

Contribution of Refugees on the Economy of Rwanda

A study by the University of California Davis* provided empirical evidence of the positive economic impact of refugees on Rwanda's economy. The key findings include:

- One additional camp-based refugee receiving cash assistance increases annual real income in the local economy within a 10-km radius around the camp by **\$205 to \$253** (as compared to \$120–\$126 in camps where assistance is provided in-kind-Fig.1)
- Refugees boost trade between the local economy and the rest of Rwanda, by **\$49 to \$55** per refugee per year (Fig.1)
- **34-47%** of refugees in camps have some wage income
- On average a camp-based refugee has an income of **USD 73** per year in addition to received aid
- **8-13%** of refugees in camps own a business
- **8-20%** of refugees in camps receive remittances

Another study by the University of Maastricht** revealed that:

- A Rwandan residing within 10 km radius from a refugee camp is 90% more likely to be engaged in wage employment in comparison to someone located beyond 20 km from a camp.
- Living within 10 km of a refugee camp results in a household having greater asset ownership in comparison to those living beyond 20 km radius

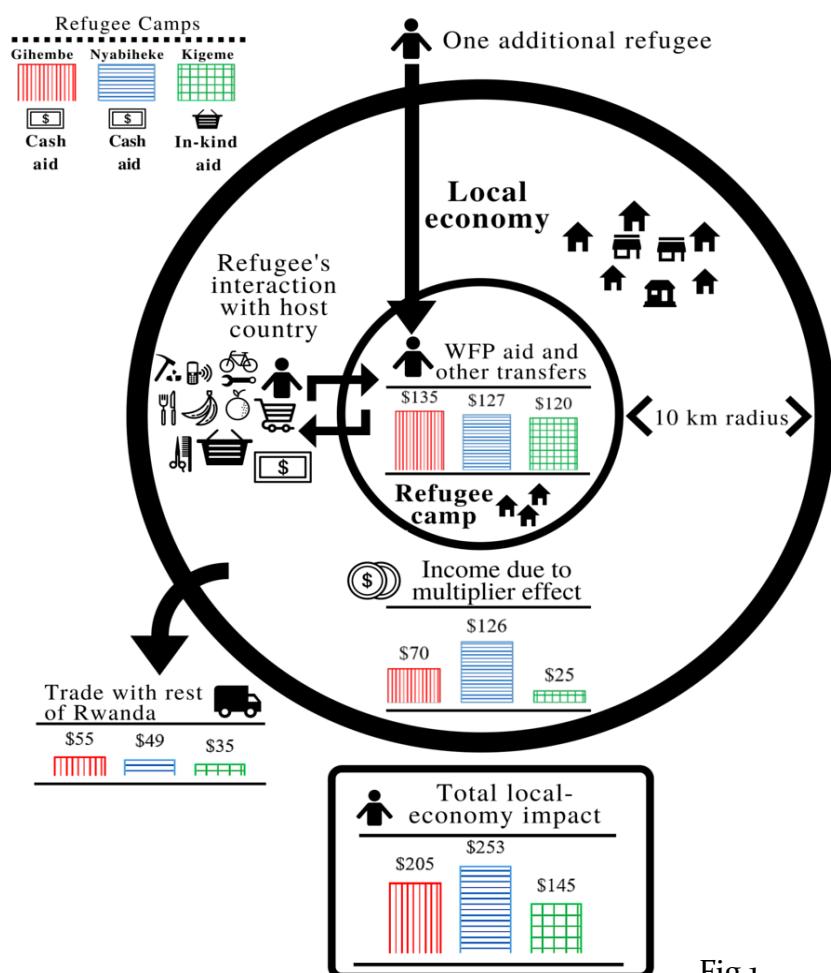


Fig.1

Example of a refugee who contributes to Rwanda's economy

- Gilbert Ngongo, a refugee, is the CEO of Sea Food Ltd – a **Rwandan company** which supplies many of Kigali's most upscale hotels and restaurants with seafood
- Self-financed corporate investment of **RWF 300,000,000**
- Sales per year: **RWF 1,128,000,000 (USD 1.3 million)**
- Paying taxes to the Rwandan Revenue Authority
- Works with investors to generate Foreign Direct Investment to Rwanda
- Number of employees: **14**

Key enablers for refugees to contribute to Rwanda's Development:

- Shift to Cash Based Intervention by humanitarian agencies
- Refugees being fluent in Kinyarwanda (or Kirundi)
- Freedom to work, move and in all ways participate in Rwanda's economy as consumers, entrepreneurs and employees
- Moves towards alternatives to camps and socio-economic inclusion



CEO of Sea Food Ltd and Congolese refugees
GILBERT NGONGO

*University of California Davis: Economic Impact of Refugees: Findings from Three Congolese Refugee Camps of in Rwanda (Taylor et al, 2016)

**University of Maastricht: The Local Economic Impact of Hosting Refugees: The Case of Congolese Refugees in Rwanda (Loschmann et al, 2016)

Refugee Economic Inclusion Website

<http://www.unhcr.org/rw/livelihoods>

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