et al., 2011:404). In addition, the researcher also made field notes during the interviews. The notes assisted the researcher with the transcriptions after a particular day of interviewing which helped her to evaluate if she was capturing the information adequately. This enabled the researcher to pick up any aspects that required follow ups for further clarity.

The data analysis was done according to Creswell's model of thematic analysis since it sought to identify themes, sub-themes and categories that would emerge from the data (Creswell, 2009:185). In line with this model, the researcher analysed data using the following stages:

Organising and preparing data for analysis: In this stage the researcher transcribed all the one-on-one interviews. After data collection, field notes were typed, scanned, sorted and arranged into different computer files (Creswell, 2009:185).

Reading through all the data: The researcher read through all the collected data in order to get a general sense and overall meaning of the collected information. The researcher also read the data several times in its entirety in order to get the sense of the interviews as a whole (Schurink et al., 2011:399).

Coding the data: The researcher used coding to organise the collected data. She put sentences and paragraphs into categories and labelled them into topics and themes (Schurink et al., 2011:411). A colour coding scheme was utilised, whereby the researcher highlighted similar information and themes using the same colour (Creswell, 2009:188). The researcher ensured that codes which are descriptive and characteristic of the data needed, which entailed in-depth information about the challenges that refugee women that reside in Sunnyside Tshwane experience in shifting from survival to sustainable livelihoods, were represented (Schurink et al., 2011:410). The constant comparison method was used to develop a comprehensive coding scheme (Schurink et al., 2011:410). This involved the researcher reading all the transcripts numerous times while comparing them with the interview schedule to make sure that all the questions were answered through the captured data. The researcher set parameters to each code for the purpose of screening the data and

determining which data would be relevant to the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:493). This was done by using the goal of the research, the research objectives, and research questions, to help the researcher to select the relevant information that would form quality research findings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:493).

Generation of themes and sub-themes: Upon completion of the coding process, themes and sub-themes were noted which appeared and reappeared (Creswell, 2009:189). Similar themes and sub-themes were grouped together. In addition, the researcher highlighted participants' multiple perspectives given during the semi-structured interviews, and quotations were included in the research findings (Creswell, 2009:189).

Interpretation of data: As a final step, the researcher compared the research findings with the literature. Once the meaning of data had been derived from the findings (Creswell, 2009:189), the research findings were presented in the form of this research report.

3.5.3.1 Trustworthiness of data

In qualitative studies, trustworthiness of research can be ensured when the findings of the research reveal closely what is meant by participants (Lincoln & Guba, (1985) as quoted by Lietz, Langer & Furman, 2006:4). Trustworthiness is revealed through reflexivity, the use of an audit trail (Lietz, et al., 2006:7), credibility, dependability, and conformability of data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:276) which will be discussed next.

- **Reflexivity**

The researcher ensured that she was mindful of her position as a foreign national, in terms of her identity, beliefs and values in identifying with the participants from different nationalities (Lietz et al., 2006:7). This assisted her not to interfere with participants revealing the actual meaning, of their experiences and also to understand the challenges encountered by them from their own perspectives (Lietz et al., 2006:8). Reflexivity entails asking participants many questions from their perspective and experiences which was part of the method that the researcher utilised for the data collection (Lietz et al., 2006:9).

- **The use of an audit trail**

According to Lietz et al. (2006:9) an audit trail is essential in qualitative research since it promotes transparency and trustworthiness during the study. Therefore, the researcher kept a diary to document an audit trail by providing a clear description of all the steps taken while doing the research study (Lietz et al., 2006:9).

- **Credibility**

The researcher ensured data credibility by checking for data accuracy (Creswell, 2009:190). According to Schurink et al. (2011:419) credibility is vital as it reveals that an inquiry was held in such a manner that the participants were identified and described accurately. The researcher ensured credibility by choosing an adequate representation of the needed population of refugee women, by having clear and objective selection criteria of how to choose the 23 refugee women who participated in the research study (Schurink et al., 2011:419). Furthermore, the one-on-one interviews were guided by a semi-structured interview schedule, which was in the form of a prolonged engagement between the researcher and the participants in accordance with the specific objectives of the study (Schurink, 2011:420). Moreover, in order to increase data credibility, the researcher acquainted herself with the gender, culture, history and socio-economic origin of the refugee women and debriefing of participants was provided to promote honesty (Creswell, 2009:192).

The researcher managed to do follow up interviews with three participants to verify the information they had provided during the data collection process. The participants were randomly selected according to their availability. By according them adequate time to clarify whether their views had been accurately understood, the researcher recognised the participants as the experts on the research topic (Greeff, 2011:351).

- **Dependability**

The researcher ensured dependability of data by ensuring that the research process was well documented, audited and logically executed and presented (Schurink et al., 2011:420) as reflected in this research report. The researcher also ensured dependability of data by maintaining consistency in her approach, which was done through recording all the steps of the instrumental case study in such a way that

other researchers would be able to use the gathered information for their own studies (Creswell, 2009:190). Furthermore, the researcher checked all her transcripts to make sure that they do not have any obvious mistakes resulting from transcription. The researcher ensured that when coding, she constantly compared her data with the interview schedule so that all codes had relevant definitions related to the study's questions (Schurink et al., 2011:411). The researcher requested one of her social work colleagues who has two years' experience as a junior researcher, ten years' experience as a lecturer and seven years' experience as a social worker to act as an independent coder to check the coding and analysis (Creswell, 2009:191). The independent coder increased the trustworthiness of the collected data (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:448).

- **Conformability**

The researcher ensured data conformity by maintaining objectivity throughout the research process (Schurink et al., 2011:421). She ensured that all the collected data was recorded accurately and therefore a true reflection of what the participants voiced, this helped to reduce ambiguity and promote objectivity (Schurink et al., 2011:421). The researcher also ensured that all the procedures in the study were well documented in the research findings to enable other researchers to use the results and apply the findings to other settings (Schurink et al., 2011:421).

3.5.4 Pilot Study

The pilot study enabled the researcher to get a feel of what the real study would be like throughout the research process (Fouché & Delpont, 2011:73-75). The pilot study helped the researcher to come to grips with some of the practical aspects of making contact with the refugee women, conducting the interviews and becoming alert to her own interviewing skills (Greeff, 2011:350). The researcher used the sampling criteria to select two refugee women registered with Future Families. The interview schedule was tested to determine whether it would generate the required data for the study (Fouché & Delpont, 2011:75). The pilot study revealed that the research procedure and data collection instruments were clear and the study worthy of being carried out. The two refugee women gave informed consent and participated in the main study since there were no changes required to any research procedures and the data collection instrument (Strydom, 2011:241).

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To attain a research study of high quality, the researcher followed adequate procedures and ethical considerations throughout the research study (Babbie, 2011:478). The study was ethically cleared by the University of Pretoria (see Annexure C). In this particular study, the researcher paid attention to the following ethical considerations.

3.6.1 Avoidance of harm

The researcher protected participants by not exposing them to any form of harm, be it emotional or physical. The researcher tried by all means to eliminate all personal information that could lead to personal harassment or embarrassment to participants (Strydom, 2011:115). Thus, the researcher was extra careful since she interviewed the refugee women about their survival strategies and challenges they encounter to attain sustainable livelihoods which could potentially be emotionally harmful to them. The researcher also provided debriefing to all the participants after every interview. A few participants were referred for counselling and psycho-social support to a social worker of Future Families.

3.6.2 Informed consent

The researcher gave participants information on the goal and objectives of the research, the procedures which were followed during the research, the expected duration of the participants' involvement, and their roles to enable them to decide voluntarily whether to participate in the study or not. This was adequately discussed before they agreed to participate in the study so that participants got a full understanding of the possible risks involved (Babbie, 2005:64). Furthermore, this would help participants to understand what the research was all about so that they could give well-informed consent (Babbie, 2005:64). A written informed consent form was provided to every participant to sign (see Annexure D), indicating that the study is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study anytime if they so wished without any consequences (Strydom, 2011:117). Permission to approach service users as research participants was obtained from Future Families (see Annexure B).

3.6.3 Violation of Privacy/ Anonymity/ Confidentiality

The researcher strived to ensure the privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of participants by protecting their identity (Barbie, 2011:482). The researcher ensured that the refugee women's individual names were not directly associated with the information obtained from them individually (Neuman, 2000:139). All tapes, transcriptions, analysed data, and informed consent forms will be safely stored at the University of Pretoria for 15 years, before being destroyed. The informed consent form addressed these matters to ensure that the participants understood the research process and what they had agreed to. The participants were interviewed at the Future Families' offices which ensured privacy and confidentiality.

3.6.4 Actions and competency of researcher

The researcher undertook this research study in a competent and ethical manner since she attained theoretical guidelines when she completed a module on research methodology. Furthermore, the proposed study was conducted under the guidance and supervision of an experienced supervisor.

3.6.5 Dissemination of research findings

The research findings are disseminated in this research report. It will also be prepared as a manuscript and submission to a scientific subject journal.

3.7. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was delayed due to the social workers, auxiliary social worker, team leaders and child care workers busy schedules who took a lot of time to inform the participants that the researcher would contact them.

The study was conducted at the Future Families's office in Sunnyside. Although the interviews were conducted in privacy, it was difficult to limit the daily movements and noise of the many staff members and clients at the office. The noise from children further contributed to disturbances as some of the participants had no option but to bring their children along. This is because they did not have anyone to leave the

children with. These disturbances could have influenced the quality of the collected data.

Furthermore, as most of the refugee women who participated in the study were employed on a part time basis, their availability was restricted. The researcher had to be very patient and flexible to allow them to cancel and postpone appointments.

3.8 Research findings

The research findings will first focus on the biographical details of the 23 participants in the study. The findings from the one-on-one interviews will follow and are discussed in the form of themes, sub-themes and categories.

3.8.1 Biographical profile of participants

The biographical profiles of the 23 participants include information about their age, period they have stayed in South Africa, when they received their refugee status and the kind of services they receive from the NGO, Future Families.

- **Age, years resident in South Africa, and year refugee status was obtained**

Participants' age, years of being a resident in South Africa, and the year in which refugee status was obtained, are summarised in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Age of participants, number of years resident in South Africa and year refugee status was obtained

Participants	Age	Years resident in SA	Year refugee status obtained
1	33	2	2014
2	26	3	2014
3	37	3	2013
4	30	2	2015
5	27	2	2013
6	30	12	2005
7	22	9	2006

8	18	15	2010
9	31	9	2005
10	35	2	2015
11	38	4	2013
12	41	8	2009
13	43	9	2006
14	33	8	2012
15	30	9	2008
16	28	8	2008
17	32	2	2014
18	29	6	2014
19	25	14	2005
20	28	2	2013
21	27	3	2013
22	30	8	2008
23	33	5	2010

Table 3.1 reveals that the ages of the participants, ranged from 18 years to 43 years. Hence, there were no participants between the ages of 48-52 years, 53-57 and 58 years and above. The age group indicates that it is more the younger working age group who leave their countries to seek a better future for themselves and their families. Participants have resided in South Africa between two and 15 years. Two years is the minimum number of years to obtain refugee status. The youngest participants aged 18, 22 and 25 years, have resided in South Africa for the longest periods, namely 15, 9 and 14 years respectively. They also received their refugee status some years back, respectively in 2010, 2006 and 2005. Thus, the three participants moved to South Africa when they were still children. It is further revealed that the oldest participants aged 41 and 43 have been in the country for eight and nine years respectively and received their refugee status respectively in 2006 and 2009. They therefore came to South Africa when they were in their early 30s in search of a better future for themselves and their families.

- **Services rendered by Future Families**

The services rendered to refugee women by Future Families are summarised in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Services rendered by Future Families

Types of services	Participants receiving service
Food vouchers	19
Money for accommodation	7
School fees	4
Emotional support	2
Holiday programmes for children	4
Counselling services	1
Psycho-social support	4
Empowerment programmes	2
Job opportunities	2

Table 3.2 reveals that refugee women are receiving different services from Future Families. However, the most pressing need for services is in the form of food vouchers; received by 19 participants which is an indication that they lack food security. Findings further indicate that four participants were on the Future Families database but had not yet started receiving any services. They were on the waiting list for more than six months and had all applied for food vouchers, money for school fees and money for accommodation, indicating their struggle to meet their basic needs.

3.8.2. Key themes, sub-themes and categories

The following are the key themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data obtained from refugee women through one-on-one interviews.

Table 3.3: Key themes and sub-themes and categories

Theme 1: Realising basic human needs and rights	
Sub-themes	Categories
1.1 Getting a job/ employment opportunities	1.1.1 Lack of recognition of qualifications
1.2 Access to food security	
1.3 Access to health care services	1.3.1 Challenges of health care services 1.3.2 Inadequate assistance 1.3.3 Not understanding the procedures followed at the health care facilities
1.4 Access to educational opportunities	1.4.1 Lack of adequate finances to pay for tertiary education 1.4.2 Lack of money to pay for children's school fees and to meet their needs
1.5 Access to adequate shelter	1.5.1 Challenges of sharing 1.5.2 No privacy and insufficient room space 1.5.3 Issues of safety and instability 1.5.4 Health risks
1.6 Access to clean water and sanitation	
Theme 2: Challenges to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods	
2.1 Unemployment	
2.2 Communication challenges	
2.3 Transport challenges	
Theme 3: Gender-based violence, prejudices and sexual abuse	

3.1 Gender-based violence and Prejudices	
3.2 Exploitation and sexual abuse	
Theme 4: Impact of xenophobia on refugee women	
4.1 Challenges with Department of Home Affairs	
4.2 Xenophobia causes refugee women and their families to live in fear	
Theme 5: Support systems in meeting needs	
5.1 Support from local NGOs	
5.2 Assistance from government Departments	
5.3 Support from family and social and Other networks	
5.4 Location of Sunnyside Community	
5.5 Available day care centres in Sunnyside area	
5.6 Financial support and challenges	5.6.1 Lack of financial support to start businesses 5.6.2 Financial expectations and demands with regard to refugee women's family
Theme 6: Strategies to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods	

These themes and sub-themes will next be discussed. Findings will be verified by direct quotations from the participants and where applicable, the findings will be integrated with literature.

Theme 1: Realising basic human needs and rights

Participants encounter enormous challenges in adequately attaining their basic human needs and rights which include getting jobs, health services, secure

accommodation, education, food, water and sanitation. Some participants highlighted that they cannot evaluate their qualifications at the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) due to not having money and one participant mentioned that she failed to obtain her qualifications from her country of origin. This further complicates the participant's access to basic needs and rights. The above mentioned challenges will be next discussed as sub-themes.

Sub-theme:1.1 Getting a job/employment opportunities

All participants indicated that they have challenges in getting adequate employment in South Africa. Most of the participants highlighted that they had completed their matriculation and managed to attain tertiary level qualifications in their country of origin which include degrees in French, nursing, marketing, accounting, tourism, engineering and telecommunication. Other qualifications include diplomas in teaching, hairdressing, hotel and catering and home-based care training. Findings reveal that, most participants are working part time as domestic workers, hairdressers or cleaners, while others work as home-based care workers. Most participants indicated that they have more than one job at the same time to make ends meet.

A few participants reported to be working respectively, as a warehouse supervisor, a security guard, trainee teacher, while one reported to be self-employed, selling clothes and shoes for commission. Participants also indicated that South African policies give preference to nationals. The findings are echoed in the voices of two participants:

- *Despite my qualifications of a degree in French, diplomas in financial and pastoral accounting, practical bookkeeping and computer skills certificates from University of South Africa and Rosebank College, I have struggled for years to get a proper job until another foreigner, a Nigerian, employed me as a warehouse supervisor. I think the government policies also make it difficult for us to get jobs since the employers have to prove why they are employing us refugees.*
- *I am a nurse by profession so I had found a job to work as a nurse in the Western Cape, however, the clinic was scared to keep me because I do not*

have all the needed documents. Since then I have been working as a part-time domestic worker because job opportunities are difficult as they give first priority to South African citizens and it has been difficult since my husband is unemployed and has a heart problem.

Category: 1.1.1 Lack of recognition of qualifications

Many participants were unable to have their qualifications evaluated by SAQA due to lack of finances. Furthermore, some participants indicated that their particular degrees were not recognised in South Africa and for that reason they had to go back to institutions of higher learning in South Africa to improve their qualifications. However, due to financial instability, many participants were unable to gain entrance to tertiary educational institutions. The participants' frustrations are reflected below:

- *The challenge that we have is that we are struggling financially so we do not have money to take our qualifications for evaluation at SAQA. We also have to pay rent and buy food for our children to survive.*
- *Opportunities to study are there but there is no money to evaluate qualifications at SAQA. I failed to evaluate my Masters in Administration and a certificate in Secretarial Studies.*
- *I have a nursing degree from my home country but I am not able to further my studies because I do not have the money. I also cannot afford to send my qualification for evaluation.*

The participant's views are in line with opinions highlighted by De Vriese (2006:24) and Addo (2008:84) that refugee women struggle to get employment, especially in the formal economy. The Women Refugee Commission (2011:9) asserts that refugee women are not able to secure decent employment and hence encounter economic challenges which force them to work in unregulated sectors of the informal economy. Bagula (2011:32) affirms that South African policies for hiring foreign nationals do not protect the refugee women; on the contrary the penalties on employers who hire illegal foreigners are actually very strict. This is the situation with most refugees, despite the Refugee Act that guarantees them the same basic civil,

social and economic rights, including the right to seek employment as citizens of South Africa (De Klerk, 2009:14).

Furthermore, as is a member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), South Africa is obliged to follow the organisation's aims which includes complying with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work and to provide "decent work" (Makhema, 2009:35). Refugee women continue to struggle despite their entitlement to live in dignity and to attain self-reliance through enjoying their right to work which was established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 23.1, and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 6 (United Nations Refugee Agency, 2011:5). Mafukidze and Mbanda (2009:10) assert that several refugee women preferred studying in South Africa but failed to do so due to a lack of institutional support from Southern African Development Community (SADC), African Union (AU) and United Nations (UN).

Sub-theme:1.2 Access to food security

The majority of the participants indicated that they are struggling to obtain adequate food for themselves and their families. Most of the participants reported having food shortages every month. Some participants reported lack to such an extent that some go to sleep without eating for four days or even up to two weeks. The majority of the participants cannot afford three meals a day. They eat once or twice a day and drink tea and eat bread for supper, while others eat porridge.

Although Future Families support most of the participants with food vouchers, the organisation is not always able to assist regularly. The refugee women end up frustrated and desperate and they have to ask for assistance from their churches, neighbours, friends and relatives. They further noted that they continue to struggle in terms of food security because they do not earn enough money; also some of their husbands earn low salaries, and other participants have large families. The following quotes are evident of their struggle for food:

- *I am earning a very low salary since I am working as a cleaner in a hair salon, thus I am not able to afford buying enough food for the whole month for me and my children. This is why I came here at Future Families to ask for food*

vouchers but so far I have only received them twice and last month I did not receive any food voucher.

- When I get my child's child support grant, I buy what the child needs first, like nappies and milk then my husband provides money for food but the food we are able to buy is not enough for the whole month since my husband does not earn a lot. So sometimes we have to eat porridge or bread and tea for supper.*
- I sometimes go for three or four days without food and I act like I am fasting. I have a cousin who also stays in Sunnyside, who sometimes helps me out with food or money to buy food but I am embarrassed to go there daily.*
- I am working and my mother is also working so we help each other to buy food for our family of five people, we can sometimes go for two weeks without food then I end up borrowing money from my colleagues or go to my pastor for assistance.*

The participants' experiences concur with the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2015:1) that food is amongst the main needs of refugees in South Africa. The struggle among refugee women to provide food for themselves and their children was also pointed out by the Jesuit Refugee Service International Office (2014). The UNHCR undertakes to assist refugees with food only for a short period, until they manage to attain assistance from the government or other NGOs (UNHCR, 2015:1). The government through South African Social Services (SASSA) assists by providing a Social Relief of Distress Grant; the grant is made available even without any identity documents (CORMSA 2009:104). Yet many refugees continue to struggle with attaining food security support from the government and NGOs which does not appear to be consistent. Refugees who reside in abandoned buildings in Johannesburg are reported to be struggling with access to adequate food (Doctors without Borders, 2010:1).

Sub-themes:1.3 Access to health care services

Most participants encounter enormous challenges at the local health care facilities. These challenges include access to health care services, inadequate assistance, and not understanding the procedures followed at the health care facilities.

Category: 1.3.1 Challenges of health care services

Many participants mentioned their difficulties in accessing health including waiting in long queues, spending the whole day at the clinic or hospitals, being attended to late in the day or having to leave without being attended to, and being told to come back after a week, or being referred back from the hospital to local clinics. Some participants indicated that at Sammy Marks clinic they are assisted for free but that there are many patients to be seen daily. The participants' lived realities are represented in the following voices:

- *I am scared to use the Sammy Marks Clinic since a lot of people complain about the services and spending the whole day there without being assisted.*
- *I do not know where Tshwane hospital or clinic is but I have access to nearby pharmacies where I buy medication when I am sick or my children are sick. I only heard that if you want to go to Tshwane hospital, you have to wake up very early because there will be very long queues”.*
- *I go to Sammy Marks Clinic when I am sick or my child is sick, however, the problem is that you can be told to come back the following week. They also assist many people, since it is for free, it can be +/- 100 people a day so they are obviously not able to help everyone.*

Category: 1.3.2 Inadequate assistance

The majority of the participants indicated that they are not adequately assisted. They are given medication without a thorough medical assessment; some feel they are not given the right medication; and in some instances they are even told that there is no medication. Some participants then go to pharmacies and buy the medication on their own. The delays and wrong prognosis are putting the life of refugee women and their families at risk. Many participants reported that they buy over the counter

medication to avoid going to the nearby hospitals, since they fear for their lives or are scared of the nurses who shout and are rude to them. The following narratives explain participants' hardships in obtaining health care services:

- *My husband had a heart problem and he went to a public hospital several times but was not assisted adequately saying it was flu or it was his lungs and they gave him antibiotics but did not admit him for observation. Yet I knew with my nursing background that he was having problems with his heart. Thus, after two months he had a heart attack and it was now an emergency. At Steve Biko when you have are an asylum seeker, like my husband, it's a problem because they were even refusing to admit him until we found another understanding doctor but we now have to pay for operations.*
- *I have been going to Sammy Marks Clinic but I encountered a lot of challenges while I was pregnant which led me to giving birth before the actual time at seven months and two weeks. The nurses who attended to me had xenophobia, they were complaining that foreigners are always giving birth yet I only have two children. They even called me "Makwerekwere" [meaning a belittling name that is given to foreigners] When I realised that they were not stopping, I ended up running out of the clinic because I was scared of my life. I realised that nurses are only helping because they are working for the government but there is no love. When I left the clinic, the manager called me back but I refused to be treated. You can spend the whole day at the clinic without being helped. After that incident I gave birth to my baby before the actual time due to stress and the delivery was also not easy since the nurses did not treat me well again. The nurses were shouting at me whenever I showed any signs of pain or screamed due to pain. I would try to communicate to the doctors but they were also xenophobic and did not listen. I got to the extent of feeling the baby's head and I feel the nurses were not following the doctor's instructions. The nurse started giving me instructions to stand despite the baby coming out. Another sister nurse who was kind is the one who assisted me when she heard me screaming and realised that the baby was now close by. That sister nurse even told her colleague that the way*

she handled me was wrong. However, I was still discharged the day after I gave birth.

- *When I or any of my family members are sick, we go to Sammy Marks Clinic but we have not been receiving adequate help. My sister has pneumonia and she does not get adequate medication and she struggles every time in winter. I also have a heart problem and when I get medication from the clinic, it makes me feel weak and does not help thus I end up using water and milk since I cannot afford to go to private doctors.*

Category: 1.3.3 Not understanding the procedures followed at the health care facilities

A few participants said that they do not understand the procedures at the health care facilities. According to the participants, they are supposed to be treated for free but sometimes they are told to pay a certain amount and the amount is not the same every time, or per patient. Other participants, who are nurses by profession, indicated that they do not understand the nurses' treatment procedures since they do not open medical cards first and do not seem to examine a patient before treatment. Some participants also were confused by the referral system as they are referred back to Sammy Marks Clinic by Tshwane Hospital, without any proper explanation. One participant had no knowledge of where either Tshwane hospital or Sammy Marks Clinic were located; yet both are close to the Sunnyside area. The participants' confusion on procedures are reflected in the following quotes:

- *I went with my child for immunisation then the nurses did not check her first, they just injected her then soon after the injection they realised that she was no longer fine, that is when they started to examine her and opened a file for her.*
- *I go to Sammy Marks Clinic with my smaller children that are below the age of five years. With the older children and adults we go to Tshwane hospital. We recently started paying R50 but I do not know what the money is for but before we never used to pay.*

- *At the health care facilities, they attend to you but sometimes we are told that there is no medication thus you should buy your own medication from the pharmacy. When the child is very sick you pay. Last time they charged me R250 but I negotiated to pay R100 then was told to pay the rest the next time I go there”.*

Findings correlate with literature, indicating that refugee women are sometimes refused access to treatment by doctors and nurses in the clinics and hospitals. Refugee women in Johannesburg are reported to be struggling with accessing adequate health care services causing some victims of sexual and gender-based violence to suffer from psychological disorders (Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, 2007:8; JRS, 2014). Denying refugee women their right to basic health services contradicts the South African Constitution that is supposed to protect the rights of all individuals residing in the country (Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS), 2014). The experience of one participant with her spouse’s heart attack with regard to ongoing medical support, confirm Amisi’s (2006:33) observation that refugee women have no access to emergency health care services in South Africa.

Because they are not treated well when they visit hospitals, refugee women avoid seeking any medical attention even when they are sick. In line with the findings of Amisi (2006:33) they sometimes opt to request financial assistance from friends and relatives in order to seek private medical attention. The experiences of a participant on giving birth, are evidenced by Health-E (2011:1) reporting that pregnant refugee women in the Eastern Cape are ignored by nurses, verbally and physically abused, and wait for long hours to be assisted.

Sub-theme:1.4 Access to educational opportunities

Most of the participants were of the view that opportunities for further education are available in South Africa. However, there are many stumbling blocks that make it difficult for them to utilise these opportunities. These include lack of adequate finances to pay for tertiary education and lack of money to pay for children’s school fees and to meet their education needs.

Category: 1.4.1 Lack of adequate finances to pay for tertiary education

Participants reported that opportunities for skills development, training and further education, among other, in home based care, first aid, English lessons, computer skills, baking, and sewing, are available. However, many participants cited that although educational opportunities are available, they lack stable finances to pay enrolment and tuition fees. In addition, the participants indicated that they are not able to make use of the various opportunities since they cannot take time off to learn new skills as they need to work and provide for their families. They also do not have money to pay for day-care centres. Other participants noted that they lacked information about bursaries and learnership programmes as an alternative to attaining financial support to pursue studies.

Some participants were of the opinion that, as in the case of all other opportunities in South Africa, first priority is given to South African citizens to take up opportunities for skills development, training and further education. Only one participant highlighted that she was able to attain a national diploma in financial accounting and a national certificate in pastoral accounting from UNISA and attained certificates in practical bookkeeping and computer skills from Rosebank College. The participants explained their position as follows:

- *I think educational opportunities are available even to us refugee women, however, it is difficult for us to make use of them because of the high fees so we are not able to go to university and add to our qualifications that we obtained in our home countries.*
- *I have a diploma in hotel and catering from my country of origin, I wanted to further my education but I do not have the money and I thought I would get a job and get money to further my studies. I do not know of any bursaries or learnership programmes that I can apply for.*
- *I studied engineering and telecommunications in Congo and I would like to study further but the finances do not allow me, I also do not have the time to study because I will be working and looking for better jobs.*
- *I have Grade 6, opportunities to study are there but the money to pay for the fees and for the day-care centres where you can leave your children is not*

there. I am also not able to be involved in the skills development because of my two children.

These findings correlate with the findings of Keshavarzian (2005:28) that refugee women's economic stability is significantly hindered by lack of skills which lead to them living at a marginal economic level. It also confirms the observation by the United Nations Refugee Agency (2011:37) that refugee women's access to further education is at times hindered by lack of day-care centres and family support for many young mothers whilst they go to colleges and other academic institutions, in pursuit of education. Literature further supports that there are hindrances to the participants' attainment of educational opportunities as Global Education Magazine ([n.d]:1) concurs that South Africa does not enforce any financial aid scheme policy that promotes refugee tertiary education thus refugees are not able to benefit from the South African National Student Financial Aid Scheme.

This is a financial aid scheme policy that was adopted to assist mainly the marginalised and disadvantaged individuals to attain tertiary education (Global Education Magazine ([n.d]:1). The participants are also included among the marginalised and vulnerable due to their circumstances but the financial aid scheme does not consider them as beneficiaries. Thus refugee women continue to lack access to educational opportunities that are entitled to them as noted by Makhema (2009:19) who states that South Africa is a signatory of the 1985 UN Declaration which stipulates in Article 8 (1) (C) on the Human Rights of individuals of the country and indicates that individuals who are not nationals of the country but residing lawfully, in a host country have the right to adequate education. On the contrary, Amisi (2006:11), supports what has been highlighted by the participants that not all refugee women are not educated but some managed to attain tertiary education qualifications in their countries of origin. However, despite being educated and having experience, refugees continue to struggle with obtaining employment (Kalitanyi & Visser, 2010:6).

Category: 1.4.2 Lack of money to pay for children's school fees and to meet their needs

Many refugee women encounter challenges in the paying of school fees for their children as they lack adequate jobs and stable incomes. Most women are thus

forced to make alternative payment arrangements or apply for school fees exemption at the various schools that their children attend. The participants also indicated that they are depending on Future Families to assist them with money to pay for their children's school fees. However, Future Families is not able to pay the school fees regularly. Many refugee women also highlighted that they have difficulty meeting the educational requirements of their children due to financial constraints. The reasons for participants' financial constraints are captured in by their words:

- *I had to apply for school fees exemption for my child to continue attending school.*
- *I owe a lot of school fees for my three children, which I am failing to pay in full; however, I have managed to make an arrangement to pay the money in instalments.*
- *This month my child did not even go to school since Future Families did not give me money to pay for his school fees”.*
- *I am struggling to buy my child enough nappies and milk because my husband is unemployed and the child support grant is not enough.*

The findings confirm the view of Pittaway ([n.d.]:18) that access to education for refugees is difficult which challenge the belief of the refugee community that education is a key to their dream of obtaining a better and secure future. Uwabakulikiza (2009:91) attests that unemployment leads to an inability to meet basic needs and robs refugee women of their roles of being mothers, since they are not able to take proper care of their children, which include providing for a better education.

Sub-theme:1.5 Access to adequate shelter

Accommodation seems to be a challenge faced by many participants in Sunnyside, Tshwane. They revealed that they are struggling to get their own flats and houses despite being in the country for a long period of time. Challenges include sharing flats, with no privacy and enough room space, issues of safety and instability, and health risks.

Category: 1.5.1 Challenges of sharing

The majority of the participants indicated that it is difficult for them to get their own flats due to lack of identity documents and also mostly because of insufficient funds to pay rent. Therefore most of them have no choice but to share a flat so as to help each other paying the monthly rent. All the participants reported that they share with strangers, except for two who were residing with their friends. Only one participant indicated that she was not sharing her flat with anyone. The participants reported to be sharing with up to ten people in a one-and-a-half bedroomed or two-and-a-half bedroomed flat. Sharing with strangers poses safety (see 1.5.3) and health risks. Participants related their experiences with accommodation as follows:

- *It is difficult to rent a house with refugee status, so I am currently staying in a flat registered in someone's name. We have been staying in Sunnyside for nine years. It is now difficult for me and my husband to pay all the full rentals so we looked for a lady to share with and cut expenses since the rentals are very expensive.*
- *I have been staying in Sunnyside since 2013. My brother applied for a two bed-roomed flat for me so I use one room with my three children. Then I looked for one tenant to share with since I cannot afford the whole rent alone. I do not know the man whom I am sharing with, there is also no privacy for me and my children and I am also not happy that I am sharing the same room with my 18 year-old child.*
- *Me, my mother and three siblings have been staying in Sunnyside for three years. We are sharing a flat with five other people. Thus we are staying in a two-and-a-half bedroomed flat; the ten of us. It is challenging, sharing a sittingroom with my mum and siblings. We gave the bedrooms to the tenants so that we can get more money to add to the rent. Hence, there is not enough space for us and it is not good for our health. It is also not safe since we do not know the people we share with; thus scared they might steal from us, so we have to lock up everything every time we leave the house. There is also no privacy since we sleep in an open room and change in the bathroom.*

Category: 1.5.2 No privacy and insufficient room space

A few of the participants indicated that they are unhappy with the lack of privacy and that they are forced to change in front of their older and younger children. They are even worried that it will affect the way the children view and respect them. The challenges with privacy and room space can be summarised in the words of two participants:

- *I am staying in a one-and-a-half bedroomed flat with my eight siblings and one tenant. We had to put a tenant in the half bed-room to get money for the rent. There is no adequate room because me and all my siblings, including two boys, share a bedroom and my brothers sleep on the floor while me and my six sisters sleep on the bed.*
- *I have been staying in Sunnyside, in a flat since 2008. I share a flat with my two children and four other people because the rent is expensive. We had to divide the flat with curtains for privacy but still there is no privacy. The owner of the flat can chase you out anytime and if you do not pay rent you can also be chased out. There is not enough space since children need space to play, I even share the bed with them and change in front of them thus scared that they will not respect me as they grow up.*

Category: 1.5.3 Issues of safety and instability

Many participants raised issues of safety with regard to their belongings and food. These items are stolen by people with whom they share accommodation. Issues of instability were also mentioned as participants are forced to move regularly due to the high rent. Landlords chase them out of the flats if they fail to pay rent. Sometimes they cause them to end up sleeping outside. Other participants do not have money for accommodation and they stay with their friends and church mates. The participant's concerns are reflected below:

- *The rent is always going up and I do not have money to pay for a flat or to share with someone thus I do not have anywhere to stay; but one of my friends from church said I can stay in her diningroom in the meantime.*

- *I have been staying in Sunnyside for three years. I am currently staying with my friends that I met at church. I do not have a place of my own and I do not know when I will be able to get one. I even sometimes sleep outside for a day.*
- *I am currently staying with a friend but it is not easy because she is always complaining about money issues since she is the one who buys food and pays rent. When I get money sometimes, I also give her R200.*

Category: 1.5.4 Health risks

A few participants feared being exposed to health risks since they share toilets with many strangers. One participant reported sleeping on a balcony with her husband which is cold during winter and not good for their health. The participant's views are summarised in the following quotes:

- *I have been staying in Sunnyside for two years in a one-and-half bedroomed flat. I am staying there with my children and husband and we are sleeping on the balcony which is not good for my sick husband, especially this time during winter. The other rooms I share with some tenants who are also strangers so it is not really safe for us but we have no choice. I have challenges of cleaning the mess left by tenants in the toilet and we have no privacy. There is also no adequate space but no choice because of the high rentals.*
- *Me, my mother and three siblings have been staying in Sunnyside for three years. We are sharing a flat with five other people. Thus we are staying in a two-and-half bedroomed flat the ten of us thus there is no enough space for us and it is not good for our health.*

The accommodation challenges that have been highlighted, are confirmed by Jacobsen (2012:5) who asserts that, the unstable accommodation arrangements of refugee women affect their ability to build social networks as they have to always relocate frequently. Continuous relocation also affects their livelihoods since it decreases their opportunities of responding to job vacancies and use of social services (Jacobsen, 2012:5). Many participants complained about the high rent which concurs with Jacobsen's (2012:5) observation that refugee women often pay more for rent compared to local South Africans. Furthermore, due to lack of

permanent jobs, refugee women are not able to sign any accommodation contracts, which make them vulnerable to exploitation by house owners who request high rentals (Jacobsen, 2012:5).

The Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (2007:46;47) affirms that many refugee women face challenges of eviction, overcrowding and temporary accommodation. The Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (2007:8) alludes that many refugee women in South Africa experience various accommodation challenges because they are not included in the national housing policies; thereby limiting their protection from landlords who exploit them and evict them without notice. Their vulnerability places many of the refugee women at risk of violence and crime and affects their physical and mental well being (Consortium of Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, 2007;47).

Sub-theme:1.6 Access to clean water and sanitation

Sanitation risks seem to be common among the participants, while some also experience challenges of water cuts because they cannot afford to pay their bills monthly. Furthermore, sharing of one toilet among as many as ten people, affects the toilet's flushing system. The inevitable health risks are evident in the following responses:

- *When ten people share one toilet, there are always hygiene issues and health risks since I have to clean every person's mess and also the flushing system of the toilet can be affected regularly and we sometimes have to use a bucket system.*
- *We use pre-paid water and it is very expensive; thus sometimes we cannot afford the water so we can go for days without water and we have to stop using the toilet or we use it then close it until we ask for water from neighbours and friends.*

The findings are confirmed in literature. Apalata, Kibiribiri, Knight and Lutge (2007:18) report that refugee women in South Africa do not access adequate water that is conducive for their health. Doctors Without Borders (2010:1) highlight

research done in inner-city Johannesburg stating that amongst the abandoned 82 slum buildings visited with an estimated population of 50-6000 people where refugees reside, 45 buildings had poor water supply and inadequate sanitation. Furthermore, Doctors Without Borders (2010) assert that in Johannesburg many refugee women are reported to be residing in industrial sites, former offices and flat blocks that have very poor or no sanitation while access to water is also limited.

Theme 2: Challenges to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods

Many participants revealed that they encounter many challenges to their shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods. These challenges will be next discussed as three sub-themes, namely unemployment, communication and transport challenges.

Sub-theme: 2.1 Unemployment

In sub-theme 1, participants' difficulties to get a job and access to economic opportunities were discussed. In addition to challenges mentioned in category 1.1, the reality is that South Africa faces a high unemployment rate of 26,4 per cent (Statistics, 2015:1). A couple of participants indicated that, it was difficult for them to get jobs due to the high unemployment rate in South Africa; despite being educated. Their realities are reflected in the voices of two participants:

- *I have a diploma in travel and tourism but I cannot find a job so I sell ice pops in the streets in Sunnyside, to add to the money I get from my husband and the child support grant that I receive monthly.*
- *I was a security officer at Midrand but I worked there for two months without any salary and later on I found out that the manager had disappeared without paying us. I was in a difficult situation because I had moved out of my friend's place and taken my own flat so now I did not have money to pay the rent. Therefore I had to find a part-time domestic job and also work in the hair salon for me to survive.*

The findings indicate that refugee women face enormous challenges in attaining employment. This is confirmed by Addo (2008:44), who asserts that refugee women lack economic opportunities in the formal sector. According to South African Statistics (2015:1) there are 36 million individuals that are employable in South

Africa, yet only 15,5 million are currently employed. Therefore, refugee women are bound to struggle to attain adequate employment. This is despite the South African Refugee Act of 1998 being in place to allow them to work legally (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011:2;9).

Uwabakulikiza (2009:36) points out that the high level of unemployment does not affect South Africans only but also refugee women that reside in the country. In addition, Uwabakulikiza (2009:39) stresses that unemployment among refugee women further reduces what they are able to do financially and as a result also leave them stranded in relation to recognition of their full capacities. Furthermore, their financial circumstances destroy their self-worth, causes stress, trauma, and humiliation to them (Uwabakulikiza, 2009:39).

Sub-theme: 2.2 Communication challenges

Communication challenges in terms of language were reflected by a few participants. Knowledge of English and local languages make it difficult to communicate, especially for refugee women who reported that they do not have matric and are coming from non-English speaking countries. However, participants highlighted that their English has improved greatly because of English lessons that are provided for free at a school in Pretoria Central. However, they felt that the lessons provided were inadequate as they were not being taught well. The following quotes reveal participants' language challenges:

- *English was a great challenge when I came to South Africa so I had no choice but to enrol for English classes and also my children had to help me hence my English has greatly improved although I can still not read and write in English. I feel the lessons are not being taught well. However, the main challenge is to learn local languages since there are no lessons and it is difficult when you need assistance at Home Affairs or in clinics or even to get a job because if you speak in English, you are sometimes ignored.*
- *I am scared to travel to other provinces in South Africa and get exposed to different opportunities due to the language barriers. It is also difficult for us refugee women to learn the local languages.*

The participants' language frustrations are supported by Bloch (2004:2) who asserts that the lack of English language skills among refugee women is a barrier to the labour market as it limits their participation. Research further reveals that language differences pose challenges to both refugees and service providers because it creates communication barriers that could increase medical errors, treatment non-adherences and poor healthcare outcomes (Pavlish, Noor & Brandt, 2010:7). In addition, Halpern (2011:38) highlights that English language is a key aspect that influences successful refugee employment.

Sub-theme: 2.3 Transport challenges

Participants indicated that it is difficult to find employment, especially domestic work, close to Sunnyside which implies that they are dependent on transport to access their work places. A few participants noted that transport is a challenge since taxis are expensive and also not safe to use. They indicated that they are left with no choice but to use trains that are less expensive. They explained their transport challenges as follows:

- *A certain taxi once took me to a wrong place then I started demanding that he stops so that I can drop off but the driver refused to stop until I decided to jump out.*
- *It is difficult to get domestic work in Sunnyside thus when you are working far, you are forced to use trains to try and save money. However trains are not safe since you board them very early in the morning and there will be a lot of men smoking dagga.*
- *Most jobs are found as far as Menlyn shopping centre, so it is a disadvantage since transport is expensive”.*

The lack of safety in trains that was highlighted by the participants correlates with Harris (2001), who observes that the extent to which refugee women are put in overcrowded trucks and trains and also encounter violence while in transit and during the repatriation process. The violence is reported to be happening at the hands of the South African authorities and many refugees are thrown off or pushed out of the moving trucks and trains (Harris, 2001). The Refugee Ministry Centre

(2011:12) concurs that in 2008 during the xenophobic attacks, there were some refugees who failed to get transport to go and seek assistance at the walk-in centre at the St Mary's Anglican Cathedral in Johannesburg, due to safety issues.

Theme 3: Gender-based violence, prejudices and sexual abuse

Aspects of gender-based violence, exploitation and sexual abuse were reported by a couple of participants who felt either not treated well due to their cultural prejudice or men taking advantage of their circumstances and financial situations as refugee women.

Sub-theme:3.1 Gender-based violence and prejudices

Issues of gender-based violence were raised by a Somali refugee woman, who is of the opinion that Somali women are looked down upon by the community and by their husbands due to their culture that prejudices them from working and to be dependent on their husbands. They are always indoors and scared to start their own businesses or to help their husbands. This has disadvantages if the husband dies. Another participant reported that their husbands had left them, which made them and their children's lives difficult. A few participants also indicated that their husbands' were being promiscuous and not taking good care of them and their children and it seems they felt it was because of the life they were living as refugees. The findings are confirmed by the participants' remarks:

- *As a Somali refugee woman I have realised that many of women in my culture are not treated well, they are looked down upon, not allowed to work, always stay indoors and are scared to start their own businesses.*
- *My husband left me and the children when he lost his job and he went back to our country of origin, since then life has been difficult for us.*

Sub-theme:3.2 Exploitation and sexual abuse

A participant indicated that refugee women end up looking for men who can provide for their needs, due to lack of job opportunities. However, the men take advantage of

them since they request sex in exchange for their provisions. This makes the participants feel like prostitutes. One participant raised an issue of fear of travelling to other areas in South Africa since it is not safe for refugee women who are reported to be victims of rape. The following quotes echo the findings:

- *Due to lack of adequate jobs, a lot of refugee women like me, end up looking for a man to meet their financial needs, however, the men start taking advantage and expect sex in return of their financial support thereby making us feel like prostitutes.*
- *I am scared to travel to other places in South Africa because refugee women are raped.*

The issues of gender-based violence, exploitation and prejudice, were also identified by De Vriese (2006:23) who attests that refugee women are vulnerable and at risk of exploitation. They lack protection against rape and sexual abuse in South African communities (De Vriese, 2006:23). Ayadurai (2011:2) concurs that refugee women are vulnerable to exploitation and violence because of lack of legal protection. It is further noted that refugee women continue to lack adequate protection from relevant authorities and law enforcement agencies, which is now putting them more at risk as violence against them is increasing in most South African communities (Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, 2007:9). This is the situation despite South Africa being a signatory to international and regional treaties and instruments that protect refugee women, such as the 1951 United Nations (UN) Convention and the 1969 Organisation for African Union (OAU) Convention (Makhema, 2009:18), and the 1992 Convention on the Elimination of all form of Discrimination against Women (United Nations, 2010:5).

In addition, Makhema (2009:19) states that the 1951 UN Convention, in its Article 24, emphasises the importance of social security in protecting refugees in South Africa (Makhema, 2009:19). Furthermore, Natukunda (2008:26) highlights that the 1951 Refugee Convention, Article 16, stipulates that it is the government's responsibility to ensure that refugee women receive adequate protection against any forms of violence (Natukunda, 2008:26). The study's findings confirm that the law and justice system enforcement is still perceived as not being favourable for refugee women,

since they are still likely to be exposed to injustice and exploitation and have limited access to criminal justice (Knowledge, 2013:9). Hence, there is a need for the government to implement laws that protect refugee women from sexual exploitation (Committee for the Follow-up on Women's Issues, 2007:75). As highlighted by the Council of Europe (2014:2) it is vital to train authorities and officials who are able to protect refugee women against sexual violence as this can play a crucial role in protecting refugee women (Natukunda, 2008:28).

Theme 4: Impact of xenophobia on refugee women

Participants ascribed the way they are treated by Home Affairs and at health facilities to attitudes of xenophobia. Amongst the participants, most of them experienced xenophobia in hospitals and clinics, which led to them not receiving adequate assistance as highlighted in sub-theme 1.3. Some participants also felt that xenophobia makes it difficult for them to get jobs as indicated in sub-theme 1.1. The participants also reported that some South Africans think that they are in the country to steal their jobs. Another participant indicated that, she is not sure if the challenges of job opportunities are not because of xenophobia. They also see xenophobia as limiting their access to employment and financial opportunities. Some refugee women think that due to xenophobia, banks make the requirements for foreigners to open bank accounts very difficult. The impact of xenophobia on refugee women emerged in sub-themes pertaining to challenges with home affairs and the participants living in fear.

Sub-theme: 4.1 Challenges with Department of Home Affairs

An analysis of the interviews revealed that most participants were not happy with the period that the Department of Home Affairs takes to grant them refugee status. According to the Refugees Act 130 of 1998, it is supposed to take an individual two years while residing in South Africa, to qualify for refugee status and five years to qualify for a permanent residence, and an identity document. Some of the participants reported that they have been staying in South Africa for more than five years without receiving refugee statuses. Furthermore, most of the participants reported not having identity documents. The Department of Home Affairs is allegedly also accepting bribes to process refugee status which presents a further challenge. Other difficulties that participants encounter, include inefficient officials that process

refugee status for them, but not their children, leaving them to struggle to obtain status for their children. The lack of documentation for their children presents challenges of acquiring access to schools for the children concerned.

The impact of not having an identity document is clear from the following participants' responses:

- *“It is difficult to get a job due to high rate of unemployment in South Africa and not having an identity document”.*
- *“I could not even get a cleaning job because I do not have an identity document”.*

The struggle to get refugee status for themselves and their children is evident from the following participants' quotes

- *I have refugee status but my three children do not have and at first when I made a follow up at Home Affairs, I was told that the system was down and now I have been going there regularly, only to be told that they are not in the system. This is now a problem for me since my children could not get school places close-by. They are attending in Atteridgeville which is too far and they have to use the trains which is not safe for them.*
- *Getting a refugee status is now very difficult, unlike in the past, now Home Affairs officials expect you to bribe them so that they can assist you. So you can even stay for more than five years without refugee status or an identity document.*

Sub-theme: 4.2 Xenophobia causes refugee women and their families live in fear

One participant reported that South African children do not want to play with her children. Her children are called derogatory names, teased and she further stated that they live in fear of violence. Another participant also highlighted that if they wear their traditional clothes, they are also teased. The participants' narratives are captured below:

- *Where I stay, South African children do not want to play with my children. They call them derogatory names, tease them and refuse to play with them. We actually live in fear of violence.*
- *People call me names like “Makwerekwere” [] because I wear my traditional clothes.*

Information provided by the participants confirm that xenophobia is an aspect that makes it difficult for refugee women to sustain themselves and survive normal lives (Jaji, 2009:92). Findings noted by Sigsworth (2010:1) correlate with the views of the participants, especially that in South Africa it is normal for foreign women to experience xenophobic violence. Foreign women encounter different forms of violence like physical violence, verbal and psychological abuse, structural and institutional violence and cultural and ethnic discrimination because of being female and foreign (Sigsworth, 2010:1). Challenges encountered by refugee women at Home Affairs are supported by the Department of Home Affairs (2015:4) that concurs that in 2015 it still acknowledges that it experiences challenges in the provision of refugee status and relevant documents. The Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Ms F. Chohan acknowledges that there are major gaps in terms of funding, policy and the system which needs initiatives that strengthen partnerships with other departments which will be intensified in 2015-2016 to help change the current challenges of refugees (Department of Home Affairs, 2015:5).

As indicated earlier, Refugees Act guarantees refugees, basic civil, social and economic rights, which includes recognition of their refugee status, full legal protection, right to identity documents, and the right to seek employment as in the case of citizens of South Africa (De Klerk, 2009:14). However, despite that policy being in place, refugees continue to lack personal identification due to a long waiting process (Ayadurai, 2011:7). In addition, UNCHR (2014:1) further concurs that although South African legislation for refugees is good, its status determination process is inefficient leading to high backlogs and experiences challenges of xenophobia and human rights violation.

Theme 5: Support systems in meeting needs

Support systems are viewed by the researcher as individuals, groups, non-governmental organisations like Future Families, JRS, CWL, financial institutions, or agencies that provide support in terms of emotional, financial and material needs to help refugee women meet their basic and developmental needs. The participants expected Future Families to be one of their main support systems as the refugee women were all registered clients at the NGO, however, they were also linked to other NGOs and service providers. Findings reveal that most of the participants benefited from the government, NGOs, friends and family support, community, schools and day-care centres. These particular support networks made their survival strategies easier although they complained that it was not enough. Some participants indicated that they have not been receiving adequate support from their relatives, NGOs and the government. Participants revealed that the services provided by the NGOs were viewed as insufficient by the recipients. This particular point of view was raised mostly by participants that were on the waiting list of Future Families and had not received any services for more than six months; also other participants who had received assistance once off or for a few months, and participants who expected financial assistance to start their own businesses. Some of the participants also reported that they do not receive adequate counselling at the times they are available for interviews.

Sub-theme: 5.1 Support from local NGOs

Findings reveal that most of the assistance that was received by participants was from NGOs, especially Future Families and JRS. The particular NGOs mostly assist with material support and skills development. The majority of the participants were benefiting from food parcels, money for accommodation, emotional support, counselling services, empowerment programmes and job opportunities (see table 3.2). JRS was pointed out as another NGO that assists participants with money for accommodation, food vouchers and financial support to start their own businesses. In addition JRS has started assisting refugee women with translating their SAQA qualifications in order for them to get adequate job opportunities. The Red Cross was identified as an NGO that helps with skills development. The organisation trained a few of the participants to be first aid and home-based care workers. The participants' words confirmed the findings:

- *Future Families has been assisting me for three years, with food vouchers, money for rent and school fees. The Red Cross also gave me an opportunity to train as a first aid and home-based care worker and afterwards Future Families helped me with a job, so I now work as a home-based care worker.*
- *I have applied for business funding at JRS but I am still waiting for their response and I know that JRS has also started helping refugee women with evaluating their qualifications at SAQA in order for them to get better jobs.*

The remark of a participant that when they requested JRS for a food voucher, they were asked to undergo English tests, indicates that the reason for the test was not clearly understood. In addition to providing food, the quote below indicates that JRS intended to facilitate work opportunities. The following points from the participants were captured:

- *I am not able to tell you that I have received any assistance from any NGO here in South Africa. I have applied for assistance here at Future Families and at JRS but have not received anything, yet I see others getting assistance. I am even tired of making follow ups because they said to me you have been in the country for eight years, how have you been surviving all this time?*
- *Me and my siblings have been in South Africa for the past 15 years and I do not see hope here in South Africa, the government and NGOs have failed to change our lives for the better, they are not able to provide us with free accommodation and jobs, yet in other countries like Canada and Australia, refugees are receiving adequate assistance.*
- *Future Families does not provide me with counselling, so I do not have anyone to tell my problems. They also do not believe our challenges as refugee women.*
- *I went to JRS to ask for a food parcel, the first thing they did was to test my English, then they later on gave me funding to start an internet café. They bought me three computers and one printer worth R8000 which I think was*

not enough and that was not what I had asked for since I do not like doing business.

Findings were supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2004:1) as they highlighted their services to refugees which include international protection; material support in terms of shelter, food, medical aid, education and social services (UNHCR, 2004:1). In line with what was indicated by participants, the Catholic Women's League Family Life Centre (CWL, 2014:1) is an NGO that is based in Sunnyside that assists refugee families with material assistance that includes food parcels, schools fees, life skills, counselling and psycho-support (CWL, 2014:1). Furthermore, Ngubeni (2014) confirmed that Future Families is one of the few NGOs that assist with social services in terms of accommodation, food and school fees to new refugee families and unaccompanied minors around Pretoria. Findings confirm the observation by UNHCR (2011:14) that assets and resources determine the livelihood strategies that are chosen by a household.

However, as mentioned earlier, there were a few participants who felt that the assistance was not enough. The few participants who reported that they do not receive counselling from the NGOs mentioned that there is no one to assist them with regard to their personal challenges, losses, experiences and emotional well-being since most of them do not have families, relatives and have separated with their partners and husbands due to the challenges they have encountered as refugees.

Sub-theme: 5.2 Assistance from government departments

Findings indicate that schools in Sunnyside understand the financial situation of refugee women and are open to arrangements being made when it comes to school fees payments and exemptions. The schools may even give discounts if they explain their situations to the school principals. However, one participant reported that there are some school principals that have an attitude towards refugee children and their parents which makes it difficult to get school fees exemption. She also complained about high increases in school fees.

Participants indicated that the Department of Labour assists them with information about job opportunities. However, this challenge relates to the challenge earlier indicated, that participants do not have the money to have their qualifications translated. A few participants reported to be receiving child support grants for their children and they mentioned that the grant helps them to meet some of their children's basic needs. However, they were not sure for how long they were entitled to receive the grant and one participant indicated that she was told that she would only receive it for three months. The participants views are captured as follows:

- *I could not pay for my child's schools fees and I went to the school to make some arrangements. I even ended up getting a discount from the initial amount, from R450 to R250 which is much better.*
- *I am aware that the Department of Labour does assist even refugee women to get information about jobs, although I have never received assistance from them since I still have a challenge of evaluating my qualifications at SAQA.*
- *SASSA is helping us with child support grants for our children, although it is not enough but you are able to add to what you would have received from your work or husband.*

Sub-theme: 5.3 Support from family and social and other networks

Findings reveal that family, friends, fellow country women, church mates, pastors, neighbours, and colleagues assist participants with information about jobs, money for food and accommodation, teaching them hairdressing skills and also giving them part-time domestic jobs. The participants' views are reflected below:

- *I am able to plait my colleagues and their families to make extra money but sometimes when the money is not enough, I get assistance from my church pastor but he is only able to give me small amounts like R300/R400.*
- *My friends, neighbors and church mates help me all the time. Some assist with giving me part time domestic work, others refer me to their friends and family members for part-time jobs. I have also many church mates that give me goods to sell on their behalf then I get commission from that.*

- *My friends saw that I and my children were struggling because I could not find a job and failed to meet my daily needs so they taught me how to be a hairdresser, which is what I am now doing for survival.*

However, a minority of the participants cited lack of adequate support from their relatives. They reported not to have parents or other relatives in South Africa supporting them:

- *As an 18-year-old, it is difficult to restart your life in a new country without a mother or a father to support you.*
- *Life is difficult for us refugees especially if you do not have any family to rely on. If I tell you that I have an aunt or an uncle here in South Africa, I will be lying. My only relatives are my children.*

Amisi (2006:17) attests that without family support, refugee women struggle to get accommodation when they arrive in South Africa for the first time and to integrate into the society. Robison et al. (2002:2) indicate that many refugee women are reported to be lacking social assets which comprise of family who share information, norms, culture, networks and have a caring, organised and trusting relationship (Robison et al., 2002:2).

Sub-theme: 5.4 Location of Sunnyside Community

Many participants also benefit from the support they receive from the Sunnyside community. Sunnyside is located close to the CBD and other residential areas, which makes it easier for the participants to walk and look for jobs and clients. The Sunnyside community sometimes assists with information about employment opportunities, for instance Shoprite and Spar offer job opportunities to refugee women. Vacancies for hairdressers, domestic workers and other services are advertised even in the streets thus helping refugee women to get clients and jobs, for instance a participant that got a teaching trainee post at a private school. Participants also revealed that in Sunnyside there are many internet cafes which they are able to use to look for job opportunities. However, the issue of not having

an identity document continued to surface as an obstacle to successful access of available job opportunities. The participants explained their experiences as follows:

- *I stand everyday in the streets in Sunnyside and advertise my hairdressing skills for me to get clients and Sunnyside also has many hair salons which is easier for us hairdressers to get jobs.*
- *Sunnyside area is good because you are able to save money for transport since I can work in town and walk to work and my children are able to walk to the schools that are in and around Sunnyside.*
- *There are many internet cafes in Sunnyside thus refugee women are able to go there and look for jobs. Also in Esselen Street they sometimes advertise jobs in shop windows; that is how I found my warehouse supervisor job. Businesses in Sunnyside like Shoprite and Spar also employ refugee women.*
- *I heard from my friends that stay in Sunnyside that there was a teaching trainee post at a private school in Pretoria Central so I tried my luck and applied. A few months later I got the job and I am glad because I am paid a monthly stipend of R2500 which I use to meet my family's needs.*

Sub-theme: 5.5 Availability of day-care centres in Sunnyside area

The availability of many day-care centres in and around Sunnyside was highlighted by a few participants, which makes it easier for participants to leave their children when going to find employment or going to work:

- *There are many day-care centers in Sunnyside, so if I get a job, I will be able to find somewhere to leave my children.*

The struggle of refugee women to integrate into society without family support is confirmed by Amisi (2006:17). The value of social assets are emphasised by Serrat (2008:2) who identifies social assets as relations of trust, mutual understanding and support. Robison et al. (2002:5) and Larance (2001:14) also emphasise that social assets make it possible for human beings to use other forms of assets, for instance physical assets and human assets and encourage the formation of ties which allow

individuals to share scarce resources. Njagi (2005:22) refers to financial assets as central to the functioning of the economy and vital when it comes to successfully utilising all the other forms of capital.

Sub- theme: 5.6 Financial support and challenges

Allen, Otchere and Senbet (2011:1) state that financial support systems entail banking systems and non-banking institutions that include stock markets, fixed income markets, microfinance institutions and insurance markets. Hence, a financial support system should assist refugee women to have access to credit to start their own small businesses, to be able to save their monthly incomes in banks of their choice and apply for insurance in case of any emergencies. Therefore, for refugee women to access any financial support system, they should have a bank account and a stable job and income. Lack of financial assistance from local NGOs, and insufficient financial resources, were highlighted as the main challenges that are hindering them from attaining a sustainable monthly income.

Category: 5.6.1 Lack of financial support to start businesses

A few participants indicated that they have the skills to operate a business, but are unable to start businesses such as reselling or renting a chair in a hair salon, due to lack of capital. Further revelations by participants included a lack of knowledge of how to get financial assistance. Furthermore, many refugee women reported that they are unable to open bank accounts due to the unstable income they have in jobs such as part-time domestic work and hairdressing. Furthermore, participants indicated that they do not have the required proof of income and identity documents to open bank accounts and also to find adequate permanent employment. The words of the participants are captured below:

- *I am not able to start a business of reselling because I do not have money and I do not know where to go for assistance.*
- *I am not able to rent a chair in the hair salons because I do not have the money since I have to pay rent and buy food for my children.*

- *I am struggling to start my own business because of my finances that are not stable and I applied for assistance at JRS but I have been making several follow ups without any success.*
- *I am not able to open a bank account because I do not have an identity document and this made it difficult for me to get a job since the employers need somewhere to deposit your salary directly.*
- *The banks request proof of income which is difficult for me since I work on a part-time basis, doing laundry and child care and sometimes get money from my relatives.*

Category: 5.6.2 Financial expectations and demands from the refugee women's family

A few refugee women mentioned their frustrations caused by demands for money by their parents, relatives and children from their previous marriages who are in their countries of origin. They indicated that the extended family expect financial support for food and school fees yet they are struggling to meet their own needs and the needs of their children. Their frustrations are reflected in the following quotes:

- *I have children from my previous marriage and my husband has older children of his own too, and all of them need money for school fees and food thus they expect us to sent money to DRC regularly yet my husband is sick and unemployed and I am working on a part-time basis, as a domestic worker.*
- *My parents back home in Somalia expect me to sent them money yet I am not working and struggling to meet my family's needs, since I am depending on my children's child-support grants and my husband's salary which is not enough.*

Ayadurai (2011:8) allude that refugee women end up opting for opportunities within the informal sector. However, Addo (2008:82) points out that within the informal sector refugee women continue to encounter numerous challenges such as failing to access loans and credit, open a bank account, or to attain financial assistance at the

banks. Without bank accounts refugee women are not able to attain financial assets which are viewed by Njagi (2005:22) as aspects that support livelihoods such as cash flow, investments and savings.

Theme 6: Strategies to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods

Participants were asked what should be put in place to assist them with earning a sustainable livelihood. Strategies include a role for government and NGOs to provide business opportunities, adequate financial support to start businesses, job opportunities, sustainable income generating projects, educational opportunities to empower refugee women and adequate policies that protect refugee women and support them to get identity documents and refugee statuses. The researcher integrated their suggestions with her recommendations in facilitating a shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods in Chapter 4 (see 4.4). The following quotes reflect the participants' proposed strategies:

- *We need to be assisted with getting all the required documents and money to register at SAQA. The government should also be lenient with refugee women and should liaise with different institutions to make the whole process easier.*
- *Assistance with getting a job or funding to start a business in buying and selling items. Also to be provided with business management training to make sure that the business will be successful.*
- *South African government should be strict with their policies that involve the police protecting refugee women since they are also raped. Business training for refugee women to be self-reliant, sustainable and entrepreneurs are needed. Also teaching them how to start a business. It is important to involve refugee women, to participate in identifying their problems and solutions. Also listening to them, assessing what they are able to do and their needs and not judging them from a distance.*

- *Government laws should be improved because I feel that companies do not have anything against refugee women but it is the government that expects them to employ South Africans in certain positions and have to prove why they are employing refugees. Even at colleges they also check if students have valid documents since she was once called by inspectors while studying at Rosebank College.*
- *Promotion of human rights to provide us with accommodation since we are chased into the streets the minute you do not rent and that will affect your privacy.*
- *It is easier when refugees have identity documents thus refugee women should be assisted with getting identity documents, which make it easier for them to open accounts and get jobs.*

3.9 Summary

Chapter Three discussed the research and methodology of the study; the pilot study; the ethical issues related to the study, and limitations of the study. Furthermore, the research findings were presented and discussed, and integrated with literature. The next chapter will present the key findings of the study, draw conclusions and make recommendations.

CHAPTER 4

KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the research report. It firstly focuses on how the goal and objectives of the study were accomplished. Next the key findings of the study are presented, followed by the conclusions drawn from the findings. Finally, recommendations are provided.

4.2 Goal and objectives

The goal of the study was to explore the challenges that refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies. The goal of the study was attained through the fulfilment of the following objectives:

Objective 1

- To contextualise the situation and challenges of refugee women from a Sustainable Livelihoods Approach.

This objective was achieved in the literature review, Chapter Two, sub-section 2.2, where the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) was presented as a guiding tool that can be utilised to improve the lives of refugee women to help them attain sustainable livelihoods. The objective was further met in sub-section 2.3 when the researcher discussed the policies and legislation pertaining to refugee women in South Africa. It was indicated that refugee women encounter many challenges despite all the policies and legislation which are in place to protect them. Furthermore, the researcher emphasised the importance and challenges of policy

implementation in improving refugee women's self-reliance by increasing their access to civil and socio-economic rights.

Objective 2

- To explore the extent to which access to education, employment, food security, health care services, adequate shelter, water and sanitation pose challenges to refugee women to attain sustainable livelihoods.

This objective was accomplished in both the literature review (Chapter Two), and the empirical findings (Chapter Three) of the study. In Chapter Two, sub-section 2.4, the socio-economic challenges encountered by refugee women to attain sustainable livelihoods were discussed. The literature findings revealed that refugee women continue to struggle in all the spheres of their lives which affect them physically, emotionally and psychologically. In Chapter Three, sub-section 3.7.2, findings indicated that participants encounter challenges in relation to access to education, employment, health care services, shelter, water and sanitation. Furthermore, challenges are increased by the Department of Home Affairs' failure to provide identity documents for refugees and hence, limiting their access to social protection, and having their basic needs.

Objective 3

- To explore the strategies that refugee women use for survival.

Objective 3 was met both in Chapters Two and Three. The literature review explored the challenges for refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods (see Chapter Two, sub-section 2.6). Strategies that were explored and discussed include social protection, provision of capacity building, availability of a labour market, local integration and coping strategies. In the empirical study findings (see Chapter Three, sub-section 3.7.2), participants' challenges related to job/employment opportunities for refugee women. Findings indicated that many refugee women work on a part-time basis, including having more than one job at a time, such as domestic workers, hairdressers and cleaners.

Objective 4

- To explore resources and assets available to refugee women to develop sustainable livelihood strategies.

Objective 4 was addressed in the literature review, Chapter Two sub-section 2.5, where the resources and assets that are available for refugee women were identified and discussed. The particular assets that were identified included human assets, natural assets, physical assets and financial assets which are essential aspects for sustainable livelihoods. The objective was also met in the empirical study findings; Chapter Three, sub-section 3.7.2 (see theme 1, category 1.4), where the available opportunities for skills development, training and further education that can be used by refugee women, were discussed. The objective was further addressed in theme 5 where participants highlighted the assistance they receive from local NGOs such as Future Families, and the government which includes material support, psycho-social support and empowerment programmes.

Objective 5

- To propose strategies for refugee women to achieve sustainable livelihoods.

Objective 5 was attained in the empirical study findings as well as in this chapter. In Chapter Three, sub-section 3.7.2 (see theme 6), participants proposed strategies to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods. These proposals are incorporated in the recommendations discussed in this chapter (see section 4.4). By giving participants a voice through this study, to recommend strategies that might help improve their lives, recognised their strengths and emphasised the importance of being empowered in search of achieving sustainable livelihoods.

4.3 Key findings and conclusions

In this section, key findings are presented, followed by a specific conclusion for each of the findings.

- ❖ Most refugee women find it extremely difficult to find an adequate permanent job despite being educated or having stayed in the country for a long period. If they do get a job, it is mostly part time, or more than one part-time job at a time to make ends meet. Due to a lack of decent work, their income remains low, which

in turn, influences their access to adequate health services, further education, education for their children, adequate shelter, and food security.

- The socio-economic challenges that the refugee women face, keep them trapped in poverty, expose them to discrimination, violence, exclusion, and humiliation.
- ❖ Refugee women's lack of economic opportunities are linked to not having identification documents, lack of financial support to start their own small businesses, and language challenges which, in turn, influence their communication skills.
- Language proficiency is important for communication, and utilising of opportunities for a better life, including finding a job, using social services, and for local integration. A lack of identification documents continues the financial struggle of refugee women. Identification is essential to open a bank account; it a first step to an application for any loan or credit, and it is also a first requirement from an employer to deposit employees' monthly income.
- ❖ The Department of Home Affairs fails to protect refugee women by not improving the system of issuing identity documents and implementing the policies and legislation that are supposed to protect them. The lack of identification documents negatively impacts their access to employment, health services, education, social services, and housing.
- Identity documents are the key to receiving refugee status, and attaining social and economic rights; in particular social protection, and to live without fear of being exploited.
- ❖ In their attempts to provide a roof over their heads, refugee women are putting themselves at risk of crime, violence, health risks, and not having any privacy while sharing with strangers who help them pay their rentals.
- Refugee women and their families are deprived of their basic human rights as stated in the South African Constitution (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996). This includes the right to basic education, food security, shelter and safety and security. Furthermore, the political will in implementing legislation and policies that is supposed to protect refugee women, such as the Refugee Act 130 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1998), is questioned.

- ❖ Findings reveal that refugee women encounter challenges regarding xenophobia which is most evident in hospitals and clinics but also in attaining job opportunities, in banks and within the Sunnyside community.
- The reality of xenophobia is evident in isolating refugees, making them live in constant fear, and imposing a threat to their dignity and rights to attain adequate health care and adequate jobs as well as access to education for both themselves and their children. This also hinders the chances of empowering refugee women to attain sustainable livelihoods.

- ❖ The findings indicate that the majority of the participants were benefiting from the support and social services provided by NGOs, especially Future Families and Jesuits Refugee Services. Most of them benefit from food vouchers, others receive money for accommodation, school fees, and psycho-social and emotional support. However, they are not satisfied with the support they receive as they expect more, especially from NGOs.
- Refugee women continue to benefit from the support and social services they receive from various NGOs as they assist them with survival strategies and increase their resilience. However, NGOs depend on donors who have specific criteria for funding. Refugee women confuse NGOs' role with entitlement to financial support. It also reflects a misunderstanding of the capacity of NGOs to assist them to obtain sustainable livelihoods.

- ❖ Findings reveal that tertiary education does not necessarily provide access to adequate job opportunities. Furthermore, many participants reported that opportunities for skills development, training and further education are available, but difficult for them to utilise due to their poor financial circumstances. In addition, they do not have money to have their qualifications evaluated at SAQA. Furthermore, they cannot take up education opportunities, as they need to work and provide for their families; they also lack money to pay for day-care centres for their children while they study.
- It is difficult for many refugee women to upgrade their vocational skills to increase their employability, due to their circumstances that are beyond their control. Thus, as they are challenged to improve their current circumstances, refugee women

are in dire need to access social grants, especially the child support grant, to enable them to increase their chances for a better life for themselves and their families.

4.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations to address the challenges that refugee women encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods. The recommendations refer to policy implementation, and government's role; NGO services and social grants.

4.4.1 Policy implementation

With regard to policy implementation, the following recommendations are made:

Adequate implementation of the South African Refugee Act 130 of 1998 will increase the provision of social protection and will promote basic civil, social and economic rights for refugee women. It is also important for the government to include strategies that support the implementation of different refugee policies and legislation; for instance, the government should increase strategies to stop xenophobia in order to protect refugee women from exploitation and exclusion. Monitoring mechanisms should also be put in place to ensure that the South African Police Services (SAPS) protect refugees adequately and promote their human rights and dignity.

The government should support policies that promote the provision of adequate financial support for refugee women to start businesses. Government should also provide business opportunities which can help them to get money in order for them to provide for their families. Business opportunities can bring about sustainability, self-reliance and help refugee women to become entrepreneurs.

The following government departments can play a role in promoting sustainable livelihoods for refugee women:

- The Department of Labour should implement policies that limit refugee women's restrictions to adequate employment in order to help them attain sustainable livelihoods. These policies should include access to information centres where refugee women can get information about job opportunities, bursaries, skills development, and are able to register their curriculum vitae. As highlighted by participants', this particular Department should include in its policies the provision to employ refugee women in local companies and businesses. Referring refugee women for job opportunities or on-the-job training will make it easier for them to acquire employment. Furthermore, mechanisms should be put in place to help refugee women to get all the needed documents that will help them to qualify for work. The Department should also provide information about how refugee women can apply for business licences to avoid them being harassed by metro police officers.
- The Department of Higher Education should amend its policies and include aspects that promote tertiary education for refugees. This includes providing information and financial assistance for evaluating their qualifications at SAQA, to enable them to compete within the economic market. Furthermore, the Department should not exclude refugee women from benefits such as the South African National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) which is a policy that was adopted to assist mainly marginalised and disadvantaged individuals to attain tertiary education and other bursaries for skills development programmes. The government should also provide adequate financial support for refugee women to be able to enroll at tertiary institutions.
- The provision of local language lessons would assist refugee women to acquire basic services, attain jobs and with local integration.
- Furthermore, the provision of adequate English lessons to refugee women will improve their communication skills, and help to increase their chances of acquiring the needed resources for them to attain sustainable livelihoods. The Department of Higher Education in partnership with NGOs, should provide adequate educational opportunities to help refugee women acquire South African

qualifications which would make it easier for them to have the same opportunities as South African citizens.

- The Department of Basic Education should ensure that school fees provisions and regulations meet the needs of refugees; especially school fees exemptions for their children and protecting them from school principals that have negative attitudes towards refugee children and their families.
- The Department of Health should monitor implementation of policies and mechanisms that ensure that refugee women's right to health is protected and adequate health care services are provided.
- The Department of Home Affairs should improve its networking with other departments such as the Department of Health, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education, to help improve refugees' attainment of basic services which include health, social services and education.
- Furthermore, the Department of Home Affairs should address the challenges that limit the provision of refugee status, permanent residence and identity documents to refugee women to help them attain their right to identification. Increased opportunities for refugee women to attain such identification particulars would make it easier for them to open bank accounts and get financial opportunities that can change their lives.

4.4.2 NGO services

NGOs such as Future Families, JRS, Catholic Women's League, UNHCR and other refugee organisations who render services to refugees, should work in collaboration with the government to provide adequate assistance to refugee women to enable them to be successfully integrated into the community. Adequate needs assessment, guidance, support, counselling, referrals to other stakeholders and follow-ups should be provided in order to meet the needs of refugee women. It is also vital for NGOs to clarify their services and selection criteria in order for them to deal with the issue of entitlement, frustration and the confusion that abound among many refugee women regarding services that they are expecting to receive from NGOs. NGOs should

facilitate day-care centres for refugee women who are working to help them stay employed. Opportunities for unemployed refugee women to be involved in Early Childhood Development should also be promoted.

4.4.3 Social Grants

South African Social Services Association (SASSA) should promote adequate access to social grants for refugee women and children, including social relief of distress, pension and disability grants in order to help them meet their basic needs and that of their families.

Adequate information about the child support grants should also be made available to the refugee women, for example for how long they are entitled to a child support grant and what are the qualifying requirements.

4.4.4 Future research

Further research is recommended on the proposed strategies in this study, and in particular on how they can fill the gaps between implementation, coordination and monitoring of refugee policies, and its impact on social and economic inclusion of refugees.

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Annexure A

Semi-structured interview schedule

Refugee women

Goal of the study: The goal of the study is to explore the challenges that refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies.

Section A: Biographical details

Please provide the following details:

1. Age Group

18-22	23-27	28-32	33-37	38-42	43-47	48-52	53-57	58+
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2. How long have you been in South Africa? _____

3. When did you receive your refugee status? _____

4. What kind of services have you been receiving from future families? _____

Section B: Questions on livelihoods

1. What are the challenges that you experience as a refugee woman?
2. What economic/ job opportunities do you have access to in order to earn a living?
3. What opportunities do you have for skills development, training and/ or further education?
4. How would you explain your housing/ shelter in relation to your needs?
5. What is your experience in having access to clean water and sanitation?
6. How do you provide for food on a daily basis?
7. What is your experience with having access to health care services?
8. What resources and/ or assets are available to you to earn a sustainable monthly income?
9. What should be put in place to assist you with earning a decent income so that you can provide for yourself and your family on a daily basis?



Annexure B



NPO 084-926
PBO 930034781

To whom it may concern

23 February 2015

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT FUTURE FAMILIES SUNNYSIDE

Future Families Sunnyside office hereby gives Doreen Maigurira permission to conduct her research at our office within the Sunnyside community.

We adhere in giving her full support and the needed information available in order for her to complete her research.

Our best wishes accompany her.

Kind Regards

Jolande Jooste
Programme Manager/Social Worker
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Sunnyside
012 320 6838

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Sunnyside

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Centre
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Empowering families to create their own future



Annexure C



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Research Ethics Committee

18 June 2015

Dear Prof Lombard

Project: Challenges to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies: case study of refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane
Researcher: D Tihabyani
Supervisor: Prof A Lombard
Department: Social Work and Criminology
Reference number: 11311836 (GW20150517HS)

Thank you for your response to the Committee's correspondence of 5 June 2015.

I have pleasure in informing you that the Research Ethics Committee formally **approved** the above study at an *ad hoc* meeting held on 18 June 2015. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should your actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

The Committee requests you to convey this approval to the researcher.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof. Karen Harris
Acting Chair: Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: karen.harris@up.ac.za

Kindly note that your original signed approval certificate will be sent to your supervisor via the Head of Department. Please liaise with your supervisor.

Research Ethics Committee Members: Prof KL Harris (Acting Chair); Dr L Blokland; Prof M-H Coetzee; Dr JEH Grobler; Prof B Hogmeyer; Ms H Klopper; Dr C Panebianco-Warrens; Dr C Puttergill; Prof GM Spies; Dr Y Spies; Prof E Tajard; Dr P Wood



Annexure D



12/06/2015

Our Ref: Researcher: Doreen Maigurira
Mobile: 0786755268
Email: Doreen.maigurira@gmail.com

Letter of informed consent for participants (Refugee Women in Sunnyside)

The information below will attempt to give you all the details that pertain to your participation in this study. It is very important for you to read through all sections, so that you are aware of what you are consenting to. If you agree to be interviewed in this study please sign the consent declaration that you will find at the end of this document.

Title of Study: Challenges to shift from survival to sustainable livelihoods: Case study of refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane.

Goal of the study: The goal of the study is to explore the challenges that refugee women in Sunnyside, Tshwane encounter to shift from survival to sustainable livelihood strategies.

Procedures: I understand that as a participant in this study, I am expected to attend a one-on-one interview meant to explore the challenges that I, as refugee woman, encounter in shifting from a survival to sustainable livelihood. I am aware that the interview will be scheduled for approximately 60 minutes. I take note that the venue of the interview will be at the office of Future Families at a time that is convenient for me. I give full consent to the researcher to use audio tapes to record the whole interview.

Risks and discomforts: As I have been informed, I take note that the study will not have any unforeseen risks and discomforts. However, I understand and I am aware that the research may disturb me as it may remind me of some emotional challenges that I encounter as a refugee. Hence, I have been informed that the researcher will provide debriefing after every interview. If necessary, I will be referred for counselling or therapy to a social worker of Future Families.

Benefits: I understand that there are no financial benefits or any other incentives offered to participate in the study. However, I understand that I could indirectly benefit by strategies for that will be proposed as an outcome of the study which could assist me in earning a sustainable livelihood.

Participants' rights: I am fully aware that participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw my participation at any time without any negative consequences.

Right of access to the researcher: I understand that the researcher will always make time during and after the interview to provide clarity on any issues that I have questions on.

Confidentiality: I am aware that the information shared during the interview is supposed to be kept with utmost confidentiality and that it will not be linked to me directly in any way that would identify me. I understand that if I withdraw from the study, the information that I would have shared in the interview will be destroyed and that I am not supposed to discuss it with anyone. I am also aware that the researcher is supposed to compile a research report that have to be submitted to the University of Pretoria for academic purposes and that the research findings will be submitted for publication to a scientific journal. I understand that, other than the researcher and her supervisor no one will have access to the research data and that both will treat it with confidentiality. I am also aware that according to the stipulations of the University of Pretoria, raw data will be kept securely for a minimum of 15 years and that it will not be used for any other purposes, without my informed consent.

My signature on this letter of consent, is a confirmation that I have read and clearly understood the content thereof. I understand by signing this letter of informed consent, I do not give up any legal rights.

Participant (Print name) Participant's Signature Date

Researcher (Print name) Researcher's Signature Date