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Is Local Social Cohesion Influenced by Hosting Refugees?

The Case of Congolese Refugees in Rwanda

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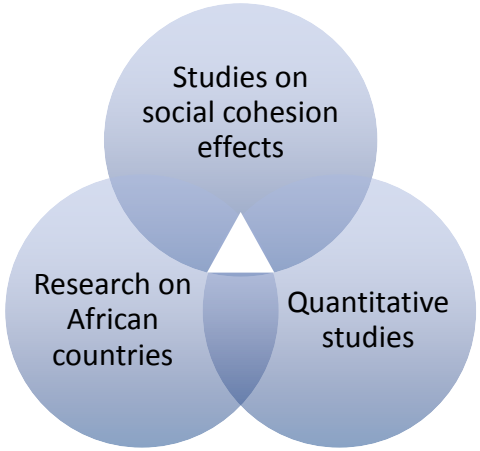
Introduction

- Local inhabitants of developing countries: world's main refugee hosts
  - From refugees to hosts: the case of Rwanda

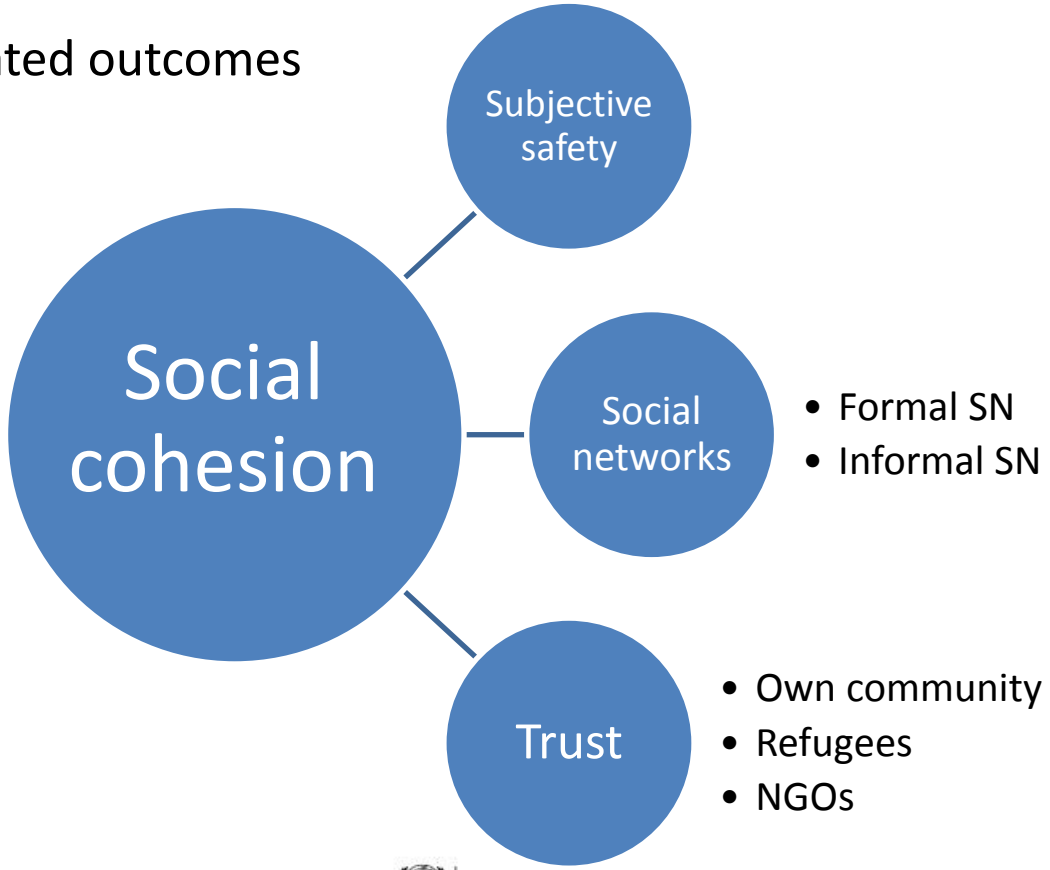
- UNHCR-funded project – impact of DRC refugees on Rwandans
  - Duration: Sept. 2015 – Dec. 2016
  - Labor market, Health, Education, Social infrastructure

- Why the need for a study on the social cohesion impact?
  - Basis of functional society
  - Persisting gaps in the literature



Research Question

How is the **presence of** Congolese **refugees** linked to **social cohesion**-related outcomes in Rwandan communities?



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Theory and previous studies

‘Hunkering down’ thesis (Putnam, 2007)

- Increase in diversity → Inhabitants withdrawn from society, less trust
- Changes in attitudes over time

Limited research and mixed results

- **Safety**: Increased threats (e.g. Codjoe et al., 2012; UNHCR, 2003)
  vs. no effect (Schmeidl, 2002)
  vs. not due to refugees (Rutinwa & Kamanga, 2003)
- **Social networks**: Positive effect of migrant stock (Kesler & Bloemraad, 2010)
  vs. Negative impact of refugees (Whitaker, 2009)
- **Trust**: No negative effect of diversity on general trust (Hooghe et al, 2008)
  Sources of hostility towards refugees (e.g. World Bank, 2013)
  NGOs: mixed effects for locals (Whitaker, 2009)

Rwanda: A refugee host since late 1990s

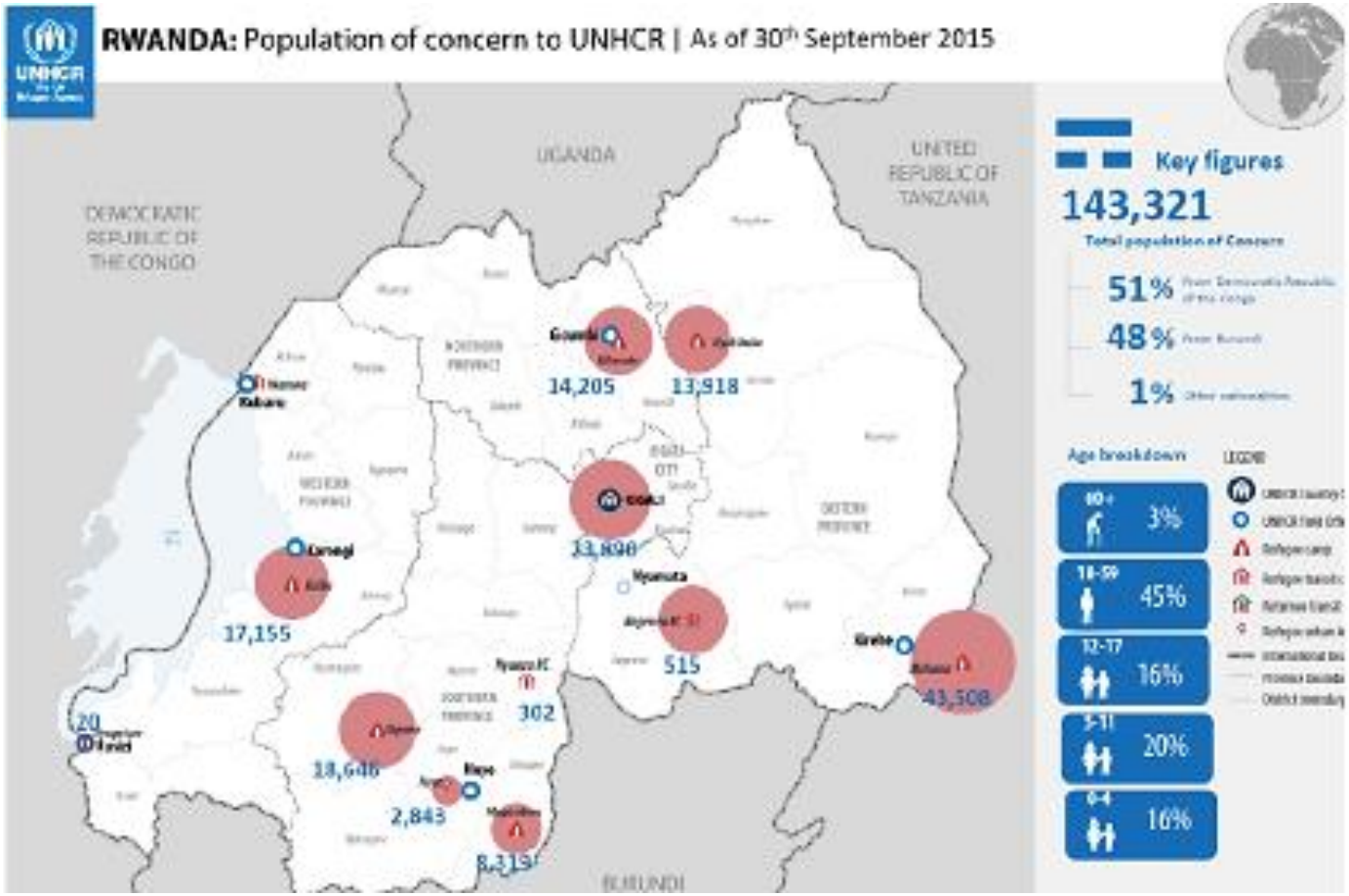
- ~75,000 Congolese refugees in the country today
- Vast majority in a protracted situation in one of 5 camps.

- An unusually inclusive refugee policy, fosters social mixing
  - Refugees free to participate in labor market and public sphere
  - Economic interactions between locals and refugees

	Year established	Total population (2015)	Refugee population relative to local pop.
Gihembe	1997	14,205	21%
Kigeme	1995 (2012)	18,646	21%
Kiziba	1996	17,155	17%

Sources: MIDIMAR, 2016; National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2012; UNHCR, 2015 (as of 09/2015).

Rwanda: A refugee host since late 1990s



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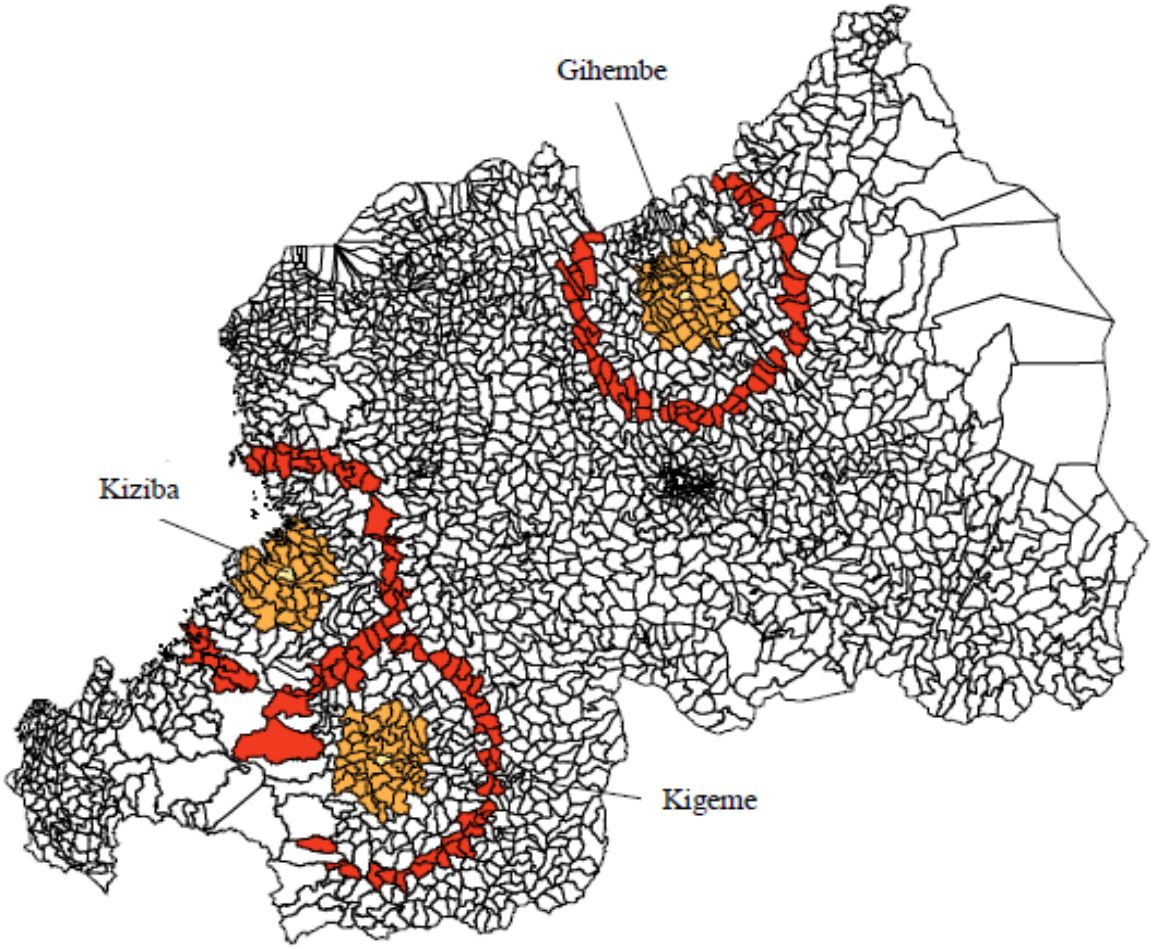
Sampling strategy



Note: Own generation based on publicly available administrative GIS data. Yellow cells indicate the location of each refugee camp. Orange cells are those within 10 km of each camp. Red cells are those above 20 km of each camp.

Data and methods

Sample in host communities, by distance to the nearest camp

	Gihembe		Kigeme		Kiziba		Total	
	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%
< 10 km	151	32.61	156	33.69	156	33.69	463	49.62
> 20 km	157	33.4	157	33.4	156	33.19	470	50.38
Total	308	33.01	313	33.55	312	33.44	933	100

Empirical approach:

- Logistic regression analysis
- Main variable of interest: **camp proximity** (<10 km vs. >20 km)
  - Include camp specific effects of proximity [interactions]
- Complement with focus group discussions

Measurement of social cohesion outcomes

	Safety	Social networks		Trust		
Variable	Subjective safety	Formal	Informal	Community	Refugees	NGOs
Measure	Feels safe in community (binary from 1-5 scale)	Organizational membership (any/none)	Informal support network (anyone/no one)	Binary variables from 1-5 trust scale		
1	Completely safe/ Mostly safe/ Neutral	Active member of 1+ community organization	1+ person to count of for sudden financial help	Completely trust/ Quite a lot of trust/ Neutral		
0	A little safe/ Not at all safe	No membership	0 people to count on	Little trust/ No trust at all		

Descriptive differences of HH's social cohesion indicators

Descriptive differences of local households by communities' distance from refugee camp

	Local communities				
	Short distance (=<10km)		Long distance (~20km)		
	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.	N
Subjective safety	400	86.39	403	85.74	803
Formal network	216	46.65	228	48.51	444
Informal network for assistance	225	48.60	179	38.09	404**
Trust in people from own community	368	79.48	391	83.19	759
Trust in international organizations and NGOs	426	92.01	435	92.55	861
Trust in refugees in Rwanda	374	80.78	379	80.64	753

Note: ** indicates statistically significant mean difference across groups at the 5 percent level

Descriptive differences of control variables

Summary statistics of the sample (by community's distance from refugee camp)

	<10km		>20km			
	Freq. / Mean	Perc./ St. Dev.	Freq. / Mean	Perc./ St. Dev.	N	Perc. (of total)
Female	282	60.91	275	58.51	557	59.7
Married	338	73	322	68.51	660	70.74
Literate	306	66.09	298	63.4	604	64.74
At least one employed member in the household	426	92.01	451	95.96	877	94
Share of children vs. adults in household	1.01	0.86	0.97	0.82		
Monthly household income (RWF)	47,546.07	13,0784.2	25,398.24	46,095.87		
Household size	4.98	2.09	4.61	2.11		
Closest refugee camp						
Kigeme	156	33.69	157	33.4	313	33.55
Kiziba	156	33.69	156	33.19	312	33.44
Gihembe	151	32.61	157	33.4	308	33.01
N	463	49.62	470	50.38	933	100

Results (1a): Safety and social networks

Subjective safety and social networks (Odds ratios presented)

	Subjective safety		Formal network		Informal network for assistance	
Lives in proximity of refugee camp	1.11		0.90		1.48**	
	(0.24)		(0.15)		(0.24)	
Short distance from Kigeme		0.87		2.45***		2.31***
		(0.37)		(0.54)		(0.54)
Short distance from Kiziba		1.20		0.84		1.55*
		(0.34)		(0.16)		(0.40)
Short distance from Gihembe		1.44		0.35***		0.91
		(0.69)		(0.09)		(0.25)
Controls	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Pseudo R2	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.04
Observations	933	933	933	933	933	933

Note: *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.10. Kiziba is the reference camp. Standard errors in parentheses are clustered at the community level.

"The only issue we have here is poverty, we do not have any problems with refugees." – P. 3, Kigeme <10 km
"The first issue that rose was stealing goats from local people, but it has been while without complaining about that"– Participant 5, Kigeme <10 km

Results (1b): Safety and social networks

Subjective safety and social networks (Odds ratios presented)

	Subjective safety		Formal network		Informal network for assistance	
Female	0.64***	0.66**	0.85	0.76	1.02	0.98
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.17)	(0.18)
Literate	0.82	0.82	1.32**	1.32**	1.67***	1.67***
	(0.18)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.26)
Income quintile (household)	1.10	1.10*	1.21***	1.20***	1.12**	1.11*
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Kigeme	1.18	1.38	1.20	0.71	0.71*	0.57***
	(0.30)	(0.54)	(0.24)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.12)
Gihembe	2.46***	2.26***	0.81	1.24	0.64**	0.84
	(0.64)	(0.69)	(0.16)	(0.29)	(0.13)	(0.22)
Kiziba	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)
Other controls	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Pseudo R2	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.04
Observations	933	933	933	933	933	933

Note: *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.10. Kiziba is the reference camp. Standard errors in parentheses are clustered at the community level.

Results (2a): Trust

Social and institutional trust and proximity to refugee camps (odds ratio)

	Trust in people from own community		Trust in refugees in Rwanda		Trust in int'l organizations / NGOs	
Lives in proximity of refugee camp	0.78		1.07		0.91	
	(0.16)		(0.27)		(0.17)	
Short distance from Kigeme		0.73		1.02		0.59**
		(0.30)		(0.42)		(0.14)
Short distance from Kiziba		1.05		2.27**		1.13
		(0.31)		(0.84)		(0.32)
Short distance from Gihembe		0.58*		0.60		1.25
		(0.19)		(0.22)		(0.57)
Controls	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Pseudo R2	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02
Observations	933	933	933	933	933	933

Note: *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.10. Kiziba is the reference camp. Standard errors in parentheses are clustered at the community level.

"When they arrived, we all feared them because some of them had witchcraft powers. [..] But now don't fear them anymore and we have commercial relations with them" – Participant 3, Gihembe <10 km

Results (2b): Trust

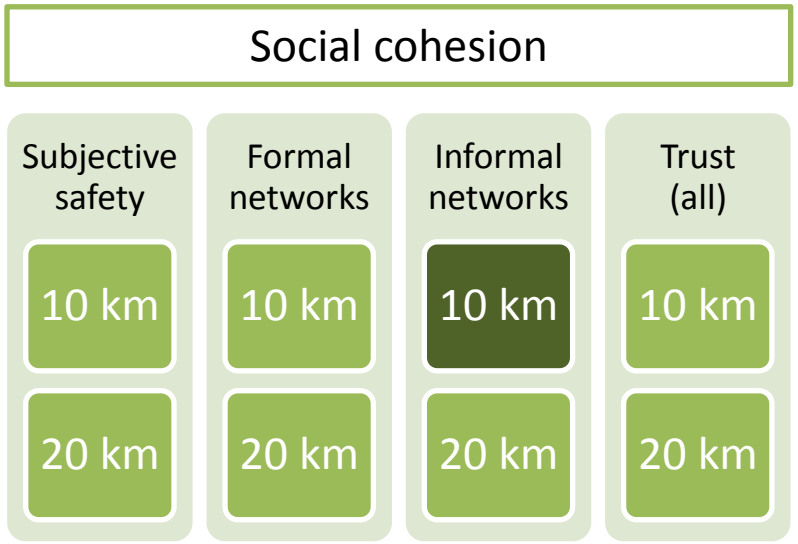
Social and institutional trust and proximity to refugee camps (odds ratio)

	Trust in people from own community		Trust in refugees in Rwanda		Trust in int'l organizations / NGOs	
Female	0.63**	0.64**	0.88	0.89	1.49**	1.58**
	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.28)	(0.30)
Literate	0.65***	0.65**	0.60***	0.60***	0.84	0.84
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.17)	(0.17)
Kigeme	1.24	1.50	0.63	0.89	1.06	1.50
	(0.33)	(0.61)	(0.20)	(0.36)	(0.23)	(0.41)
Gihembe	1.62**	2.23**	0.78	1.48	1.87**	1.80**
	(0.38)	(0.77)	(0.24)	(0.50)	(0.47)	(0.48)
Kiziba	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)
Other controls	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Pseudo R2	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02
Observations	933	933	933	933	933	933

Note: *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.10. Kiziba is the reference camp. Standard errors in parentheses are clustered at the community level.

Summary of results

Residing in a short-distance vs. a long-distance community shows **no negative links** to measured social cohesion outcomes



Key findings for policy:

I. Hosts and refugees have a mostly peaceful relationship

II. The work of international organizations and NGOs on behalf of refugees is not a source of widespread resentment

I. Hosts and refugees have peaceful relations

Cultural proximity

The only difference arises from the fact that they are located in the camp. Otherwise, we consider them as Rwandans.

– Participant 1**,** Kiziba community >20 km

Time

When [the refugees] arrived here, we were afraid of them since they are refugees but now we even work with them.

– Participant 7, Kiziba community >20 km

Economic interaction

(...) But then we share[d] the production; he gives the morning milk to his kids and then I give the evening one to mine. And this creates a bond between us.

– Participant 4, Kigeme community <10 km

→ Integrative refugee policy helps relations

II. NGOs are viewed positively

Role of NGOs in asserting security

> *In addition, **security is better when refugees are well treated**. You understand that they can disturb the country's security; if they are dying of hunger, they can steal from people in this community, and their kids cannot study well with an empty stomach. That is the reason they really need support.*
>
> – Participant 2, Gihembe community 20 km

→ Continued support for refugees important from social cohesion perspective

Additional findings: Independent local challenges

- Female respondents feeling less safe, trust community less
  - Need for female empowerment initiatives?
- Social isolation of poorer households?
  - Explore in more detail
  - Reach out, encourage participation in social support networks

Thank you

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Descriptives by closest refugee camp

Descriptive differences of local households by closest refugee camp

	Local communities (by closest refugee camp)						
	Gihembe		Kigeme		Kiziba		
	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.	N
Active member in a community organization	160	51.12	146	46.79	138	44.81	444
Feel safe in the community	264	84.35	255	81.73	284	92.21	803**
Informal network for assistance	126	40.26	154	49.36	124	40.26	404**
Trust in people from own community	255	81.47	245	78.53	259	84.09	759
Trust in int. orgs. and NGOs	286	91.37	283	90.71	292	94.81	861
Trust in refugees in Rwanda	243	77.64	263	84.29	247	80.19	753

Note: ** indicates statistically significant mean difference across groups at the 5 percent level (Chi-squared test)

Correlations

Correlations between location and outcome variables

	Closest refugee camp			Short distance (10 km) from refugee camp
	Kigeme	Kiziba	Gihembe	
Active member in a community organization	0.056	-0.011	-0.044	-0.024
Feel safe in the community	-0.029	-0.085	0.114	0.001
Informal network for assistance	-0.042	0.089	-0.048	0.101
Trust in people from own community	-0.004	-0.047	0.051	-0.047
Trust in int. orgs. and NGOs	-0.032	-0.039	0.071	-0.003
Trust in refugees in Rwanda	-0.060	0.066	-0.006	0.002