

**Terence Madzimore**

**Socio-Economic Impact of Refugees on  
Host Communities. The Case of Tongogara  
Refugee Camp in Chipinge District,  
Zimbabwe**

**Master's Thesis**

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**FACULTY OF COMMERCE**  
**INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (IDS)**

**THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF REFUGEES IN  
TONGOGARA REFUGEE CAMP ON THE HOST COMMUNITY  
IN CHIPINGE DISTRICT.**

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree

Of

Master of Science (MSc) in Development Studies

By

Terence Madzimure

## **ABSTRACT**

This research is concerned with refugees and their impact on the host community. In refugee hosting areas, the local communities face various economic, social and cultural challenges as they interact with refugees. This study investigated the socio-economic impact of refugees from Tongogara refugee Camp on the host community of Chipinge District, Zimbabwe. A qualitative approach was used to conduct the research and the researcher used focus group discussions, interview guides and questionnaires. Since the research was qualitative, the researcher obtained data from key informants and the units of analysis included the refugees who are mostly involved in business, the host population who interacts with the refugees, the local authorities, UNHCR and other representatives of Organizations working in the Camp. The research established that despite the Zimbabwe Government's encampment policy, the refugees were free to interact with the local communities and to trade in the District. The research found that there were both positive and negative social and economic impacts associated with the presence of the Tongogara Refugee Camp. Some of the positive impacts included infrastructure development, provision of transport services and creation of market places for both the locals and refugees. Negative impacts included deforestation, theft, social ills like prostitution and alcohol abuse. The study also found that there was a good social relationship between the refugees and the host community on the whole. However, competition for common property resources proved to be a key source of tension between the two groups. The researcher gathered that the Government of Zimbabwe and other local authorities had to revisit some of their policies as well as to support both the refugees and the locals for them to fully utilize the economic and social benefits that the presence of refugees bring and also mitigating the negative impacts that they also bring. This can be done by integrating the refugees into the formal employment working system, providing working permits for the refugees so that they can freely work, extend projects to the host communities which are specifically for them and also to provide financial assistance to refugees so that they can engage in income generating projects that sustain them.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to all the refugees and mostly those in Tongogara refugee Camp where the research was undertaken. The researcher was moved by the plight of the refugees from their journey from the country of origin to the host country, their protracted situation and their uncertainty about being resettled to a third country, being repatriated or re-intergrated in the country of host. The research sought to find out the social and economic impacts the refugees from Tongogara Refugee Camp have on the host community of Chipinge District.