Assessing the Communicative Ecology of Male Refugees in Namibia: A Study to Guide Health Communication Interventions on Multiple and Concurrent Sexual Partnerships

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Nakia M. Matthias
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This thesis titled
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by

NAKIA M. MATTHIAS

has been approved for
the Center for International Studies by

Rafael Obregón
Associate Professor of Media Arts & Studies

Rafael Obregón
Director, Communication and Development Studies

Daniel Weiner
Executive Director, Center for International Studies
ABSTRACT

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Director of Thesis: Rafael Obregon

Multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships (MCP) have been identified as a primary driver of HIV in Namibia. Consequently, a national social and behavior change communication (SBCC) campaign was launched to address this phenomenon. However, campaign messaging and activities do not target refugees, while research indicates that male refugees are particularly vulnerable to factors alluding to participation in MCP. A need persists to extend the resources from Namibia’s national MCP SBCC campaign to this group. This research sought to articulate the communicative ecology of Namibia’s male refugees to inform health communication initiatives concerned with MCP and HIV. Snapshot ethnography was conducted in Windhoek, Otjiwarongo and Osire Refugee Camp for 10 weeks. Participant mapping, interviews and go-alongs guided a grounded theory approach toward the illumination of the communicative ecology of Namibia’s male refugees. Analysis of the findings indicates that male refugees employ future orientations, mobility and communication assets to mitigate disempowering circumstances.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

Rafael Obregon

Associate Professor of Media Arts & Studies
DEDICATION

for Tloloc, my Gramma, my Granny, my Uncle Sol

and the world’s ‘refugee’ populations
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am the author of this document, but I am certainly not the only person that has dedicated time, energy and concern toward its completion. I would not have been able to take on the task of my academic experience without the guidance, leadership and encouragement of the numerous people who share genuine interest in my success.

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Mom and Dad, thank you for helping me do this. The endless love and support that you both have given me has made it possible for me to transform my life.
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CHAPTER ONE

Significance of the Study

The purpose of the research is to assess the communicative ecology of male refugees in Namibia to highlight their communication patterns and preferences as well as socio-communicative networks which comprise communicative assets amongst their social realms. The research findings can be employed as baseline or formative data to advise Health Communicators, the Namibian government, Southern African regional governments, NGO’s, bilateral and multilateral entities tasked with the protection of refugee health or HIV prevention. Potential application of the findings may function as input for interventions concerned with correlations between HIV, mobility and (MCP).

Introduction

These findings have informed the creation of national health campaigns that aim to generate awareness as well as prompt social and behavior change amongst Namibian citizens (Burleigh, Scwartz, and Murtaza 2010, C-Hub 2010, Shipena and Khuruses 2008). However, a review of the campaign literature, social media and web sites alert that these initiatives fail to engage refugee populations, especially within the context of mobility and interaction amongst social networks. This is important as mobility and the engagement of social networks have proven to be the prevailing factors known to warrant MCP (USAID 2010, UNAIDS 2010, Mah and Halperin 2010, UNAIDS 2009, USAID 2008, UNGASS/GRN 2008, Shipena and Khuruses 2008, Soul City/One Love 2008, SADC 2006).

Furthermore, research demonstrates that refugee populations are susceptible to health impactive vulnerabilities (such as HIV and STD) presented through the dynamics of poverty, the uptake of mobility and the maintenance of sexual social networks (IOM 2010, IOM 2005) as a means to enlarge their social capital (Thornton 2009) and abate the impacts of poverty and marginalization (IOM 2010). Mobility amongst refugee populations is primarily attributed to attempts at income generation and the alleviation of various resource deficiencies amongst refugee communities (IOM 2010, UNHCR 2008, IOM 2005).

Therefore refugee populations in Namibia should be factored into the national SBCC campaigns which address MCP as a primary driver of HIV to avert potential risks associated with entry into sexual social networks due to mobility, poverty and engagement with sexual social networks. The UNHCR’s HIV/AIDS Behavioural...
Surveillance Survey on Osire Refugee Camp (2008) [hereafter referred to as Osire] (see Appendix C) and the surrounding communities reveals that Namibia’s male refugees routinely depart the refugee camp to conduct informal trade activities (UNHCR 2008). This finding indicates that Namibia’s male refugees are engaged in regular mobility, making them susceptible to potential health risks associated with this practice.

It is imperative that Namibia’s national SBCC formulate targeted messaging for refugees and engage them in its various initiatives. Moreover, male refugees must be targeted through communicative efforts which inform and invite their understanding of the potential risks associated with mobility and the engagement in sexual social networks.

Research emanating from officiating agencies tasked with refugee health, present a limited view to the impact of HIV and AIDS amongst male refugee populations. This is in stark contrast to the abundance of literature pertaining to women’s health in refugee settings as well as child and maternal health in refugee settings within the context of HIV and AIDS.

Additionally, existing studies which specifically examine HIV and AIDS knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) in the Osire refugee community (UNHCR 2008, UNHCR/WFP 2008) fail to explore the role of information, communication and media in the KAP of this population as it pertains to HIV and AIDS. As a consequence of this discovery and in conjunction with the fact that regular income generating mobility is a known cause of flight from the camp for Namibia’s male refugees (UNHCR 2008), this study sought to acknowledge and evaluate the communicative ecology of male
refugees residing in Namibia. This effort was premised on the need for the development of formative data on communication processes and practices specific to this group.

Chapter one of this analysis has five main objectives. First, the chapter will provide an overview of the complexities of the problem of HIV and AIDS, in the context of MCP in Southern Africa and Namibia. Second, the chapter will examine how mobile populations and thus male refugees may potentially be impacted by HIV via the interaction of socio-ecological circumstances that warrant the uptake of MCP. Third, the chapter will explore two current national MCP social and behavior change communication campaigns in Namibia and the implications for directed communication for male refugees. Fourth, the chapter will examine previous study of the communication patterns of camp-based refugees. Finally, a brief rationale will relay the importance of an evaluation of the communicative ecology of male refugees in Namibia. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the points of inquiry and significance of the study.

**Contextualizing MCP and HIV in Southern Africa and Namibia**

Multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships are maintained when an act of sexual intercourse with one partner occurs between two acts of sexual intercourse with an additional partner (IOM 2010, UNAIDS 2009, Thornton 2009, Shipena and Khuruses 2008) within one month (One Love/Soul City 2010). It is the simultaneous engagement of more than one sexual relationship, whereby the overlap or concurrency of partners over time is marked by lifetime, intermittent and one time sexual encounters (UNAIDS 2009, Parker, Makhubele, Ntlabati, and Connolly 2007).
MCP constitute a primary issue of concern with regard to the acceleration of HIV incidence in Southern Africa (SADC 2006), as research indicates the prominence of this practice throughout the region (Mah and Halperin 2010). “Concurrent partnerships pose grave risk because they link people together in sexual networks” (USAID 2008), which enable the immediate transmission of new HIV infections amongst individuals within them (Halperin and Epstein 2007).

This is due to the high level of HIV present within the blood of infected individuals during the initial 3 to 6 weeks of a new HIV infection (Republic of Namibia/USAID 2009). Within this period the virus is highly reproductive and infective, and thus MCP accelerate exposure to and transmission of the virus throughout sexual networks (Republic of Namibia/USAID 2009, Halperin and Epstein 2007). Empirical modeling has evidenced that minute reductions in partner concurrency function to abate the expanse of sexual networks and result in the reduction of the transmission of HIV within populations (UNAIDS 2009, USAID 2008).

The 2008 Desert Soul Target Audience Research Report on Multiple and Concurrent Partnerships in Namibia concluded that the maintenance of MCP in the country are primarily attributed to sociocultural norms, poverty and mobility. These findings are also supported by the USAID report to the Namibian Ministry of Health and Social Services on the Behavioral and Contextual Factors Driving the HIV and AIDS Epidemic in Namibia (2009).
HIV and AIDS in the Republic of Namibia

There are 200,000 people living with HIV or AIDS in the Republic of Namibia (UNAIDS 2010, USAID 2010). The nation has approximately 2,108,665 inhabitants and bears one of the highest HIV and AIDS rates in Africa (UNICEF 2010). HIV and AIDS are considered the primary causes of premature death in the nation (UNAIDS 2010). Sexual transmission constitutes the primary mode for HIV infection in Namibia (USAID 2010). The toll of HIV and AIDS on this sparsely populated country with a recent legacy of colonial domination and narrow skills base could devastate its advances in human and economic development (Bollinger and Stover 1999). Thus HIV and AIDS constitute the prevailing public health problem for the country.

Sociocultural Norms and MCP in Namibia

Although females maintain MCP in Namibia studies reveal that Namibian males are primarily engaged in this practice, which contributes to HIV incidence evidenced amongst the nation’s female population (USAID 2009, Shipena and Khuruses 2008). Furthermore, cultural constructs uphold and validate the practice of MCP in Namibia, especially for men (Mufune 2006). For instance, “the Herero and Owambo cultures consider it acceptable for a man to have many sexual partners…because their fathers and grandfathers did so too” (Shipena and Khuruses 2008, p.11). Similarly, Silozi culture stipulates that marriage to more than one woman is acceptable granted that the husband can provide for all of his wives (Shipena and Khuruses 2008).
Poverty and the Maintenance of MCP in Namibia

A participant in the 2009 Community Capacity Enhancement through Community Conversations program (UNAIDS 2010) in Caprivi indicated that MCP work to alleviate “poverty and hunger”… and that…“it’s a way to survive.” MCP are means for securing financial and material support for males and females in Namibia (Shipena and Khuruses 2008). In this context MCP are believed to be an acceptable, practical and rational practice (Thornton 2009, Shipena and Khuruses 2008) according to individuals who benefit from them.

Linking Mobility and HIV in Southern Africa and Namibia

Research on HIV in Southern Africa asserts that human mobility is instrumental in the prevalence and spread of HIV incidence. (IOM 2010, SADC 2006, Lurie, Harrison, Wilkinson and Karim 1997). The majority of this research generally focuses on labor migrants and irregular migrants as these are the primary groups comprising mobile populations throughout the region (IOM 2010, p10). Similarly, studies on group mobility in Namibia concentrate on transport workers, sex workers, mine workers and non-refugee informal traders. The International Organization for Migration (2003) elaborates the operationalization of mobile populations to include “military personnel, transport workers, mine workers, construction workers, informal traders, agricultural farm workers, domestic workers, migrant laborers, internally displaced persons and refugees” (p8).

Throughout Southern Africa mobile populations are designated as groups which are particularly vulnerable to HIV as a result of the maintenance of MCP evidenced within them (USAID 2009, IOM 2010). Research suggests that mobile populations are
susceptible to contracting HIV due to the structural and circumstantial issues that they encounter during migratory activity and routinized mobility. They may be subject to xenophobia, discrimination, exploitation, harassment, poverty as well as the absence of legal recourse and social support (IOM 2010, 2006, 2003).

Additionally, the transitory lifestyles embodied by mobile populations may cause them to experience social isolation and disruptions in sociocultural and behavioral norms. (IOM 2010, IOM/PHAMSA/IPPR, n.d). Access to prophylactics and health information for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of HIV may also be inhibited by routine mobility (IOM 2010).

*Correlating Mobility and the Role of MCP as Social Networks*

According to Bates, Trostle, Cevallos, Hubbard and Eisenberg (2007) social networks function as pathogenic conduits that are conditioned by geographical circumstances, such as human mobility. Mobile populations are known to engage in MCP as unstable environmental conditions and fragmented social relationships foment the creation and maintenance of geographically dispersed social networks which may simultaneously function as sexual networks (IOM 2010).

Sexual networks are known to arise from excessive mobility via various forms of migration, asylum-seeking and trade (Thornton 2009, IOM/PHAMSA/IPPR, n.d). Sexual networks are not bound by or limited to socio-economic, cultural, ethnic, racial and linguistic differences (Thornton 2009) amongst mobile and host populations. Social networks maintained via MCP offer tangible, immaterial, physical and emotional benefits (USAID 2009) to individuals comprising mobile populations because they employ them
as a strategic mechanism for the attainment of resources and social capital (Thornton 2009, D’Addario, Sherrell and Hiebert 2007, Barnes and Prior 2007).

Essentially mobile populations utilize and thrive within social networks to mitigate the effects of poverty, social exclusion (Thornton 2009) and to compensate for barriers to informational and political resources. In this light, the practice and strategy of maintaining MCP as a form of social network and potential mechanism for social agency provides a view to the rationale for risk taking behavior (Thornton 2009) evidenced via sexual relationships maintained by individuals within mobile populations.

Risky sexual practices associated with MCP within mobile populations coincide with the findings from studies which demonstrate that MCP render individuals within them extremely vulnerable to HIV. The foremost risk exacted within MCP is the failure to use condoms during sexual acts. Thornton (2009) suggests that the elimination of condom usage within sexual encounters may work to generate trust amongst mobile individuals and their sexual network partners who provide them with various forms of support. This explanation posits that trust and thus the act of unprotected sex are equated. Therefore, the risk of unprotected sex is overlooked for the maximization of potential and real benefits resulting from perceptions of trust. Summarily, condom usage may work to limit the benefits and support afforded to mobile individuals engaged in MCP. Therefore, risky behavior exhibited through refraining from condom usage is rationalized as a means to secure social capital.
**Male Refugees and HIV**

Overall, research dedicated to the dynamics of HIV phenomena amongst male refugee populations is slight. Moreover, of the work reviewed pertaining to male refugees and HIV [with regard to incidence, prevention, treatment, care, prevalence, behavioral surveillance as well as knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP)], few studies or reports are premised on designated refugee settings in Africa. Instead Europe, Australia, and The United States of America are the focus of resettlement and host nation research which inspect HIV phenomena within intake refugee populationsvi.

Research that examine HIV within the context of refugee communities in African host and pull nations compare and contrast HIV prevalence, incidence as well as KAP amongst refugee and host nation populations.vii Additionally, studies tend to concentrate on internally displaced personsviii, urban refugees and female refugees as distinct populations, while male refugees as unique populations remain absent from dedicated studies. The predominance of the study of urban refugees in Africa coincides with official data which contend that the majority of refugee populations reside outside of refugee camps amongst host nation populations (UNAIDS 2007) ix.

Furthermore, the framing of gender issues in the discourses of governments as well as multilateral and bilateral entities (Smith and Robertson 2008, Datta 2004) may account for the overwhelming focus on the impact of HIV amongst female refugees. The most notable institutional study that examines males in refugee settings is premised upon the prevention of HIV within the context of sexual and gender based violence educationx. There is a need for studies dedicated to the dimensions of HIV in the lives of
male (Peacock, Stemple, Sawires and Coates 2009) refugees, especially as it relates to prevention and MCP in Africa.

**Dimensions of Refugee Mobility and HIV in Namibia**

Namibia’s Osire officially houses approximately 8,142 inhabitants classified as refugees and asylum-seekers (UNHCR 2010, online\textsuperscript{vi}). These individuals primarily hail from Angola, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi (UNHCR 2008, UNHCR/WFP 2008).

It is estimated that in the year 2008, approximately 82 refugees in Osire tested positive for HIV\textsuperscript{vii} (UNHCR 2008). This does not account for refugees at large who do not reside within Osire but rather engage in internal migration\textsuperscript{viii} or are deemed urban refugees\textsuperscript{ix}. Namibia’s urban refugee population mainly reside in Windhoek [the capital city of Namibia] and along the border with Angola (UNHCR/WFP 2008), where HIV prevalence is highest in the country (Republic of Namibia/USAID 2008).

It is a known fact that refugee populations do not translocate HIV from their places of origin to their host and resettlement destinations (UNAIDS 2007, UNHCR 2005). “…Historical evidence shows that refugees have often migrated from countries with lower HIV prevalence to countries with higher HIV prevalence” (UNHCR 2007, p.1). However, the mobility of refugee populations does not cease upon arrival to the destination where asylum is sought and residence is maintained.

According to Sclettaris (2009), mobility functions as a strategic mechanism for survival and the maintenance of livelihood for refugees. Circular migratory patterns are an example whereby mobility between refugee camps, rural areas and cities are
commonplace methods exacted by refugees to locate resources and opportunities (IOM 2010, UNHCR 2008). In fact the UNAIDS Policy Brief on HIV and Refugees (2007) asserts that refugee populations primarily live amongst host communities (p.2).

Mobility within host nations may increase exposure to and the transmission of HIV amongst refugee and host nation populations (UNAIDS 2007, UNHCR 2005). The Behavioral Surveillance Survey on Osire refugee camp and surrounding communities in Namibia (2008) indicates that approximately 33 per cent of the refugee respondents that were surveyed confirmed their absence from Osire for a period of at least one month within the previous year (p.11). The survey noted the likelihood of underreported mobility amongst refugee respondents, as their travel outside of the Osire may not have been approved by refugee camp officials (p.11). Therefore, the refugee camp records are unreliable and inadequate for monitoring and gauging the extent, frequency and duration of refugee movement outside of the camp.

Survey respondents revealed that they frequently visited the surrounding communities to interact with friends and relatives. Furthermore, the survey explicitly demonstrates that male refugees engage in prolonged absences from the refugee camp primarily due to trade activity. It also evidenced that trade and market activities facilitate regular mobility and interaction amongst camp-based refugees and Namibian nationals who reside in the proximate community (p.11).

The mobility patterns evidenced within individuals and groups comprising the refugee population in Namibia may bear significant implications for their communicative ecology. As a structural concern, mobility may impact their exposure to informational
resources, interventions and strategic communication that address MCP. Therefore, mobility must be factored into the communicative engagement of refugees with regard to MCP and HIV interventions. Understanding and explicating relationships between mobility, place-making and sense-making amongst refugees must inform the development of information and communicative strategies utilized in health campaigns.

*Acculturation, Male Refugees and MCP in Namibia*

There is a need to address males regarding their perceptions of the risks associated with MCP (UNAIDS 2009), especially as it pertains to specific socio-ecological structures which guide them. According to Meston & Ahrold (2010) research demonstrates that, “highly acculturated individuals tend to adopt sexual practices similar to those of the mainstream culture” (p. 180).

Engagement in MCP is a common cultural practice amongst male members of the most prominent ethnic groups in Namibia (Shipena and Khuruses 2008). This phenomenon is significant as male refugees may adopt the prevailing sociocultural practices (Dutta-Bergman 2005) within the country as they undergo acculturative processes (Meston and Ahrold 2010, Sapienza, Hichy, Guanera and Di Nuovo 2010) whereby the dislocation of their culturally derived behavioral norms (Dutta 2008) can allude to the uptake of MCP. Additional studies (Marin et al. 1993b, Sabogal et al. 1993, 1995 as cited in Marks, Cantero and Simoni 1998) have demonstrated that highly acculturated male immigrant populations are likely to partake in MCP.
The Need for National SBCC Interventions for Refugees in Namibia

Health Communication practitioners have designated the issue of MCP as an integral component for inclusion within HIV prevention campaigns throughout Southern Africa (UNAIDS 2009). Some governments in the region provide health care for refugee populations, [especially antiretroviral medications as well as other sexually transmitted infection (STI), HIV and AIDS treatment services\textsuperscript{xvi}] however, their national health campaigns fail to target and include refugees within their HIV prevention frameworks and messaging appeals (IOM 2010, Burton and John-Leader 2009). This is characteristic of HIV prevention initiatives deployed by the Namibian government whereby the failure to engage and serve vulnerable populations is due to the absence of tailored and responsive approaches (IOM 2010, UNGASS/Republic of Namibia 2008). This is evident as national MCP reduction campaigns are not employed as strategic methods for communicating to refugee populations about the prevention of HIV\textsuperscript{xvii}.

A 2008 Report of the \textit{UNHCR/WFP Joint Assessment Mission} to determine Assistance to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Osire noted that “refugee populations’ awareness of HIV/AIDS issues is still at low level” (p. 18). This finding prevailed subsequent to the UNHCR’s Strategic Plan for 2005-2007 on Refugees, HIV and AIDS (2005), which addresses a dire need to ensure that refugees are included in the HIV policy and intervention frameworks of host nations and pull-countries. Its objectives call for attention to this issue at, “international, regional, sub-regional, country and organizational levels” (p.3). In addition, it espouses a need for formative data as well as consistent surveillance, monitoring and evaluation to inform dedicated programs for
refugees. Localization of “culturally and linguistically” (p.3) targeted preventative efforts are also stated as inputs required to abate HIV transmission amongst refugee communities. The dearth of country-specific research and data which relay the experiences and realities of refugees thwarts the realization of culturally premised interventions for communicating to refugee populations about the risks associated with MCP. This is specifically the case since the inception of campaigns and initiatives that address MCP as a primary driver of HIV in Namibia.

*MCP Social and Behavior Change Communication Campaigns in Namibia*

Namibia’s current agenda for preventing HIV incidence has fomented the implementation of public health campaigns that are executed by NGO’s, multilateral and bilateral agencies. The campaigns are specifically concerned with promoting social and behavior change as well as generating awareness about the health risks associated with MCP. The target audiences for the campaigns are Namibian nationals who engage in sexual relationships whereby they are knowingly and unknowingly members of sexual networks. Essentially, the campaigns focus on communicating to Namibian citizens about MCP as a primary driver of HIV incidence. There is currently one national social and behavior change communication campaign in Namibia which draws on the resources of a technical advisory and implementing partners to reach the public. This campaign is supported by a Southern African regional campaign that is executed by a Namibian NGO that is affiliated with the Soul City Institute for Health and Development. Together, the national *Break the Chain* campaign in conjunction with the regionally implemented *One*
Love Namibia campaign form the official efforts of the Namibian government to address MCP in the nation.

Overview of the Break the Chain Campaign

Break the Chain is Namibia’s national social and behavior change communication campaign that seeks to prevent new HIV incidence in the country by addressing the practice of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships (MCP) (Burleigh, Scwartz, Murtaza 2010). It was launched in December 2009 under the direction of the Break the Chain Working Group which is comprised of a variety of multilateral agencies, bilateral agencies, Namibian NGO’s, International NGO’s and Namibian ministerial bodies. These entities collaborate to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate an array of communicative initiatives to reach targeted segments of the multi-ethnic Namibian populace. The primary populations of concern are Namibian nationals ranging from the ages of 15 to 20 years, unmarried youth and married or cohabitating couples ranging from the ages of 25 to 45 years (Burleigh, Scwartz and Murtaza 2010, Kalscheur and Burleigh 2010, C-Hub 2010).

Break the Chain aims to engage people involved in regular and casual sexual contact via directed messages that demonstrate the various contexts and situations through which MCP occur. The campaign employs a range of mass media and interpersonal communication methods to generate awareness about the risks associated with contracting HIV due to social norms and behavioral practices associated with traditions such as polygamy (C-Hub 2010, IntraHealth 2010). It also actively addresses populations who engage in transactional sex, long-distance relationships impacted by
mobility, people living with HIV and AIDS and men who have sex with men (MSM) (C-Hub 2010, IntraHealth 2010).

**Communication and the Break the Chain Campaign**

The multi-channel campaign reaches audiences at multiple levels of society (Burleigh, Swartz, Murtaza 2010, IntraHealth 2010). The campaign message is direct and simple, posing the question: ‘Who are you connected to?’ It is structured to appeal to Namibians regardless of ethnic affiliation, sex, gender, race or occupational status, to name a few. Communication materials are furnished in English, Afrikaans, Otjiherero and Oshiwambo (C-Hub 2010).

The campaign employs approaches that work to draw interest among individuals involved in sexual networks through awareness raising, while simultaneously promoting preventative risk reduction practices (IntraHealth 2010, Kalscheur and Burleigh 2010, C-Hub 2010). Secondly it focuses on assisting the capacities of individuals and groups via the development of crucial skills such as condom negotiation, while transforming attitudes toward the practice of MCP so that it becomes socially undesirable (C-Hub 2010, IntraHealth 2010, Burleigh, Swartz, Murtaza 2010).

Mass media and interpersonal communication factor into the campaign design as complementary, mutually reinforcing constituents. Campaign materials are visible at high volume public places such as major traffic intersections and public transportation hubs (Burleigh, Swartz, Murtaza 2010). Mass media utilized by the campaign include, radio, television, newspapers, newsletters, billboards, posters, flyers and internet blogs (C-Hub 2010, Burleigh, Swartz, Murtaza 2010). It also employs specially developed interpersonal
communication materials that are used by implementing partners to stimulate dialogue around MCP and related issues. Mediums for the elicitation of interpersonal communication entail, vignetting techniques, narrative and social network elicitation, interactive movies, literature discussion and face-to-face discussion [see the One Love Namibia Campaign].

Mid-campaign evaluation has shown that public reception to the Break the Chain campaign is highly positive, as research participants have affirmed that they have re-assessed their personal risk of contracting HIV and consider multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships to be risky (C-Hub 2010, online).

Overview of the One Love Namibia Campaign

The One Love Namibia campaign is the Desert Soul Health and Development Communication non-profit organization’s national effort to address MCP as one of the primary drivers of HIV in the nation (Shipena and Khuruses 2008). It is part of a regional One Love Southern Africa Campaign developed by the Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication [hereafter referred to as Soul City] in direct response to the recommendations set forth by the Expert Think Tank Meeting on HIV Prevention in High-Prevalence Countries in the SADC region on May 2006 in Lesotho (Shipena and Khuruses 2008, Soul City/One Love 2008, SADC 2006).

The One Love Namibia campaign was implemented in September 2009 but officially launched in April 2010 (Shipena and Khuruses 2008). It is based on formative research which assessed the KAP of target audiences with regard to MCP in the country (Shipena and Khuruses 2008). It specifically addresses women, youth and mobile
populations that are deemed most vulnerable to contracting HIV due to structural factors that warrant the uptake of MCP (Soul City/One Love Campaign 2011, Shipena and Khuruses 2008). The campaign also engages policy makers as well as community, cultural and religious leadership in its efforts.

Through the use of mass and interpersonal media channels, the campaign deploys an array of culturally responsive tools to generate awareness and promote social and behavior change. In accordance with the Soul City model, the One Love Namibia campaign engages the public and policy makers through a rigorous combination of Entertainment Education, community mobilization, Media Advocacy, Lobbying and policy advisement (Soul City/One Love Campaign 2011).

Mass media campaign instruments include, “information booklets, posters, billboards, radio serials, public service announcements (PSAs) and media advocacy” (Soul Beat: Edutainment, n.d.). To reinforce mass mediated messaging, the campaign utilizes interpersonal communication elicitation methods to generate dialogue amongst target audience communities, community leadership and journalists (Soul Beat: Edutainment, n.d.). These tools include combination of interactive films, picture code charts [vignettes], flannelgrams\textsuperscript{xxi}, facilitation booklets, community meetings and workshops that train journalists on MCP reporting (C-Hub 2010, Burleigh, Swartz, Murtaza 2010). Collectively these approaches to interpersonal communication function to build local discourse as well as guide the evaluation of behavioral practices and outcomes related to MCP. At present an evaluative report on the One Love Namibia campaign is
unavailable. Therefore measures of awareness as well as social and behavior change amongst target audiences in the country cannot be detailed.

**Directed Communicative Engagement with Male Refugees in Namibia**

To date, the Break the Chain campaign and the One Love Namibia campaign have not addressed populations within Osire, nor have they addressed urban refugee populations within the country. Multilateral agencies, NGO’s and regional governing entities in Southern Africa have collectively acknowledged that it is imperative to target refugee populations via communicative interventions for the prevention of HIV (IOM 2010, UNHCR 2008, SADC 2006).

MCP can primarily be viewed as cultural and structural phenomena that affect the sexual reproductive health of males and females. However, females are generally the intended audience of campaigns that address issues related to MCP and HIV in Africa, while the engagement and targeting of men has been marginal (Mufune 2009, Peacock et al., 2009).

It is crucial to include men in the development of communicative approaches as they make decisions regarding sexual activity in relationships (Mufune 2009, Peacock et al., 2009) that bear upon the potential for HIV transmission, such as condom usage (Lifshay, Nakayiwa, King, Grinstead-Reznickc, Katuntu, Batamwita, Ezati, Coutinho, Kazibwe and Bunnell 2009, Mufune 2009).

Male refugees may appreciate and respond positively to health campaigns which draw on and speak directly to their realities in Namibia. Therefore, attention should be directed toward the communicative ecology of male refugees in attempt to acknowledge,
valuate and appeal to the cultures, sensibilities and distinct experiences of these social actors. Such efforts would function to furnish unprecedented data to social and behavioral change communication entities for the development of interventions and preventative communication.

Previous Study of Communication Patterns in Refugee Camps

Robertson’s study of 3 Daadab Refugee Camps in Kenya attempts to address gaps in the literature regarding the communication activity occurring within these designated refugee inhabitation sites (Robertson 2004). Although not exhaustive, the review of literature conducted for this study has evidenced similar outcomes. Apart from these analogous assessments, Robertson’s study diverges with this study through its strict functional inquiry of communication, information and location.

The study attempts to document the usability and modal effectiveness of camp communication assets. It also seeks to determine where refugees access information in the camp. Finally it aims to articulate the presence of typical forms of mass media and the function of mass communication in the camp (Robertson 2004).

The study consults a conceptual framework motivated by, “Wright’s concept of functional and dysfunctional communication, diffusion theory, theories of innovation and Habermas’ concept of the public sphere” (Robertson 2004, p. 8). During a 2 week period of fieldwork “close observation, participant observation, personal interviewing, and local media collection” (p. 17) were employed to conduct data collection.

Robertson confirms that the study concentrated on “institutional communication” (p. 17) within and between administrative and implementing organizations, interpersonal
communication between representatives of refugee organizations and refugee camp residents as well as mass communication within the camp (Robertson 2004). Where refugee communicative patterns are concerned, the objectives of the research does not illustrate whether or not the presence of “functional” (p.17) communication denotes its utility to camp residents thus it overlooks contextual factors that inform refugees’ usage of communication channels. Furthermore it does not probe how communication channels influence their consumption of information. Robertson (2004) states, “I expected to encounter … being told that “more” and “better” communication is needed, despite the fact that there may well be ample amounts of “functional” communication going on in the camp” (p.17). Essentially, the study does not consider the implications of sense making in human communication and how this ultimately interacts with the functionality of communication channels in communication processes.

*Assessing the Communicative Ecology of Male Refugees in Namibia*

An assessment of the communicative ecology of male refugees in Namibia can provide an unprecedented view to the discovery of how and why communication flourishes in the order of their lifeworld. An inventory of their communication assets is an essential aspect of this process, to allow for understanding of communication as it interacts with structures that are mediated, informational, situational and contextual in their respective environments. Ultimately such data may speak to how and why male refugees access, utilize, create and reject communicative phenomena.

Data collection via a myriad of qualitative approaches such as grounded theory, snapshot ethnography and ethnomethodology can facilitate the discovery and
understanding of socio-communicative and cultural practices (Patton 2002, Denzin 1969) specific to Namibia’s male refugee population. This is significant to elucidate their sense-making methods, knowledge systems, routine and tacit ways of doing (Garfinkel 1967), as well as their values and preferences for communication.

Ethnographic interaction through participant observation, participant mapping elicitation as well as unstructured and semi-structured (see Appendix D) interviews may demonstrate the rationale for mobility, mobility patterns as well as location specific data about urban and camp-based refugees. Such approaches can also serve to illustrate the dynamics of social networks maintained and formed by male refugees within Osire and the various locations inhabited, frequented and traversed by refugee populations in Namibia.

Points of Inquiry

The study essentially probes three intersections of inquiry. The first is concerned with what phenomena comprise and facilitate the communicative ecology of male refugees in Namibia? This is premised on the assumption that human beings inherently maintain and facilitate communication via the interaction of language (verbal and non-verbal), social practice and the utilization of pertinent media (Tacchi, Slater, & Hearn 2003). These phenomena may be indicative of communication processes that sustain and regulate human relationships, actions and knowledge systems amongst and between groups.

The second specifically interrogates the ways that the communicative ecology of Namibia’s male refugees warrants the articulation of relevant communication methods
and communication channels amongst refugee populations in the country. The assumption here is that the total existence of male refugees’ communication assets may not be relevant to their communicative ecology. Therefore those salient features which facilitate dialogic communication must be delineated through their admissions and interpretations.

The final point seeks to determine the aspects of the communicative ecology of male refugees constitute meaning-making processes that can inform health communication practice. In this instance, meanings provide clues to participants’ sociocultural and situational perceptions of reality with regard to their interactions amongst social actors and phenomena (Lofland and Lofland 1984) in their effective environmentxxxiii (Altheide 1994). This is important to understand how health is defined, communicated and understood within and amongst male refugees’ social networks.

Overall these points of inquiry seek to divulge and explicate facets of the communicative ecology of male refugees which may be socioculturally significant and viable resources for communicative engagement.
CHAPTER TWO
Methodological Approaches and Research Methods

This chapter examines the conceptual role and interaction of communicative ecology in this study. It also explains procedures for development of categories and codes throughout the collection, analysis and synthesis of data toward the formation of grounded theory and offers examples from previous study of refugee populations. Furthermore it explores how snapshot ethnography has been employed in previous studies as a time-limited ethnographic approach as well as the complementary function of ethnomethodology in the observation and engagement of the routines performed by participants.

The procedures for the purposive selection of gatekeepers as well as the use of social network sampling are described to explain how participant-led sampling engaged social actors who may otherwise remained hidden within participants’ social structure. The data collection process is relayed through explication of the interaction between researcher driven methods such as participant observation and interviews and their pairing with participant driven elicitation methods such as go-alongs and participant mapping. Their application across the three research settings is outlined. Finally, the specific application of grounded theory within this study is detailed to illuminate the process that informed the coding and analysis of categories and themes in the conceptualization of grounded theory.
Communicative Ecology

Communicative ecology is defined via a myriad of perspectives which seek to characterize the dynamics between human communication and the effective environment (Foulger 2004, Altheide 1995). In the same vein as symbolic interactionism communicative ecology “is grounded in the search for meaning” (Altheide 1994, p.669). The distillation of meaning serves to delineate reasons for as well as ways that information, communication and media interact within the lives (Tacchi, Hearn and Slater 2003) of a community of social actors. It essentially acknowledges sense-making in the human communication process.

Communicative ecology is primarily understood as the nexus between social networks, human communicative processes, communication structures and communication technology (Foth and Hearn 2007, Altheide 1995). Additional views maintain that it is concerned with a group’s beliefs and usage of linguistic (Shoaps 2009), communication and media resources as well as social activity that contextualizes the occurrence of their communication processes (Foth and Hearn 2007, Altheide 1994).

Altheide’s (1994) Model for an Ecology of Communication (see Appendix E) attempts to demonstrate the interactive processes by which social actors create and derive meaning from the maintenance of relations with others through the use of information technologies as part of broader communicative experiences enacted via their social and physical environments. Foulger’s (2004) Ecological Model of the Communication Process (see Appendix F) acknowledges that socially constructed mechanisms bear upon
the synergy between linguistics, media and messages that are created and exercised by a community of social actors (online) above.

According the UNESCO Ethnographic Action Research Handbook (2003), communicative ecology is defined by contexts through which people utilize, conceive and intend to employ communication, information and media within institutions, relationships and via social activity. It is also constituted by flows, resources, structures and mediums that generate and aid the negotiation, production and consumption of communication, information and media (Tacchi, Hearn and Slater 2003). Thus communicative ecologies are inherent, ubiquitous and dynamic phenomena constituted via the lifeworld of communities and societies through which they manifest.

*The Transcendent Appeal of Communicative Ecology*

The process of ruminating over approaches to orient the trajectory of the inquiry began with the notion that it is imperative to examine how refugees communicate in Namibia and how media interact with their routine communicative processes. Consequently I examined media ecology as the logical premise for the phenomena that I sought to engage.

Media ecology views media as environments that actively shape societies, whereby media [and media advancements] are positioned as the cardinal impetus for transformations in human communication processes (Valcanis 2011, Strate 2004). In this view media ecology heralds media as catalyzing agents which work upon social actors in a pervasive manner. Conversely, communicative ecology exalts social actors as drivers of communication processes and sociocultural transformations.
Therefore communication processes are activated and most importantly, rendered meaningful, by social actors through their interactions with media. The occurrence of communication in this case stems from sense-making bestowed upon the utility of media in the lives of its interactants. Media do not make or enforce meaning but rather through a selective process, social actors find meaningful their communicative capacities toward satisfying their own sensibilities, needs and goals.

Fougler (2004) contends that communicative ecologies encompass media ecology whereby ecological communicative processes comprise “a set of complex interactions, between its primary constituents: messages, people, languages and media” (online) above. Communication is deemed intrinsic to the human experience whereas media are byproducts of this experience.

In this light and with regard to the points of inquiry set forth in this study, communicative ecology transcends the functionality of media ecology through its placement of the social actor at the center of communicative and socially transformative processes. This is essential for understanding how and why a community of social actors and thus the individual sustain and thrive within their respective communicative ecologies. Communicative ecology acknowledges the multiple forces that guide or structure communication and the media preferences amongst social actors.

The communicative ecology of male refugees in Namibia was engaged by directing careful attention to numerous facets of their life activity. This entailed the discovery of latent as well as overt aspects of life. The communicative value of everything was considered and nothing was taken for granted. For instance, gaining
access to males oftentimes required the development of interpersonal relationships with female social actors in their physical and social realms. Females proved to be significant interpersonal communicative entities in the lives of male refugees. Conversely, some instances, protruding communicative assets in designated refugee settings were void of communicative significance to them. These discoveries were divulged through the committed engagement of a combination of data collection methods premised upon inductive methodological approaches. Through grounded theory, snapshot ethnography and ethnomethodology, an assessment of the communicative ecology of Namibia’s male refugees was conducted.

**Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory is developed through the experiential method whereby concepts are devised and drawn from data that have been collected via systematic fieldwork and analysis. The synergistic function of the data collection method, the emergent data and the analytical process (Charmaz 2005, Corbin and Strauss, 1990), give rise to grounded theory. Although, grounded theory is not premised on testing or modeling established theories, it can be generated to enlarge and refine them (Corbin and Strauss 1998, 1990). In this case grounded theory will be employed to, “offer insight, enhance understanding and provide a meaningful guide to action” with respect to social phenomena (Corbin and Strauss 1998).

Grounded theory methodology is activated when social and behavioral phenomena are articulated via logical conceptual associations which give rise to theoretical frames (Pahud 2008) that (1) characterize prominent aspects of the data, (2)
direct the assemblage of [additional] data which expound specific phenomena relative to further categorical designation, (3) employ emergent categorical designations as criterion to engage salient phenomena and advance the basis for theory generation, (4) appraise categorical criterion to discern their variants, as well as their productive and reproductive dimensions, (5) confirm and test relationships between categorical criterion, (6) observe correlations to existing theory, and (7) utilize comparative measures to assess the integrity of relationships between variables and newly developed categorical criterion. (Glaser and Strauss 1968)

An exhaustive review of the literature divulged an absence of research on the use of grounded theory in the exploration of socio-ecological factors that bear upon male refugees relative to HIV and MCP. Previous studies have applied grounded theory to examine the attitudes, practices, concerns and social interactions of asylum seekers, refugees and former refugees. However these inquiries primarily examine resettlement contexts as they pertain to interactions between mental health and the socio-political integration of women, youth and families.

Illuminating Refugee Perceptions and Practices through Grounded Theory

In a mixed methods study (Pahud 2008) grounded theory was produced to address gaps and dissonance in research that sought to gauge the state of mental health issues affecting refugees. Theory was constructed in a two-phase analytical process to elucidate coping mechanisms enacted by 26 newly resettled former-refugees. In the first phase, 12 categories were formed through open coding. This process entailed the careful evaluation of transcribed interviews whereby data characteristics steered the
identification and description of categorical elements and traits. The second phase employed these properties to qualify and refine further instances pertinent to confirming consistence and demonstrated relationships between the initial 12 categories.

Drawing on Glaser and Strauss’ (1967)xxviii, relay of staged development of grounded theory it is apparent that this study generated theoretical premises via the construction of categorical features according to methodological tenets of grounded theory.

The Ethnographic Snapshot

Ethnography is essentially concerned with gaining entry to the culture of a group through observation and immersive field work (Patton 2002). It is reliant upon the description of a society or people, including the vast dimensions and particulars of their daily lived realities (Charmaz and Mitchell 2001). The nexus between grounded theory and ethnography is defined by Charmaz and Mitchell (2001), whereby “…Ethnographic study can connect theory with realities…thus, it may prompt Grounded Theorists to go deeper into their studied phenomena to understand experience as their subjects live it, not simply talk about it.” (p. 161). The same is true of snapshot ethnography, however this unorthodox ethnographic classification is defined by a time-limited, rather than expansive period of ethnographic engagement with phenomena. For instance, Nishaant Choksi (2004) offered his community based social asset assessmentxxix as an ethnographic approach that provided a snapshot of the realities in a Chicago neighborhood during his nine-week involvement with community members’ social development activities. Similarly Jantzen’s (2005) snapshot ethnography of the
knowledge systems inherent within the interactions of participants in a women’s group in Kihande, Uganda transpired over a period of five weeks. Through her work she employed methods that are traditionally associated with anthropologic ethnography such as unstructured interviews and participant observation. She also consulted participatory photography as a means for data collection. Her work recognizes the limitations inherent in snapshot ethnographies but her findings and analysis valuate and necessitate the utility of this approach as it positively contributes to the realm of social scientific inquiry. In keeping with this non-traditional classification, this research employs snapshot ethnography during a nine week period across three settings in Namibia.

*Ethnomethodology*

*The Handbook of Ethnography* (2001) offers that both ethnography and ethnomethodology are “informed by interpretive tradition, concerned with the lifeworld… [as they] respect the point of view of the social actor…” (p.118) Garfinkel (1967) expands this notion through his assertion that ethnomethodological practice is achieved, “by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life, the attention accorded to extraordinary events…to learn about them as phenomena in their own right” (p.1). This dynamic is favorable to the manifestation of the communicative ecology in that the “methods”(Patton 2002, p. 111) that social actors employ to impart meaning to their unique experiences, can be affirmed, interrogated and documented therefore ensuring rich and explicit data.

Ethnomethodology suggests that social actors employ verbal accounts to construct and define their experiences (Das and Boje 1993). Such expression is helpful for the
engagement of non-verbal occurrences. This is important as ethnomethodology is premised on explicating tacit knowledge, sense-making as well as contextually situated socio-environmental phenomena that may be taken for granted (Patton 2002, Das and Boje 1993, Denzin 1969). This includes ways of doing and functioning with respect to the routine and daily lived experiences of social actors.

Sampling Methods

Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling was employed to gain entry to refugee communities whereby the guidance of specific members of this community was sought to assist with establishing communication and engagement amongst potential gatekeepers as well as additional key informants. In this instance I enlisted the assistance of my husband who is a refugee residing in Namibia as well as other individuals that have refugee status in the country. Within each of the three research settings individuals purposive sampling functioned to identify individuals with formal institutional responsibility for the management of refugee affairs. Additional participants were identified via social network sampling.

Social Network Sampling

The research sampling strategies will be informed by “social network sampling” (Schensul 1999, p. 2), a process akin to snowball sampling that will aid the selection of participants by identifying individuals who know of one another through direct or indirect relations. Social network sampling bares similarity to snowball sampling as it is employed to gain access to members within a population that may essentially be
embedded within a social actor’s social structure in an inconspicuous manner (Schensul 1999). In essence, social actors must guide researchers to individuals within their social network. However social network sampling surpasses the utility of snowball sampling for the purposes of this study. This is the case as snowball sampling merely seeks to detect within ones social network, ‘others’ who possess “desired” (Sadler, Lee, Lim and Fullerton 2010, p. 370) characteristics or tendencies (Trochim 2006).

This study seeks to gain access to social actors who comprise the total relational structure maintained and experienced by male refugees, including everyone regardless of heterogeneous characteristics. Therefore social network sampling will be employed to reveal the nature and dynamics of social relations as well as group interaction (Hintermair 2009, Trotter II 1999) maintained by male refugees and others within their social networks.

This was the primary means by which all of my sampling was conducted in each setting. Social network sampling enabled me to identify interview participants and become familiar with the roles of the various members of the refugee community. In each setting, new participants were recommended or designated through the cumulative nature of this method, thus the network of participants snowballed in multiple directions. Social network sampling bore important implications for the nature of the research as it offered views to interactions amongst and between social actors.

Data Collection Methods

I gathered primary and secondary data to inform the research process. The primary data was obtained through unstructured participant mapping elicitation
interviews; go along interviews as well as semi-structured interviews and participant observation. I also identified secondary sources such as posters, flyers, manuals, newsletters, pamphlets as well as other pertinent archival data. I used secondary data to inform my thinking of how I would frame or approach interview questions as well as to lend foundational context to my experiences.

**Participant Observation**

Participant observation persisted in each setting throughout the duration of the fieldwork experience. Observation was not merely limited to all that was evidenced during the research process. It was also attuned to what I did not witness including voids, absences and omissions with respect to information, interactions and settings. Observations essentially informed all aspects of data collection.

**Unstructured Interviews**

Unstructured interviews were the primary means for obtaining stated information from participants. Such interviews transpired throughout my observations, during participant mapping elicitation interviews and go-alongs. I used a tape recorder to document some of the instances where unstructured interviews warranted data collection through mapping and scheduled interviews. In keeping with the ethnomethodological practice of identifying, probing and illuminating the mundane amongst a community of social actors, I prompted participants to alter and explicate their methodical and tacit stream of doing and knowing by posing sequenced *why* and *how* questions within the context of participants’ actions and interaction with their surroundings.
Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted for two reasons: (1) to gather primary data from participants through their formal channels, affiliations and capacities such as administrators, appointed leadership and officials. In this case, background information formed the basis of the questions that I asked. (2) They were also utilized to follow-up on information obtained from interview participants whereby they identified individuals, settings or patterns that they deemed important within their communities and social networks during previous interviews.

Participant Mapping Elicitation Interviews

Participant mapping is a creative and theoretically derived method that presents participatory, flexible and perspective driven means for data collection. Participants were engaged through elicitation interviews that were facilitated via participant mapping. With respect to this study research, participant mapping refers to the use of writing instruments and paper to elicit and document spatial, (Vajjhala 2006) social and personal biographical data through sketches (see Appendix G and H).

Formal definitions of participant mapping are elusive however, the literature demonstrate that the technique is associated with concept mapping (Wheeldon and Fraubert 2009) and Geographic Information Systems (Vajjhala 2006, Vajjhala and Walker 2009). Participant mapping is essentially a participant reported method that can be regarded as a variant of low-tech Geographic Information Systems. This is the case as Geographic Information Systems operate to “capture, manage, analyze and visualize spatial data,” (Walker, Mason and Cheung 2006) to enable the investigation of the
existence and purpose of phenomena (Walker, Mason and Cheung 2006) so meaning can be ascribed to and distilled from the data which it depicts. Therefore, just as Geographic Information Systems allow the inspection of “patterns of social networks with spatial variation” (Walker, Mason and Cheung 2006) participant mapping warrants the discovery and emergence of data which is telling of participants’ social and physical environment.

Social scientific applications of participant mapping are concerned with the visual efficacy of maps in relaying “how and why social phenomena” (Schensul 1999 p. 93) and social relations operate within a geographical space (Cromley 1999). Summarily, they assist researchers in descriptive accounts of research sites, the gathering and synthesis of data as well as the delivery of research results (Cromley 1999).

Participant mapping elicitation interviews comprised 5 mapping elicitation techniques (see Appendix I). These techniques were employed to bring forth data from participant interviews that were based on the maps that they created. Participant mapping elicitation interviews were primarily unstructured however they were also guided by semi-structured interviews with follow-up participants. Each of the 5 mapping techniques was completed during the course of a single mapping engagement using a single sheet of paper. The mapping techniques were mobilized to: Illuminate relationships maintained within participants’ social networks [social network map]; for verification of the existence, relevance and physicality of structures and sites within communities inhabited by refugees [community map]; to identify communicative resources, spaces and places that are salient to refugees’ experiences [communication assets map]; to document participants’ mobility patterns [footprints map]; and to reveal
temporal accounts of events experienced by participants [life map]. A detailed synopsis of the participant mapping activities that were used in this study are outlined as follows:

*Social Network Mapping*

Social network mapping elicitation interviews engaged participants in the construction of visual representations or drawings of their social network. These graphic depictions constituted the raw data that guided and informed unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Essentially they served to render visible (Greiner, in press) the nature and dynamics of social relations (Hintermair 2009, Trotter II 1999) maintained by male refugees and others comprising their social networks. This is important because it enabled dialogic conversation about the relationships in participants’ social networks (Greiner, in press) based on their omissions throughout the mapping process.

*Community Mapping*

Community mapping was employed to access sketch-based data via participants’ depictions of urban and camp-based refugee communities. This method served to ascribe meaningful views to physical and social entities within the three refugee settings. Community maps evolve from the process of Cognitive Mapping (Cromley 1999), whereby people generate [sketch] tangible graphic representations of community and neighborhood features. Therefore, the term “community” will be employed in lieu of “cognitive”. Community maps are developments through which “directions to others, navigating between places and finding things that are needed or wanted” (Downs and Stea 1977 as cited in Jacobs and Luloff 1995) are relayed via members of a community. They emerge via the recall of information regarding routes, space and spatial relations
between objects and phenomena in the scheme of one’s daily physical environment (Cromley 1999). Community Mapping results in the reproduction of the “behavior, beliefs and attitudes of individuals” (1995) comprising a community. This was important for locating, interrogating and understanding participants’ preferences and routines as well as the importance of social and material entities in refugee settings.

**Footprint Mapping**

Footprint maps were used to elicit information about current, past and prospective mobility (De Lay 2003). They were especially used to illustrate individuals’ movement inside of Osire as well as national and international distance travel. Footprint maps, like Geographic Information Systems, work to trace population mobility. Furthermore, patterns related to frequency of mobility, destinations, travel modes and routes of travel can be divulged through footprint mapping (see Miller, Siffel and Correa 2009). Footprint mapping elicitation interview data was especially compared with data from community mapping interviews and social network mapping interviews to determine and verify mobility patterns related to frequency, locality as well as relationship-driven mobility throughout the interview process.

**Communication Asset Mapping**

Communication asset mapping was employed with aim to distinguish natural and constructed communication entities within the physical and social realms of Namibia’s refugee community. The mapping process relied on the perceptions and inputs of refugees to document practices, attributes, structures and channels which characterize viable and insignificant communicative systems and resources. This information was
particularly useful toward the identification and description of intangible socio-communicative assets as well as tangible material communication assets in Osire.

Communication asset mapping works to chart phenomena which constitute communicative functions as well as the organization of communication in communities. The literature presents a multitude of concepts which relegate communicative asset mapping to the service of the management and social sciences. Central to these definitions are the instrumentality of phenomenology, grounded theory, network theory and systems theory (Jeffres 2008) toward the generation of visual inventories that formulate communication asset maps.

Communication Audits (Goldhaber and Krivonos 1977) and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), (Allen, Hart and Cordes 1999, Kretzman and McKnight 1993) are methods which employ communication asset mapping as a means to locate existing and potentially viable communicative resources in participant driven processes. The Communication asset mapping elicitation interview was useful for capturing participants’ sense-making with regard to the utility of the various communicative assets that they interact with and value (or not) within their routines.

Life Mapping

The rationale for the utilization of life mapping was guided by the assumption that participants would be provided the opportunity to discuss personal and historical aspects of their lives as opposed to their relationships and associations within the broader community or social context. They were essentially used to elicit chronological personal narratives. Participants were asked to construct life maps at the end of the series of
elicitation mapping activities. This conscious decision was waged to avoid the risk of conducting interviews that would appear overtly intrusive with regard to personal matters. It was also assumed that participants would become comfortable and less guarded throughout the course of the interview process.

Life Mapping is a practice that originates from the mental health field as it was introduced by the World Health Organization in 1985 (Griffiths, Giarchi, Carr, Jones, and Horsham 2007). Similar to concept mapping, life maps are generated via thought processes around ones past, present and future perceptions of and expectations for their life (Greiner, in print, Griffiths et al, 2007).

*Go-Along Interviews*

Go-alongs enabled me to remain with participants throughout the course of their day. This method called for participant observation as well as unstructured interviewing throughout the experience. I posed questions according to participants based upon their interactions with others, events, social settings, and material entities.

The go-along elicitation experience is conducted while ethnographers accompany participants within their respective communities (Capriano 2008, Kusenbach 2003). This affords them the opportunity to simultaneously interview and observe participants as they delineate their social realms through routine interaction with their environment (Capriano 2008, Kusenbach 2003).

Go-alongs acknowledge and enable possibilities for capturing the unfolding and development of phenomena and experiences that may transpire beyond a pre-defined, fixed site. Thus, the ethnographic domain is elucidated via “diffuse” and dynamic
phenomena which transpire within, and as the result of the everyday activities and experiences of “mobile and multiply situated” (Marcus 1995, p. 102; Boccagni 2010) persons.

The phenomenological conceptions of space and place are inextricably linked to and realized through the go-along (Capriano 2008, Jones, Bunce, Evans, Gibbs, Hein 2008, Kusenbach 2003) as social realms comprise natural ethnographic domains that thrive wherever migratory participants are attendant (Marcus 1995). Therefore, go-alongs constitute and facilitate a type of multi-sited ethnographic experience that engages the discovery of nuances, occurrences and features to explicate data and guide data collection processes within the social domain.

Research Participants

I anticipated that I would engage refugee communities, non-refugee nationals who hail from refugee sending-countries as well as representatives from formal institutions that are responsible for the management of refugee affairs. The research primarily called for interaction with adult urban refugees as a means of understanding communication and mobility amongst refugee populations. However both adult urban and camp-based refugees comprised the communities that I conducted the research with. Although male refugees constituted the ideal population amongst which I sought to gather data, I routinely and purposively engaged with female refugees. [I will expand on this further into the document].

Finally, my husband is a refugee who has resided in Namibia since the year 2003. We met in 2005 when I was employed as a videographer in the country. His residence in
Namibia availed a variety of informational and relational resources to the research. Therefore, I enlisted my husband as a key informant throughout the entire research process. The impact of my marital relationship on the research process will be thoroughly explored in chapter 3.

**Description of Participants and Methods in Three Settings**

**Setting 1: Participants and Methods in Windhoek**

Upon my arrival in Windhoek I received assistance with accessing members of the refugee community through a grounds-keeper at a guesthouse in Windhoek West and the female owner of a guesthouse in Windhoek North. These individuals provided me with information regarding venues, residences and telephone numbers where I would be able to access members of the refugee community during evenings and weekends [the only spans of time that I was not engaged with an internship]. I also called on the assistance of my husband with contacting and meeting the participants for interviews.

Through social network sampling I obtained a total of 27 interviews. Out of the 27 interviews, 7 interviews were captured with an audio recorder and transcribed, 4 were obtained via participant mapping elicitation, documented with an audio recording device and subsequently transcribed. 1 interview was conducted during a go-along in the Shandumbala location in Katutura, thus it was not transcribed but rather relayed via my field notes. 15 additional interviews were conducted without the aid of an audio recording device therefore they could not be transcribed. In this case I composed field notes about the interviews immediately after my interactions with participant or as a
reflective process at the end of each ‘work day’. The participants were Angolan and Congolese refugees who resided in Windhoek North and various locations throughout the Katutura Township. I conducted data collection for a period of 5 weeks in this setting.

I organized my journey to Otjiwarongo and Osire while I resided in Windhoek. I was initially given permission to conduct my research in Osire through the UNHCR Country Representative but official access to the refugee camp was granted to me via the Ministry of Home Affairs Commissioner of Refugees. It was only possible through the efforts of a Windhoek-based male refugee that I was granted an immediate appointment with the pertinent authorities to present my credentials (see Appendix J) and intentions to enter the camp. The outcome materialized in the issuance of a permit granting me entry and prolonged visitation (see Appendix K) within Osire. Similarly, a member of the refugee community who works and resides in the camp assisted me through the provision of organizational contact information as well as lodging and transportation particulars via electronic mail and telephone communication.

Setting 2: Participants and Methods in Otjiwarongo

In Otjiwarongo, I enlisted an interpreter who also functioned as a translator of the Portuguese, Lingala and French languages. My husband and my interpreter functioned as my key informants within the Otjiwarongo refugee community. Social network sampling availed urban refugees, transient refugees and former refugees who provided me with local and contextual information. Some were gatekeepers to members of refugee communities within informal settlements in Otjiwarongo such as DRC.
I engaged in participant observation while situated in this setting. I also employed participant mapping, unstructured interviews and go-along interviews with participants. I interviewed a total of 19 participants in Otjiwarongo. 9 of these interviews were conducted without the aid of an audio recording device however I documented them via my field notes (see Appendix L, M, N). I obtained 3 interviews through participant mapping elicitation. These interviews are accompanied by audio recordings that were transcribed. I went on 2 go-alongs, 1 was documented with an audio recording device and transcribed and 1 was documented through my field notes. 5 additional interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Data collection transpired for a period of 7 days.

Setting 3: Participants and Methods in Osire

My interpreter, my husband, a male refugee business owner and a male refugee employed by the UNHCR functioned as my key informants in Osire. I purposively sought to interface with Osire Community gatekeepers. Therefore, my key informants introduced me to gatekeepers such as religious leaders, females, the refugee camp staff, coumbi transport operators and other camp-based business owners. They also informed me of specific sites within the camp that availed opportunities for interaction with potential participants. Social network sampling was employed to engage with potential participants and conduct go-along interviews and participant mapping elicitation interviews with them.

I completed a total of 39 interviews with participants in Osire. 9 of these were recorded with an audio device and transcribed. 12 interviews were conducted and audio recorded during participant mapping elicitation. These interviews were transcribed. 18
interviews were conducted without an audio recording device, 3 out of these 18 interviews were go-alongs. These interviews were reported through my field notes. The bulk of my data while in the camp was obtained via experiences whereby I engaged in participant observation. My field notes offer accounts of these experiences. Data collection was conducted for 4 weeks or 28 days exactly.

Data Coding and Analysis Through Grounded Theory

In keeping with grounded theory, open coding analysis was employed to conceptualize, designate, compare, condense and label the various patterns and phenomena that arose during the course of the fieldwork and final analysis process. This allowed me to develop and articulate concepts through the methodical analysis of their attributes and dimensions (Corbin and Strauss 1990). The synthesis of field notes was also informed by this process, making it more efficient to classify and draw correlations between experiences and observations as well as data derived directly from interviews. Furthermore, the comparative process informed the development of conceptual statements about the relationships evidenced in the data and thus my ability to form encompassing categories.

I used Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis software to organize and analyze relationships evidenced within the coded, designated and refined categories. This enabled the formulation of visual relationships that aided in the process of formulating grounded theory. Coding was developed from transcribed interviews, participant maps, field notes, and old refugee-developed newsletters (see Appendix O).
CHAPTER THREE

Reflexivity

This chapter provides a view to Namibia’s refugee community through the experiences and encounters that shaped my insights and capacities as a researcher tasked with balancing multiple identities. It also illuminates the perceptions, relationships and interactions that enriched the character of the data collection process throughout the progression of the field work experience. Most of all it assists in the construction of a mental image of the people that granted me entry into their lifeworld to enable the development of this study.

Myerhoff and Ruby (1992) offer reflexivity as “the capacity of any system of signification to turn back upon itself, to make itself its own object by referring to itself” (p.307). Thus as an individual that entered and temporarily became part of the refugee community in Namibia I engaged in an iterative and simultaneous process of introspection and external evaluation. This strategy worked as a constant resource and guide for my research. It also enabled me to exist within and experience the refugee community as its rhythms, dimensions, wonders and complexities unfurled around me.

Lavis (2010) discusses the role of the researcher versus the identity of the researcher. I was concerned with both my identity as an individual within and amongst the refugee community as well as my role as a researcher. I was particularly consumed with mitigating these roles and remaining sincere to my work and the community throughout the fieldwork process. In this case I evoked multiple researcher identities (Lavis 2010, Coffey 1999) and alternated or enlisted them when the research called for it.
There were so many dimensions to the identity that I owned, performed and transmitted through my capacity as a female, mother, wife, student, researcher, black-foreigner, foreigner, American, guest and youth. This was especially the case during fieldwork that I engaged in at Osire.

As a researcher, I sought to conduct and gain access to the lifeworld of people who I befriended. It was made perfectly clear by Osire residents that researchers were regarded as distant fixtures within the camp. This presented a challenge for me because I sought genuine relationships within the Osire community. I also realized that camp residents engage with researchers based on the negotiation and positioning of identity. I experienced transmutable and pervious exchanges with the characters, personalities and actors comprising the refugee community. This permitted the formation of mutual and willing relationships premised upon the dialogical interplay of our identities (Bott 2010, Lavis 2010, Yuval-Davis 2010). This was essential to evolving genuine relationships and accessing genuine data throughout the fieldwork process. I learned this as I experienced. I am aware that friendships and warm familiarity formed the basis of my entry into the Osire Community as a researcher. Based on the admissions of Osire residents regarding their perceptions of researchers, without the presence of friendship, I am unsure that I would have come away with anything more than uninformed observations and bland survey.

Throughout my experience, I realized that it simply mattered that I was present and available as a friend in the community and thus this role contextualized my time and interactions within Osire. My acknowledgement, valuation and accommodation of the
participants’ stances, impulses, values, routines and curiosities were central to their cooperation toward the development of the research. In retrospect, the way I went about getting at the research with participants made the difference between my status as an enthusiastic and curious friend with a natural interest in their realities versus that of the researcher that camp inhabitants tolerated and knew all too well.

*Expectation and Good News*

Expectation proved to be a constant source of negotiation for me. What expectations should I have upon my entry and in some cases, re-entry into refugee settings? Would the men take me seriously as a researcher? Would they trust me enough or even care to participate? Is it even right for me to go into to a research setting with expectations? Are expectations the same as assumptions in this case?

I had expectations due to my prior involvement with male refugees in Windhoek, Namibia from the year 2005 to 2007. I lived and worked in Namibia where my skills as a videographer were sought by male refugee musicians who had known me as an unmarried, childless *woman* who dated a fellow refugee. This is significant because research indicates that according to norms that structure many African cultures, females only become women or complete beings after they give birth and enter motherhood (Taiwo 2010, Hollos & Larsen 2008, Weinger 2006, Jensen 1995). Studies reveal that in some instances attitudes toward childless women in Africa may denote perceptions of low social status (Weinger 2006, p. 97) misbehavior (Weinger 2006, p. 95), and immorality (Hollos and Larsen 2008, p. 161).
It is merely due to my recent immersion amongst male members of Namibia’s refugee community as a married woman and mother of a male-child that I am capable of waging this interpretation of my former experiences. Prior to my departure from Namibia in 2007 certain male members of the refugee community vocalized that I was still a girl because I did not know motherhood. I never saw these individuals after the birth of my son in Namibia in 2007. Would their perceptions of me be different now that I had returned to Namibia as a mother of a three year old male-child? I arrived in Windhoek and during one of my first encounters with a male member of the refugee community I was told that I had left Namibia as “a small girl” and I came back as “a big”. Would these sentiments characterize male refugee perceptions of me now that I was with my son? How would being a woman versus a girl impact my ability to conduct research with male refugee participants? Based on my experience in Windhoek, I was unsure of what to expect upon further engagement with male members of the refugee community in Otjiwarongo and my primary research setting, Osire.

Apparently I was not the only one with expectations. Whether positive or unfavorable, certain members of the refugee community had expectations about me. I learned of this due to the fact that many of the refugees candidly relayed these expectations to me. I was told that they believed that I had left with my child and I was never expected to return to wed Tshikuna [my husband]. His story would be similar to many African and refugee men who were used for protection, abandoned and eventually forgotten by women hailing from abroad.
I was also told that I was believed to be a figment of Tshikuna’s imagination, a fictitious tale told by a lonely man who had no certain future. My return or my existence astounded those who believed this was the case. A refugee female most familiar with Tshikuna’s experiences as an asylum-seeker playfully mocked and re-enacted his phone conversations with me. She explained that Tshikuna would borrow her phone to call me but she believed that he was using calling cards to dial locally or call a voicemail number while pretending to be engaged in conversation with me. She became my closest female companion in Osire.

In contrast there were members of the refugee community who never met me but heard that I arrived in Windhoek and that I would enter Osire. They prepared for me to visit and stay with them. One such group of refugees was the first to receive my family upon our initial entry to Osire. Mama Esperance and Papa Isak met us with a freshly-prepared warm meal consisting of beans, sakuma wiki and ugalixlii.

Finally, I was told by refugees who knew me prior to my departure from Namibia in 2007 that because they were aware that I maintained constant communication with Tshikuna, they were certain that I would return. They expressed that they were happy to hear the news of my expected return. A man in Windhoek named Papa Sawa told me that he heard the good news of my return but when he saw me again, for the first time, his eyes had shown him someone who is “good”. The act of returning, reclaiming and reuniting had obviously bore sentiment amongst members of the refugee community. For this I was good and for some, my return was good news.
My Son and Our Family

I encountered male and female refugees in all three settings who referred to my son as either, “our son”, “our boy”, “my child”, “my boy”, “my American boy”, “mwana ba Congo”, “mwanangu”, “mtoto wetu”, ‘mwana Baluba’iii’, and other familial labels that people bestowed upon him. Doors literally opened for me in refugee settings with my son as the focal point of interaction. In many instances, my son legitimized the need for me to come together with people for tea or fou fou or ugali. He was welcome and therefore I was welcome. People also vocalized the elevation of Tshikuna’s status from boy to man based on his new role as a father and husband.

Many people mentioned that my son was an extension of my husband enjoying a life that my husband had not yet known in America. Some jokingly called him the next Obama, others welcomed him home. Several people gave him and my husband money. A man licked a Namibian note totaling N$100 and stuck it on my husband’s forehead while we waited for our transportation to depart to Osire. My husband explained that the man had asked if my son were circumcised and the money was a gift of approval. Many offered congratulations for the reunification of my family and new marriage.

A few people, especially men, told me that I was very clever or intelligent, not because I was conducting research and not because I was a student pursuing a master’s degree, but because I had managed to return with my son to Namibia to marry Tshikuna and reunite our family after almost three years of separation. Several interviews were conducted with my son present (see Appendix P).
Group Membership and Family Ties

Several conversations and interactions generated the affirmation, “We are family now”, “You are a Congolese now”, or “We are the same blood now”. These sentiments were occasionally expressed by both men and women that I met in Osire, guest houses in Windhoek, during commutes in refugee transportation or during encounters in grocery stores in Otjiwarongo. Several male refugees called me “sister” or “Swala”. Some elder males called me “petit”.

Meal Sharing

Having meals with people and their families or groups of people that determined that we must meet for meals became a routine especially for breakfast and lunch. They would say that they have to make sure that their boy [my son] was fed. These became opportunities for people to know me. People prepared food for me at my request and invited me to eat with them days in advance. It was almost as if I managed my research activities around meals. The meals also served as ice-breakers or bridges to data. I was often met with a barrage of questions, which in turn enabled me to ask questions. Most of my mapping exercises were conducted in tandem with a meal in someone’s home. People willingly shared their stories as well as their meals.

In Osire, I genuinely enjoyed the local cuisine and the fact that I am a vegetarian was more of a problem outside of the refugee camp than it was inside the camp. I would request ugali or fou fou and sakuma wiki/rabe\textsuperscript{sliv} [collard greens] or pondu [cassava leaves]. People commented that I favored simple food. They would either comment that I like their kind of food, I like “food from home” or that I like “simple food” better than
“high food”. Meal sharing proved to be mutually beneficial. It enabled bonding and relationships to form between me and members of the refugee community. Meals were an important gateway to interviews, go-alongs and mapping techniques. Meal sharing also led to other invitations.

**Invitations**

I was invited to Sunday church services, baptisms, christenings, the Osire Community Masjid before Fridays, office meetings, breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, trips to the shops, coumbi rides, food preparation routines, queue stand-ins, donkey-cart rides, television show viewings, newly constructed homes, ongoing plot construction, bike rides, choir practice, the soccer field bleachers, strolls throughout the refugee camp, water pump fetches, the movie theater, slaughterings, shepherdings, meetings with administrators, ‘Hollywood’, everyone’s pit latrine, vegetable gardens, verbal disputes, the library, the women’s center, the youth center, cell phone conversations and hair-braiding sittings to name a few. These were all learning experiences for me. I conducted unstructured interviews and ‘go-alongs’ during some of these engagements. I never turned down an invitation.

**My Child Status**

I was also considered a child, although I am an adult and a mother, certain Mama’s and Papa’s [as they had been referred to amongst the refugee community] in the refugee camp knew my husband [as they explained it] when they found him alone during his bawling-spell near the entrance of the refugee camp as a ‘Newcomer’, a ‘Small Boy’ or a ‘Kwassa Kwassa’. They had evidenced his transition from Newcomer/Kwassa
Kwassa Musician to ‘Family Man’ as Papa Isak had summarized it. They considered him their son and by default they took me as their daughter. Several elders referred to me as their child by calling me “mwana petit” or “petit”.

Good English

After speaking with people in Osire, some would break out in conversation with their colleagues in their mother tongues about my command of the English language. They would comment that I have “good English” or that they can’t understand me or that my English is “too much” and their English is “not O.K.” This was never a problem for me because I really never said much outside of asking questions and responding to them when I was amongst large groups of people, I rather observed. Furthermore, I never had any problems understanding the people that I interacted with.

The way I dealt with their insistence that my English was “too good” was by asserting that I cannot speak French or Lingala or Portuguese or Kirundi or Tshiluba at all and that my Kiswahili was lacking. I also told them that they knew more English than I knew in their mother tongue and that I have only spoken English most of my life while they spoke at least three to four languages fluently. Usually I would start speaking in Kiswahili, people would laugh but then they would start to use Kiswahili with me and correct me when I was wrong. Those individuals continued to use Kiswahili when communicating with me throughout my stay in Osire, thus we spoke considerably more than when I communicated in English. Eventually, they never communicated with me in English again.
I would also greet people in their language and say phrases or words in their languages that would make people smile and laugh such as, “Somo Trop”\textsuperscript{iii}, “Solola Bien”\textsuperscript{iv}, “Tarraxa, Tarrachinha”, “Um, Dois, Três”\textsuperscript{v}, “Ahlan wa Salahn”\textsuperscript{vi}, “hakuna wasi wasi”\textsuperscript{vii}, “salama salamini”\textsuperscript{viii}, or “droit chemin”\textsuperscript{ix} This resulted in a number of personal jokes between me and members of the community because some of the things that I said were cliché saying, titles of songs, albums or just random word assemblages in their languages. So when we would see each other, we would greet each other according to the phrase or words that we designated. Some even named me according to the word or phrase that we shared. A female elder from Angola called me “Tarrachinha”, a popular urban youth dance from Angola. So my good English never became a barrier to relationships or communication amongst refugees unless I needed to enlist my interpreter.

\textit{Paradoxical Privileges of My Insider-Outsider Status}

There were several ways that my outsider status supported the data collection process. I had not initially recognized the importance of my outsider status in this instance and initially tried to underplay it by strategically talking about specific music, foods, musicians, and other facets of local and national culture that I believed the inhabitants of Osire were familiar with. I believed that my attempts at cultural sensitivity would mask my outsider status. However, this was ineffective when interacting with refugees situated in Otjiwarongo and Osire.

My interactions with Windhoek-based refugees was based on a greater degree of familiarity so they tended to explain less or they even expected that I knew certain
aspects of their cultures, this was true with both Congolese and Angolan refugees. Congolese and Angolan communities are somewhat more established and thus their cultures are more commonplace and pronounced within the realm of multiculturalism in Windhoek. The former situation necessitated my role as a pupil and underscored my position as an outsider.

A man named Mustafha explained that I was “Windhoek clever” and that women in Osire needed to be “Osire village clever” in order to collect water easier, start hearty fires faster, obtain more rations than usual and to be seen first by nurses at the clinic. I essentially knew that he was informing me of my position as an outsider and that I needed to humble myself to Osire experiences. With this I determined that I would be better off not knowing. Even when I understood the rationale behind why certain actions were performed or why the infrastructure in the camp was the way that it was or how the administrative offices worked together to implement or communicate, I would act as if I had no clue.

This resulted in an outpouring of information and directives regarding processes, grievances, ethnic tensions, schemes, short-cuts, cleaning routines, rumors, entertainment, trade, personal and property security, ‘go-to people’, nocturnal behavior, camp lingo, cultural symbols, gardening, local governance, social hierarchies, Osire economics and Osire history. I would not have known to ask about much of what people disclosed and I realized that I actually did not know much about Osire at all. My field notes, interviews and go-alongs developed and benefited tremendously from my outsider status in this way.
My insider status also worked to complicate access to data collection just as it had facilitated access to people who would provide me with data. In many instances, my husband took the liberty to inform members of the community that I was conducting research. This was good as people wanted to talk to me, but they wanted to talk about everything. Instead of warming up to people and having them warm up to me [a process that was genuine and worked well in my opinion], people now determined that they would tell me everything, every detail about themselves since birth. It began to appear that they wanted me to be interested in them and they wanted their stories to intrigue and dazzle me. I became aware of situations whereby I was being told what people thought I wanted to hear. Action, adventure, scandal, and hardship episodes were typical. I was being fed the perfect refugee story. Some began to tell me stories about running from war or witchcraft in the form of violence that forced them to flee their countries.

In one case a refugee named John sat with me outside of his home as I visited him to conduct an interview that Tshikuna arranged. He started talking about refugee orphans and mental disorders in women. This was presented through his story about a woman that fled invasion as soldiers stormed and pillaged her village in Goma. The frenzied woman grabbed her baby, tied the baby onto her back and ran without looking back. She hiked and “jumped” transport until she was sure that she was safe. The woman was now kilometers away, no longer in Goma. She decided that she would wake her sleeping baby to feed it. She dismounts the child and uncovers it only to discover that she had been carrying a village dog, while she had left her baby behind amidst chaos in her rush
for safety. The woman pounded her head in anguish, goes eternally mad and that is the story of orphans and mad women comprising refugee communities from DRC.

Through this, I saw potential for the use of narrative within this community\textsuperscript{14}, however this caused me to believe that people would never take me seriously and they surely did not take me seriously as a researcher. I managed this discovery by withdrawing the appearance of interest in their asylum-seeking or refugee episodes. I redirected my attention to the most mundane and commonplace things. I abandoned all talk of refugee life. I stopped traveling with Tshikuna and my son. I ventured out alone, interviewed people alone and began asking people about whether or not they preferred \textit{Omo} or \textit{Sunlight} washing powder and why. These tactics seemed to work and I eventually realigned my research abilities. In some cases certain types of data collection with a single participant would span 2 to 4 days in attempt to transcend the spectacular and get at the ordinary.

\textit{The Unexpected: My Assistants in the Field}

I never expected that at any point during my experience in Otjiwarongo and Osire, that the refugee community would actually assist me in some capacity with the research. I had an interpreter and a few people that I sought as key informants however, I was surprised at the ways that people helped with their contribution and perspective to the research based on their interest.

This was first exemplified through the actions of a single male resident in the Refugee camp, he is 26 years old and resides in the former home constructed by my husband. He came to my home one evening with tea and bread and he explained that
based on his understanding of my concern for the health of male refugees that I should
certainly visit the movie theater from 10 am to 3 during the weekdays because men
congregated outside of the theater to play pool while talking about a range of issues
including rumors of STI, especially as they saw people walking to and from the direction
of the Osire Clinic.

Another research participant kept inviting me back to his home to look over and
add to his initial communication asset map and social network map. He explained that he
thought about the map further and realized that he forgot to mention important aspects of
his activities during our prior mapping session. Two days after our last meeting at his
home, he visited me at my room with his cellphone and showed me pictures that he had
taken with the camera that was built into his cellphone. He visited administrative offices
and noticed a poster that illustrated a communication reporting pathway for residents
within the camp that were affected by sexual or gender based violence. He explained
that he assumed that this information could potentially be useful for my research. He e-
mailed the pictures to me via his telephone the same day.
The morning after I spent my first night in Osire it seemed as though everyone I met wanted to know how my night went. This was asked in the form of questions such as, “How was the night?” “Did you rest well?” “Were you able to sleep?” “Did your bed keep you well?” Papa Isak commented that he was happy that the sun had rose and set on me in Osire and that I should now report to collect my rations and secure my plot. During my first week in the camp I was informed by many camp residents that that I was the first person to come to Osire under the guise of research who actually remained in the camp to sleep and enter the homes of the inhabitants to eat with them [Thus they tended to ignore me as a researcher].

An Osire based male refugee and employee for AHA told me about an instance where a female researcher from Norway wanted him to escort her around the camp due to her fear that she would be confronted with danger due to her understanding that many refugees had traumatic experiences that could cause them to have violent outbursts. This explanation provided rationale for comments and questions that many of the residents of the camp directed to me. Some would ask me if I were afraid or if I were scared to visit their homes. I did not understand why they would even fathom asking me that until a male participant explained that researchers and visitors generally keep interaction with residents of the camp to a minimum. He explained that visitors usually only “know how Osire life looks” but not “community life” or “family things”. He explained that the only reason why many people knew that Angelina Jolie was important when she had visited the camp was because she had many escorts from UNHCR, the police and the Ministries.
He told me that I was “going alone” in the camp but people still saw me and knew I was a visitor.

Paul, the Osire Librarian explained that I was “different” because I chose to stay in Osire but the camp administrators and government officials commute to nearby lodges during their assignments in Osire. He mentioned that the only other individuals that sleep in Osire are church missionaries, preachers and reverends who visit the churches in Osire. He explained that many visitors arrive early in the morning and that “when the sun ticks the ground they have gone far away”.

I know that my engagement with community members and my stay in the camp heavily influenced the relationships that I had with male and especially female residents. If I had not stayed in Osire, I am positive that I would not have formed certain types of relationships. I am sure that my relationships with women were very genuine because they saw me performing certain duties and chores that they performed. They advised me and helped me settle in at Osire. I ate dinner with them or visited them at night when their work was finished. I also cooked, washed clothes, cleaned dishes, swept, shopped and mothered with them. If I had not interacted with the women in Osire I now know that I would have never had access to several of the men that they were related to. Most of all if I had chosen to stay at lodges that are either 20 to 30 km away from the camp I would have never known the character of nights in Osire.
CHAPTER FOUR

Summary of Findings

Through the construction of grounded theory using Atlas.ti data analysis software it was determined that male refugees engage in the tactical mitigation of disempowering circumstances via their communicative ecology. More specifically, the findings suggest that male refugees conceive future orientations; partake in mobility acts; and enlist their communication assets as tactical responses to subvert disempowering circumstances characterized by uncertainty, perceived loss of self-identity, resource inadequacy and perceptions of marginality.

The findings demonstrate that male refugees' usage of tactics is inextricably linked to their consumption and production of messages, language and media within their communicative realm. Furthermore, the application and injection of participants’ sense-making methods are identifiable via male refugees' tactical attempts to neutralize disempowering circumstances.

Social networks prove to be the primary communication asset for male refugees. This was demonstrated via their formulation of future orientations, participation in mobility acts and their usage of communication assets. Furthermore, male refugees use various tactics within their communicative ecology to (1) Maintain social networks beyond Osire that grant them access to information, economic and tangible resources; (2) Employ ICT's to assist their information seeking and communication needs; (3) Engage in regular interpersonal and intergroup communication within camp-based and urban social networks to access information and economic resources (4) Commodify communication
assets such as personal linguistic skills, ICT's, and artistic abilities such as craft-making and musical performance and (5) Employ communication assets to assuage uncertainty, perceptions of the loss of self-identity and to compensate for resource scarcity.

Findings: Future Orientations

Several of the unstructured interviews conducted during the fieldwork in Windhoek, Otjiwarongo and Osire exhibited a common thread in that the participants spoke of their future with regard to their perceptions of place, their hopes, their ideals and their experiences in Namibia. A large part of this is evidenced in their accounts of resettlement, repatriation or absorption into their host society. The future was primarily spoken of through participants’ intentions to abandon the refugee status or label as a path toward opportunity, stability, normalcy or attainment for the future.

Some participants contextualized their future with regard to their desire to seize opportunities to provide for their families or secure a future for them free from refugee associations. The perceptions and intentions of participants highlighted their creation of an imagined, transformed or reconstructed reality through which they are afforded contentment. Many participants asserted that the refugee status as well as the affairs that regulate it are restrictive, counter prospective and psychologically daunting. Thus participants alluded to inimical physical and mental dispositions toward refugee status. Essentially issues of independence and the reversal of disempowering circumstances resounded throughout numerous accounts.

Through an interview with [Male, 29, DRC, Windhoek] an explanation about the ways that he could accomplish his goals and secure his future centered on the prospect of
resettlement to America or Europe. “Time here is go, go, go, you can be babalas [Namibian slang meaning drunk] to think about what you can do if you had the way… ’I am surviving here but if I am resettle to your side I can stop reaching those thoughts in my head. I can do the things I want…then I can say I am living but refugee is bad for me, not for me anymore… [states his name] needs changement [French word for change].”

Another participant [Male, 46, DRC, Osire] mentioned his concern for his family’s future as well as prospects for resettlement and employment outside of Namibia. “Sometimes I sit, I listen all day for the message from administrator, sometimes the interview keep me to the office all day, but if these people can see me and think we have to give this guy family the better life let us bring him to our place, then I can start now to make my life as just a citizen or the normal person, but not here in Osire…only to the UK, get job, get some house is better, not to sit, sit here to Campula… refugee is not a right life when you are clever.”

In an unstructured interview [Male, 27, Angola, Osire] stated that he was certain of his repatriation which he welcomed over residing in Namibia as a refugee. “I will go back, already I know I will go to Angola they push us there every time now but if I soon get my place there this is good for me, here is bad, refugee is the bad thing, just like that is now your name, refugee… Angola I have my language that is one good thing for me…but since I am schooling [meaning that he has been educated in Namibia] here, I can use English I have now to make some business contracts for the people they need interpreter in Luanda or the border [referring to the developing business zone at
Namibia’s border with Angola. But this place [Osire] you don’t know if you will kick off [be repatriated to Angola] tomorrow, you only know you want to get the different life than refugee.”

[Male, 52, DRC, Osire] expressed his position regarding his family and his ideas about an improved life in Namibia outside of the refugee camp. “I don’t worry about where to go now even I can stay here, when the Osire camp is no more, when they make it now a town Osire, then I can have my time to be happy….Now these child for me where they can go in life if they stay here to Osire Camp…my big is in secondary school then after he complete what happen to him? Refugee like me is big problem…because I am old I don’t bother for resettle they like the young people the young family more…give me I take my plot, even I stay right here to this plot but not in Osire camp, let them make it the town first then I am O.K… I will be [states his entire name] in Osire town not I.D. [states his document number] refugee there to Osire camp.”

Windhoek based Kwassa Kwassa musician [Male, 31, DRC, Windhoek] explained his intentions to resettle in the west to develop an international music career and eventually return to Africa. “I got my brother in Boston, he has the good life in USA so how I can be here and stay refugee when I can make [names his wife and daughter] get better things there like school, working even to save some money one day and go back in Congo or Angola… I must get in Boston I can continue to do rep [rehearsal] and our music there then I become international musician not just the popular one who is Kwassa Kwassa [a musician and person with a transient lifestyle] refugee Kinois [a person from
Kinshasa] from *Doc Congo* [Democratic Republic of Congo] performing for Pohamba
[Namibia’s current president], refugee can be old news I hope in 2012 sister...

One respondent welcomed a life in Namibia outside of the refugee camp with the
chance of dissolving his refugee status.

[Male, 39, DRC, Otjiwarongo] contends that “Namibia is not a bad place, I’m
here for 13 years as the refugee, I learn about this place nicely even Osire is not bad but if
you say Osire, the first thing to say is Osire means refugee, Osire, yes the refugee place…
that is my problem, not to be the refugee but I have my life here in Namibia you don’t
hear my complain. I can stay in Otji [Otjiwarongo] is fine they just give me my residence
finish this refugee story then I can do my business fine then retire like the pensioners.”

A business owner in Osire [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] mentioned that his potential
and desired outcomes for his family will be realized in Scandinavia as a non-refugee.

“I am very helpful here in Camp, I know but I can’t help myself, my sister, her
child, my child, my wife if I stay in here, everybody knows this... I do business in
Namibia better than many but people with family uh-uh this is not a life for them. Your
daughter can even fall pregnant here from one teacher, some even find they waiting here
until they say now go back to your county, when? I have too many things I must do from
my talent but only way is to go to Sweden or those Scandinavia countries they want me
there they working to help me to leave from refugee life, to resettle me, now I am in this
process and these kids, I pray they will be there soon… You know I see in Youtube those
people from my country they become proper when they get resettle, that is the way to go,
then I can upload my clips on Youtube from there.”
The youngest interview participant, [Male, 19, Angola, Osire] thoroughly explained his present circumstances and his options for the future once his refugee status has terminated and he is made to repatriate.

“Dona [referring to me as Dona] this refugee living is cock I don’t lie to you now… I finish my studies here so I say let me apply for bursary then I can go to UNAM [the University of Namibia] I can study law like one brother of mine in Magistrate in Otjiwarongo, he from Lubango [a city in Angola] but these people they don’t want. They stand on top their policy for people from Angola to bring us back now there is no more fighting. Then where do I go? I don’t have even one phone number for someone there, for sure… I am not like most Angolan here they send the child in Angola for holiday to see family then they return the child to Osire for schooling… no more connection is there for me… Osire is my house so before they decide I must go back, I will shoot off to DRC [referring to an informal settlement in Otjiwarongo called DRC] or Oshikango but I won’t go back in Angola, I am here from 9 years, no ma, no pa, no what… 10 years I survive here myself, my people from here live with me… My family they are here the people I know from Lubango and Luanda but they want to return me back with coins for my pocket, 12 k.g. mealies [maize meal] and smile condom to what in Angola? No future for refugee here, if you are refugee sorringo [an Oshiwambo expression for ‘sorry’ in Namibia], even the Angolan say my Portuguese is Namibian, better I stay here to study for law degree…”

[Male, 36, DRC, Otjiwarongo] explains his need to prepare for his child’s future in Namibia as well as his experiences with survival in Namibia and their implications for
his future. “…since I have my boy I am happy but his mother is Namibian and we are not married so that means they won’t give me the residence so we should be married long before. But it’s only the problem for refugee that complicate me here… I can get small contract like you see me now am going north for contract, return from another contract and again and again working like this. Is makasi [difficult in Lingala] for me I don’t see the boy now the mother take another husband, they put me to the prison in Omaruru [a region in Windhoek] because I knock the teeth for one man he doesn’t pay me because I am the refugee… but I do the work so he must to pay me so what I can do beti [feminine reference to me in Lingala]? Because he see me then he ask for my paper now he see I’m like refugee he think this man [referring to himself] is not clever. If I am not refugee then he pay me, he walk to his place, I walk to my place business is finish... but like this is difficult to survive moving, moving, us refugee we sula [local jargon adapted from the South African languages that means struggle or hustle for survival]. I don’t want like this always looking for food Oshikango [a border city in Namibia], looking for money for transport Windhoek [capital city in Namibia], for place to stay Katima [a border city in Namibia], I can be pepêlé [Lingala word for ‘right’ or ‘good’] if I get resident, my status for refugee is end then I can make my house in Otjiwarongo somewhere… I can even bring my boy and get him some money for the school fees but I need my permit for working, they never give for all refugee, this my problem.”

[Male, 24, Angola, Osire] “…I wanted to stay here when I was younger but I know if I stay here now I will get problems…we have been marked here…the returnees in Angola, here it is those ones that stayed… see my problem in Namibia is first how can
I live with Angolans here in Windhoek they forget also they were living in Osire once, then the Namibian have jealous for no reason, then you just have to stay to comunidade do campula [Campula community] ...so when they say you have to go back to Angola I will say no problem, I can manage with my people that side, we are the same, but people never think I don’t know Angola, I only know Namibia, Osire… Even some people think I’m Vambo, Kwanyama [the Kwanyama are an ethnic representation within the Ovambo tribe who inhabit Namibia and Angola] because I sound like Namibian also. If I get in Angola people will know he was the refugee that come back now, they can give you problems ‘cause you have no money... I want to fix planes, I like aviation, that is my interest but I can’t study here ‘cause they will send me back they say in 2 or 3 months… I won’t be miserable, Angola is there I can go in the Luanda I guess there they can’t know this guy is returning. I will only use Portuguese… My Portuguese is still nice from I came here but in the big city [Windhoek] fala Português bem [you/he/she speak Portuguese good] they know you are one of the refugee or they can even think you are rich Angolan doing some trade, automatic they are jealous this is what I hate about Namibia so my pleasure I get a life to Angola, I get U.S. dollar too.”

One resident, [Male, 51, DRC, Osire] shared his thoughts about his hopes to leave the refugee camp while he is still alive to resettle abroad.

“…I seen the newcomer come old, here there is only few things to consider in Osire, one is you are refugee, next is you get the papers to stay in Namibia, not my best one, and the dream for everyone you see smiling here, to get in aeroplane and go to see Obama, Queen ‘Lizbet’, Iceberg …I am here long since independence, just in camp, no
child, no wife, only problem and walking stick, you can even die here alone but who will take me, Obama take me? Even if they give me the house outside the gate is better than to be the refugee, to die the refugee. One lady from Finland she visit Osire, now you see these Papi’s they said O.K. she is nice so now I prepare my sack for Finland, this is how we think for life here, this is not a plan, to be a lover… If they ask me where you want to go [he states his name], your billet [ticket] is ready come and pick, I can even close my eyes, I show avec la carte [with map], this now is good more than Osire story, Osire story can finish.”

A refugee employee with the UNHCR mentioned his aspirations to dissolve his refugee status and resettle with the assistance of the UNHCR or to obtain employment in Namibia.

[Male, 41, DRC, Osire] “…of course I am one that can say that I expect I will be resettled …I am working here now but I would hope that UNHCR says thank you by letting me go and groove with my brothers and sisters overseas someplace and make projects with super titles… Osire gets in your blood but then you get sick, like poison right… it is not so bad if they make this place worth our while, but there is nothing…for as far as you can look…but literally there is nothing happening in Campula that can make up for all the time we’ve spent in this place… I am a veteran 14 years, I am now a comrade as they say, I’m not impressed…then the camp will not remain and what will all of us do here in Namibia as ex-refugee outcasts, our new name for 2013, some of us don’t blend well you know… I think I will take the flight as they say around here. That is my vision 2011. But the ones like us we have more education than some, the beautiful
ones, they say they can make a place for us, in Namlish [Namibian English] that means J.O.B. but I don’t want to work as a day laborer for the farmers in Otji or like ex-combatants here they stick them in GRN [Government of Namibia] border patrol to make matters worse…your new assignment sort of deal, If that’s the route, I’m doing better here at least I wear suits to work, I’ll be Osire mayor, amen.”

A musician [Male, 37, DRC, Windhoek] explains his rejection of his refugee status and his hopes to become a Namibian resident.

“…because I never think about only to stay in Osire I know this place [meaning his familiarity with Windhoek], Osire is for refugee is not for me, you can’t be refugee forever, I was only refugee that time I come to Namibia I look for some help you know I’m leaving DRC…. I’m long-timer, not a newcomer, so I drop my refugee leave it for another man… I stay here in Windhoek everyone know me in this country I make music this is my life here Kwassa [a Congolese music genre], Rhumba Congolais [Congolese Rhumba]. Beti [using a feminine referent to address me] I don’t have the problem but for refugee story this is get me angry… even now they don’t decide my case for resident. Windhoek is my kasi [local truncated jargon from the Afrikaans word ‘lokasie’ or location in English] now I can even put my money to build my place but no document for residence. I was even think I can go to be with those Congolese in Germany but this is trouble now. Is fine I am here 12 years many times I perform in the eyes of the first president now the second but they want call me the refugee like I’m the Tsotsi [a South African township slang term for young gangster].”
A craftmaker [Male, 48, DRC, Otjiwarongo] discusses his business and his intention to obtain residence in Namibia so that he can legally sell his creations in Otjiwarongo. “…for some of us, like I don’t have the place but I can have income, everyday income, Otjiwarongo is good because already people know to find me here…for business this is good. I want those people to get me the way I can make website with my contact…people can know I am here, I am selling, then I also have my muzungu [white people] client… they even looking for me to put the curio in the shops, to the guest house, to the lodge so I can give them the product if my things staying one place. But if I am in Osire I won’t do this, there is no wood to Osire my dear, what I will do to Osire desert? Here [referring to Otjiwarongo] no man bother for me to saying refugee this, refugee what, you refugee, they just get my artwork, they like it, they buy it, I survive like that… just need to get the status then I’m just make the plan to sit here in Otjiwarongo and send some money, some clothes to my boy.”

A teacher [Male, 32, DRC, Osire] talked about his desire to pursue a career outside of Osire through the resettlement or absorption of his family.

“… I have better fortunes than most people here, you know I came here already educated and so they decided for me it’s best I teach maths…no trouble for me I can teach here but by now you also hear these stories about Osire and the plan they are making for ending this place, who knows for the next years what comes… so by then I hope I can teach in Namibia or they can send me to Angola I can teach English, there are opportunities there because I speak Portuguese too one of 4 languages… you are limited here so you make things work but if I can manage to go abroad it’s also good…people
like me, from my parent country they go abroad and they become successful…because they have investors like organizations or … the one problem for me is refugee status and refugee mentality here can be bad, to think of only Osire as life is very poor, refugee is not my surname, is not my genetic code… I’m thinking I can have my own business, car, my family has already started…I just see like we must go past Osire walls shortly…”

*Findings: Mobility Acts*

In each research setting [Windhoek, Otjiwarongo and Osire] participants divulged various reasons for their need and desire to engage in routine travel. Conversely, some participants explained their stability as a factor that supports and facilitates the travel activities of other refugees.

Participants described employment in the areas of contractual labor, informal trade, transportation operation, interpretation services, as well as musical performance as the impetus for travel. Other participants did not have a specific form of employment but rather engaged in a range of employment activities such as the sale of cellular telephones, artisanal crafts, imported African textiles, imported dried foods and international currency exchange.

Some described the nature of their employment routine as *sula*. Some acquired names based on their form of income generation such as *Express, Number One* and *Kwassa Kwassa*. The uptake of income generating mobility formed the basis for survival and supplementary means for the livelihood of participants that resided in all three research settings.
Based on participant accounts it is apparent that mobility functions as a means for economic survival for male residents of Osire. On the other hand several male residents choose to exit the refugee camp because they simply dislike refugee accommodations and wish to participate in Namibian society. In this way mobility provides a sense of normalcy, inclusion in social life and detachment from poverty connotations associated with their refugee status.

As a matter of livelihood, mobility is a seemingly natural option for participants as several residents maintained that exit from the camp was necessary for income generating activities. Participants contended that food and domestic provisions made available at the camp were not sufficient for the maintenance of their diets or their domestic and personal hygiene. Some mentioned that leaving the camp was necessary to ensure access to a steady income because, “men won’t be men without money to survive and jobs can’t happen if you stay in Osire.” Others wanted to accumulate savings through various forms of employment outside of Osire to prepare for their permanent departure from the refugee camp. One man mentioned that his child lived outside of Osire and that he needed to work to provide for and visit with him. Several participants explained that Osire made them feel imprisoned, idle and insignificant therefore exit from the camp was necessary for mental and spiritual fulfillment because they did not want to “look and feel like a poor person”.

[Male, 41, DRC, Osire] discusses how he serves members of his community by sourcing goods for them in Otjiwarongo. He explains that such responsibilities require him to exit Osire frequently and that whenever he takes leave from his official position in
Osire he participates in variety of social activities in Otjiwarongo offer him fulfillment and normalcy. During a social network mapping interview he stated, “…well since I’m a good guy I help out my neighbors and few others that ask with things they need in town, we always need something right? You’ve seen this is a major event for us with protocol and flags raised… I get something I need, my wife gets her things and you should see my phone coming to life when people heard I’m going for a trip to the shops…after I reach here someone says, “why you didn’t tell me brother express?” so that means the next week I go again to get things…but if it wasn’t me going, getting people things I can be sure most couldn’t get their coins together and go when they need to… I don’t mind, ‘cause I go after I’ve been paid so I get things too… it’s good I go to the shop, do what people like doing, take a Tafel at the lodge, visit my people around town, ‘cause there’s some Congolese around if you like them enough to visit… people with real basins and toilets in the home, nice little simple things… like I remember living before this time, so this is a small break from camp, a chance to be with other people, and [states his name] without the big ‘r’… Now this time, from this month to the next you’ll know, you’ll hear it from this one or that one that I went out again, so I think 2 more times for this month then I’m sorted till next…”

In an unstructured interview, [Male, 19, Angola, Osire] asserted that, “staying in this place [referring to the refugee camp] is for lazy ones… When I finished my school I decide I can go out whenever I can get the paper... if a man can choose to be here then he can suffer like dog ‘cause you get nothing, you see there is dust… men won’t be men without money to survive and jobs can’t happen if you stay in Osire it’s not possible to be
here without trekking outside…you stay here then starting to look and feel like a dirty person…you can’t get clever about the way to live in this country if you lay, lay all the days, I plan to stay, I want to be in Namibia and I can know about the place good ‘cause I get out…I’m leaving when I can, the time, the day is all depending on my money now also if the home affairs will give me the papers to get out, but they give and I go to my bru [Afrikaans slang for friend or brother] in DRC and listen some music by the shebeen sometime but then we sula, we organize our things for who is going where to sula those mobile…so I can go by the shops or I can go near those buses… but I make sure if I go back in [referring to Osire] I get what we need, I bought some few things, have money in the pocket and have money for my FNB [referring to a bank account and First National Bank]… I can take the mobile inside and people can buy so if I get out I know I can find the way for having money, in or out…

An unstructured footprint mapping interview with [Male, 20, DRC] exhibited his preference for residing in Windhoek due to his relationships with people that reside there.

“…if I’m going in town then I don’t come back in straight … so before I need to organize with my lady about coming out … when I make the plan with her then she send some money to Nampost [The Namibian national postal service] so I can go collect to pay for transport… I reach in Khomasdal [Khomasdal is a suburb of Windhoek city] I’m just there or visit in Okuryangava with some friend … I get in that side and I see I can’t go back in now what I’ll do? How I’ll be there in Osire? No money sister in there, then you are far, just in the refugee place you can’t know when next you can get some to live from… I can’t go in, then the next day the same, I’m thinking, so then one month is pass,
2 month is, I’m staying this side…3 weeks before I was in prison, city police catch me to Frank’s Place [Frank’s place is a guest house and lounge that is owned, operated and frequented by Congolese nationals] they come to look for bad people but they see my paper for Osire was old so they put me in the central one week and commissioner he bring us to Otjiwarongo to let us get in Osire again…but is better for me, Windhoek is better than in Osire, Windhoek you see things more, my people there show me nicely to survive, I’m just around life there, I see how things is go, then I stay with [states the name of his partner] so it is good for me I don’t put my mind on refugee problem, I get the nice bed, nice flat, the things come better…

A go-along with [male, 32, Uganda, Osire] provided the opportunity to witness the participant’s employment related travel routine for the transport of passengers via his coumbi between Otjiwarongo and Osire. After an approximately two-hour trip from Otjiwarongo, the last passenger disembarked the coumbi in front of a residence in the camp. The participant helps her move a mattress and plastic bags brimming with groceries into the fenced lot of the residence, then returns to the driver’s seat. The trailer that is attached to the coumbi contains boxes and plastic bags with items that the participant secured while in Otjiwarongo. He stops at two additional residences that were at opposite ends of the camp and delivers two separate sets of groceries, passing one set off to a man standing in the rear lot of the first residence and entering the second residence with the second set of groceries. Again he returned to the driver’s seat and drove to the front of another residence, parked the coumbi and entered the dwelling. He resurfaced with his wife, we waved at each other. They rapidly shuffled plastic bags and
2 large cardboard boxes full of washing powder into the home. The participant once again returns to the driver’s seat, starts the coumbi’s engine and exclaims, “Now again for afternoon people, back and done for my night.” He drove throughout the camp repeating actions in reverse, parking outside of residences, exiting the coumbi to load bags and boxes. 10 residents filled the coumbi, 7 of them were male and it eventually progressed toward the entrance/exit of the camp. The coumbi and all of us inside of it sat in front of the Osire police station for approximately fifteen minutes awaiting the completion of the routine for verification of exit permits. The participant shuffled out of the police station with a police representative, they both distributed paper work to residents. The participant opens the door to the driver’s side of the coumbi and says aloud, “O.K. we moving now”, moves into the driver’s seat and for the second time in the day, we were off on the dusty two-lane gravel road to transport passengers and goods between Osire and Otjiwarongo.

In an unstructured interview with [Male, 39, DRC, Otjiwatongo] the participant detailed his experiences as an informal trader and elaborated on why such employment activity was the most beneficial option for him and his family. “...most of the days I just stepping from this side to next and if I get back here or go in Windhoek, I fix my business …and you only see me now since I’m running, just coming from Swakop [a commonly expressed abbreviation for the City of Swakopmund in Namibia], but I go back tomorrow again ‘cause people want these curio, and I got 3 order so some people on holiday say they want to take one Big 5 [popular artisanal theme depicting a lion, elephant, hippopotamus, rhinoceros and leopard] … I come now so [ states the name of a
craft maker] put his creative to the wood then I just make this surface [referring to an unfinished wood relief] clean, put lacquer then we have here the product… some place can be better than other for selling, but I go in Swakop, I go to Okahandja, but also I go to the lodge and some guest house here [referring to Otjiwarongo] to sell …

An unstructured interview with [Male, 34, DRC, Otjiwarongo] transpired after the participant witnessed my interactions with another interview participant. He offered insight into common logistical and productivity issues experienced by refugees that engage in trade activity to generate income. “…we are many sister, not me alone, there can be 2 of us travelling to carry our package or more… Like even [states the name of a man he is with] is traveling there… and from one town and the other town we there getting good business… It’s good we look money this way…it can be many times not really the way you make a plan to go this day and come back that day, uh uh, the way you go and come it depend on when your product is finish or if somebody want you to take order…you can even sleep to the house for some friend, in the day you go. Many time I go Swakop early, night I’m back to Windhoek ‘cause product is finished, people they pay me money… I arrive this place or [states the name of a craft maker] can call me and tell me he have some mobiles to sell, I go again…It can be only minutes over there if you have lucky, like that is pepele [Lingala word for good] … these things he’s make now, someone will take it in Swakop or those lodge just out of town here…I can be tired that’s o.k., I can say I’m a man … I have my things I need now… we leave Osire we by our own hand no help we work … [states the name of a craft maker] just make the design, then if
[Male, 26, Angola, Otjiwarongo] expressed his opposition to residing in Osire and his preference for living in an informal settlement in Otjiwarongo. The participant stated concern in the wake of resettlement efforts for Angolan nationals as a factor in his attempts to evade residence in Osire. In a footprint mapping interview the participant explained, “…like this I can be more better than if I’m in Campula ‘cause when is time to kick they get you out, you won’t get the time for to explain again about your plan to Namibia… I just decide not to go back in, I leave those refugee now, it was too bad for living, I feeling sick every time, like I’m crazy… now I stay to Tsara-Aibes [an informal settlement in Otjiwarongo]and make the hair for people…I’m barbering the hair and I sell the DVD movie…I get the girl friend she was living in ‘kasi but she move in Windhoek so we can only phoning every time… I can see her when I’m going Greenwell Matongo [A high density settlement in Katutura, Windhoek] but is expensive so I come back again… but this week I only go in Campula like all refugee now come to get the ration, you have to show the face to get again, and ask for my day for he interview so I’m going in the weekend…no, not staying, I won’t stay again there they are moving all the Angolan back to there… I’m leaving out straight if I stay they can mark me for the next group to kick so I won’t make long there… nothing can happen for me if I go in Angola now, not even the house there… then I just decide to be with [states the name of his friends] …but when I get the material I will make my place in DRC after two weeks I will build then I’ll live in there…
During a community mapping elicitation interview [Male, 43, Angola, Otjiwarongo] offered convenience and independence as reasons for residing outside of Osire. He also detailed his living arrangements and employment routine as a means for survival and self-sufficiency. “Nobody can tell me anything when I’m sleeping here, outside I care for many problems, these lady have children but we helping everybody living here so nobody worry all just working and keeping our place nice…so in the month I’m making 3, 4 trip to Oshikango and make some jobs, I hold my money for another time… mostly I’m helping those Angolans they come to Namibia to make business, for they shopping also…they pay me from U.S. dollar then I just hold it to make it change with some those shop in Otji… everybody know me there so I’m get the place to sleep fast then we all speak Portuguese, even some Chinese speaking Portuguese so there problems are small… things are cheap, not like in this side you can finish your wage in Spar but there food is also cheap so I buy the big ones[referring to bulk food items] then transport here [referring to Otjiwarongo]…I live in Namibia more than 9 years but not from Osire is like the prison, I can be sick there.. My 9 years only have 4 or even small in Osire…you’ll see the place really is like they drop you to the desert, the other planet, is far then you need something for the house, you have only the Kuka’s [small shops] to buy the things, you want meat then if you go in the farm there you go to jail those Boer they shooting refugee, they look to us like animal, you can die to get food… I leave it…but I survive with 4 lady also they are refugee we have the business, they sell the crisp [potato chips], small things for baby and lady things from the house,
they keep the kids then I’m going to find money just to have some food, we take care our
story to leave the Osire things is alright like that.”

In an unstructured interview [Male, 36, DRC, Otjiwarongo] suggests that he is
routinely transient due to his desire to generate income to contribute to his child’s
upbringing. “…I was able to be there half the year I never go out from there… see you
can’t believe I stay there long like this… then I get out some times, I meet my lady then
staying in ‘Tura [abbreviated slang term for the Katutura location in Windhoek, Namibia]
and we get a baby from 6 six years… to get in Osire long, I can’t, only if I have the
business or one appointment, like this time coming for ration you can find me, but when
this is finish you can’t find me inside again, I can’t be there … the child is schooling and
need the fees and the clothes for school and need to live so I must give for the mother to
help, not just some small money, is a big story ‘cause the child need things they can even
ask you and you can’t say “no school fees for you now” if I don’t have the job, this is not
a man… I don’t grow like that…my working at the north, these contract I take is the way
I get some money for my boy and my surviving but I don’t like it like this…you have
lucky you get me today but tomorrow or after I have to jump again to Oshikango, so you
can understand now how I’m going and getting my work…

In a footprint mapping interview [Male, 24, Angola, Otjiwarongo] detailed his
travels during the previous 6 days as well as his plans for the coming weeks outside of
Osire. “From Wednesday last I come from Otjomuise from my brothers [referring to
friends] come from Angola to make the order for uniform for security, they have the
company in Luanda they needed my help to organize some things I tell they said I must
come in Osire for the interview so they say is not the problem they give me money I can take a transport and be comfortable…I just help them there 2 days but I don’t come here like this one time, I get in Okahandja before, the days is 3 I’m with [states the name of a man] also he’s the refugee, we get the good fish not those small one the *Pilchard* [fish that is a product of Namibian waters and is commonly consumed by Namibian nationals] they having to the shops, is those from Angola one guy is bring the dry one, the *Cacusso* [referring to dried Tilapia], we buy all then want to selling in Osire for Angolans, some from Congo they know it so they can buy also…then the morning we move here and you catch me waiting… I’ll get in Osire tomorrow then waiting for the card after some 3 or 4 days surely my stocks can be finish, then after I get out again to see those brother and get again.

Data from field notes (N. Matthias, field notes, August 23, 2010) and an audio recorded go-along interview with [Male, 40, DRC, Otjiwarongo] revealed that the participant’s linguistic abilities skills formed the basis for his employment related travel. Aside from relaying how requirements or opportunities for income generation dictate his daily travel routines, his multilingual abilities afford him status within the refugee community. They also permit him to negotiate economic resources within the host community. This go-along demonstrates the dynamics between linguistic communicative assets, mobility, access to economic resources, bridging social capital and participant defined empowerment.

The participant, informed me that he was “off work” for the day and that meant that I could expect to tag along with him wherever he went. It was 9 o’clock in the
morning on a Tuesday at the *Total Hakahanna Service Station*. Coumbi’s and Taxi’s filled every inch of space that was not occupied by moving people and vehicles that acquired fuel. We decided to get something to drink before moving on, at the cash register, we unexpectedly met with a man who spoke with the participant in Lingala. The participant said, “Let’s jump with him he can put us to the side of [states the name of a male refugee], you’ll get me out Swala.” [meaning that I would meet him outside the service station store]. We ventured in a taxi outside of Otjiwarongo, on the B1 highway headed north, the participant’s friend was in fact a taxi driver. The participant explained in an apologetic manner, “...you see I said we’d go in the Lokase but this brother need me do the work for him in the lodge but we can go in the Lokase when we coming another day.” Almost over an hour later the car entered the *Khorab Safari Lodge*, we were near a town called Otavi. The taxi driver hesitantly asked me if I would carry some “curio” for him. The participant, the Taxi Driver and I entered a ‘Curio Shop’ that was inside of the lodge. I noticed that the participant and the taxi driver spoke Lingala in unusually low tones. A white woman, presumably the owner or manager of the curio shop or lodge establishment began speaking in our direction in Afrikaans. The participant gave her a streaming response. For almost a 20 minutes, the shop owner inspected the curio’s [handcrafted earrings, necklaces, bracelets and rings] that we brought to the shop, the entire time, there would be brief moments of silence while the woman rubbed, wiped, and held the curios up to the light above the counter that she stood behind. The woman spoke to the participant in Afrikaans, the participant spoke to the taxi driver in Lingala and the pattern calmly continued in reverse and then back and forth for some time until
the woman went into her cash register and counted out three hundred Namibian dollars [which seemed slight for the volume of items that were presented to her] to the participant.

When asked about the payment for the goods, the participant responded, “no that is better, she is better, some will make you leave with half or less than but I think we can get this lady these curio like this because she like them so she can sell it fast…we did o.k. I don’t think we could get the three hundred, then she was saying the season is slow…like this we made a deal today.”

The participant continued to explain that he assists a number of his fellow refugees with interpretation as a way to earn income and that he is sought by them due to his ability to speak Afrikaans fluently. “…if one of them come and say we need to push some curio, come with… I’m going in the lodge and help, Boer they can cheat, but if they see this one is speaking Afrikaans they come nicer ‘bout things…I was hear one boss to the lodge tell my friend to leave with small money but come back later for the final pay, then he tell his people, ‘just give that money you have there so they can go out from here’, then I start to speak in Afrikaans he change the story now, start to explain… I know Afrikaans too, so they can’t make problem like that with me…so these people can get cheat if I am not talking for them…they like it very much, so all of Congolese get me to push for them…then they give me money, now this guy he don’t believe we get three hundred, he give me one-fifty… People get me if somebody tell them about me I speak Afrikaans, even the Angolan business they get me, it’s good for me, I like it, I’m eating
like this… it’s my chance for work so I can even go to sleep with some money this night.”

During a footprint mapping interview [Male, 34, DRC, Windhoek, Katutura] explained that his profession as a musician dictated his need for travel throughout Namibia. He suggested that he is no longer excited about performing and that his relationship with his wife is affected due to his performance schedule. “we stay in Windhoek for a while, but I’m really not here mostly, the time I’m here can be less than the time I have to go out in the month…this is just about the job… we are 4 by 4, we are popular so people like to have us in their event, if they make a show they want us but now it’s my work, just for playing the music…I’m blessed now because a few months before, say Feb, March, April everything stop…. there was no money from show and we just quarreling in this house, but we quarreling when I’m away also, now she [referring to his wife] is away performing and I stay with [states his daughter’s name]…so life is moving, is better, we better now but in May I went in Rundu then forward in Katima [abbreviates name Katima Mulilo the city that borders Zambia], after we now in June we go in Osire for Refugee Day, we perform in the show they have World Refugee Day, this is still June time, then after we get to perform to Okahandja and now this month and then we are here now…I don’t worry about it because I have my family and we get money to live but is not good we just quarrel ‘cause I’m not around then [states his wife’s name] is with Ndilimani [A Kwassa Kwassa/Shambo band that is sponsored by the Government of the Republic of Namibia] now, she get the good job every month having N$ 28,000 so
she is performing so when I go, we just miss, miss each other, she is this way, I am over there, then she go in Luderitz and those places for Heroes Day also….

[Male 23, Angola, Windhoek, Windhoek North] expressed his apprehension for traveling to Osire in an unstructured interview as he presented the pros-and cons of returning to the refugee camp to obtain his ration card. He insisted that residence in Windhoek is better for him because he has access to Angolans that are established and willing to help him become stable in Namibia. “….but I just come there for the Refugee Party they make they give us things and nobody care about your papers this time is just to enjoy the program…this money I get here from I help the people in the guest house and everybody here is the same, the owner really help us to survive if we make the place nice then we watch it and collect the money for her, we can be here she knows too she’s Angolan… so she help us, for me I can stay and get money and be normal here… and I know ‘bout this is the time for ration so I could get some things to Osire, then get another exit paper… but If I go in now they can see I was leaving for long they can stop me from leaving out again… I can get my card and some things I need but I won’t stay in Osire so I have to sell it to some people there… I can’t travel with those things [referring to rations] in Windhoek then the things here are better … Here I can be with my girlfriend, if I go in again it can be the , they can push me in Angola because they start to make us leave now to get in Angola again. I survive nice in [name of the guest house that the participant lives and works in] have my own room here close in town… so I will only go in there [referring to Osire] for the event when they forget about to check us nice… but like this is my house and Osire is the office so I don’t like to be in the office.”
During an unstructured interview [Male, 50, DRC, Windhoek, Windhoek North] discussed his history in the country as a refugee, international musician as well as his recent travels abroad which brought him back to Namibia after his absence from the country for over one year. “…I have more than some of the men here they can be sad about no family but I got my daughters here they are big ladies, then my grandchild and I’m not married you know Mama Titi is my last wife, she have that place for Congolese but I was help her to get that…I’m coming from a different life and you get old and the things change fast. I travel this world sister with my band, Europe, Canada, people listen to me and see me with their eyes performing…people can’t know why is [refers to himself] like this no house, no money, but I just let them say their things…this time in Jo-burg [abbreviation for Johannesburg, South Africa] I really decide I have to come back in Namibia and die here too I was counting my minutes, my days for 19 months just struggle, they don’t like anybody if they not from there so you get in a difficult problem… if people get mad about something they can just blame the foreigner, that was me… I come back but I see again the life of Windhoek is not good, dry no money, no what… I can go up Oshakati [the most populous and capital city of Northern Namibia] and be better, I have one son in Ondangwa with one lady he is 11 years so I can see him too… After 2 month I will just get in the north with my boy this is better because here you can spend money for food, flat then you have transport to pay is too much and better I can get with my son now.”

During an unstructured interview with [Male, 37, DRC, Windhoek, Windhoek North] the participant explained that he does not travel frequently but rather he assists
refugees that travel to Windhoek through provision of accommodations and money due to his familiarity with their circumstances. “…mine is not the kind of thing, I travel in Namibia but not the way some people go down, up, across, some people they don’t stand they move only… I get those brother in my house even some time one sister is coming with the Chitenge [waxed textiles that feature African prints and motifs which are used to make clothing] she want to sell it I can put her to the room across my place for 1 week because she have to make some program here….not everybody make the music like me… then some come Tsotsi they always going because people push them or you find them selling to the street in Swakop then back here too… and if people need to sell their things or they come to help those business man with the work, they can stay here… you see this brother with me now he come from Osire but he was in Okahandja for 2 month, now he come this side to make the plan … he don’t want to go in Osire with those home affairs, I tell him I take him to commissioner he is in Windhoek for the moment… Sometime those Congolese to the border to Angola they come down and give me palm oil and some brother just go in there to get the U.S money then come back to sula with Chinese [referring to Chinese business owners]….so if refugee are going you can see some of us traveling better than Namibian but we make business and use the mind for business, that is why the refugee are out there, in town here and find the way around Windhoek.”

*Findings: Communication Assets in Osire*

Many of Osire’s communication assets are visible and tangible however this study attempts to better understand how Namibia’s male refugees interact with communicative
phenomena at multiple levels. Therefore, identification and elaboration of the latent facets of their communicative ecology are also crucial constituents within their realm of communicative assets. The identification and explication of communication assets in Osire was conducted through the use of participant observation, participant mapping, unstructured interviews and go-along elicitation interviews. In this setting participant observation served as an experiential point of reference for the formulation, manifestation and analysis of data.

In this regard field notes document participant observation experiences. Participant mapping functioned to expose and detail the salience of entities and features which constitute communication assets. This was accomplished through elicitation interviews that coincided with 5 mapping techniques as components of the participant mapping method. These techniques included the communication asset map, the community map, the footprint map, the life map and the social network map. Unstructured interviews and go-along interviews simultaneously present a vast array of data pertinent to participants’ communication assets.

*Focusing on Communication Assets in Osire*

Usage of the findings from Osire are privileged in this instance for a variety of reasons: With regard to communication assets, the data collected in Osire is richer than data emanating from Otjiwarongo and Windhoek because Osire is a contained setting that is designated as an official location for Namibia’s refugee community, so there was no real spatial challenges to data collection.
Additionally, the greatest amount of engagement with field work transpired in Osire. For instance, data collection in Windhoek occurred during evening hours and weekends, therefore participant observations as well as access to participants only reflect activities and refugee settings within these limits. Furthermore in Windhoek and Otjiwarongo refugee communities are dispersed therefore logistical issues such as time and distance shaped the dynamics of contact with them.

Finally, I spent twenty-eight days in Osire whereby the only time that exit from the camp became necessary was through a go-along elicitation interview. In this instance, sleeping, eating, waking up, working [researching) and enjoying leisurely activities in this setting informed my capacity to comprehend the totality of communication as it exists and is experienced in the camp during a typical August.

Hunches and assumptions could easily be affirmed or dismissed. Identifying and acknowledging the communication assets in Osire are important aspects of the process of understanding how refugees communicate as well as how communication engages and impacts them in Osire and ultimately beyond this setting.

**Male Refugees’ Interaction with Communication Assets in Osire**

Although the assessment of communication assets in Osire is informed by response data as well as participant observation, it is in no way exhaustive of all communication assets in Osire. This is the case as all communication assets were defined by the knowledge, experience and perceptions of male participants who had command of the English language. Furthermore, participant observation enabled the documentation of communication assets in the camp however these observations were limited to places and
situations that I could observe and confirm. Additionally, the perspectives, preferences and experiences of females as well as non-English speaking residents do not comprise the body of collected data.

*Description of Communication Assets in Osire*

*Languages*

The following languages are spoken by Osire residents:

Cokwe, English, French, Kibembe, Kifulero, Kimbundu, Kiyarwanda, Kirundi, Kishi, Kiswahtili, Kivila, Kwagali, Mbwera, Ngangera, Portuguese, Rutyazi and Tshiluba. In extremely rare instances, residents were able to speak Oshikwanyama, Afrikaans, German, Amharic and Sudanese Arabic.

*Mass Media*

**Billboards:** There are 17 billboards in Osire. Billboards are a formal mode of vertical communication employed by the UNHCR, AHA etc, to communicate messages regarding HIV and AIDS prevention, HIV testing, Sexual and Gender Based Violence to the inhabitants of Osire. According to the accounts of research participants, the billboards are updated every 3 to 4 years.

**Radio:** Many of the homes that were visited I observed radios people listened to local radio stations, however several people owned radios whereby the accessed various national broadcasts.

**Television:** Television sets are common in the homes of residents in Osire although electricity in the refugee camp is not legally distributed to the residents. Residents use car batteries and other hand-crafted powering devices to operate electronic
appliances. Television viewing is especially prominent during the evening hours when novellas are broadcast during the week. For instance, youth would play outdoors and people stirred about the refugee camps during the evening until it was time for a telenovela titled *La Tormenta* [The Storm]. Osire residents usually went home or visited homes that had televisions to view the nightly broadcast.

One camp resident owned a satellite dish to access *Dish TV* service. He is apparently the only resident in Osire that has a satellite dish, therefore he allows people to come to his home to view television during the evening and weekends. Telenovelas, sitcoms, music videos, news and blockbuster movies were commonly viewed by residents who had access to televisions.

Mobile Broadcasts: Mobile broadcasts are the events by which the UNHCR, AHA and the GRN administration responsible for refugee affairs make formal announcements to the camp residents via megaphone from a moving vehicle that circumnavigates and traverses the grounds of the refugee camp. The announcement for ration card distribution was made through this method during the first week that research was conducted in the camp. For two days administrators informed residents of the time and date for ration card renewal and distribution as well as the order by which residents would be called for processing. This is a common method for communicating to residents in Osire. One resident [Male, 18, DRC, Osire] referred to this activity as a, “drive by” while another participant [Male, 20, DRC, Osire] called this event “Alerte General” during unstructured interviews.
Newspapers: Newspapers were not as common as other forms of media, however a local Namibian newspaper titled *The Namibian* was occasionally observed in the possession of few refugee camp inhabitants. Residents were rarely witnessed reading newspapers except for those men waiting inside of barber shops, females who sat inside of the tailoring shop at the women’s center or Osire security guards who are stationed at the women’s center. [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] commented that, “There are no newspapers sold in Osire only those people who can afford to buy from outside can have them.”

During a go-along interview with [Male 32, Uganda, Osire] It was discovered that the participant routinely purchased The Namibian newspaper because he operated a mini bus that transported Osire residents to and from the nearest town [Otjiwarongo]. The bus operator purchased the newspaper each of the four days that I accompanied him to Otjiwarongo from Osire. He suggested that it was a good way to remain abreast of current Namibian news and to learn about the various sales ongoing at various grocery stores because the advertisements in them directed him to the appropriate stores and this was a way that he could conserve time, energy and “petrol” when shopping in Otjiwarongo. [The participant conducted several errands for residents in Osire while he was in Otjiwarongo. Shopping as I had evidenced was one major responsibility and in many cases, courtesy that the participant assumes as Osire inhabitants give him money and lists of goods that they need to purchase in Otjiwarongo. This way they would not have to pay the full fare for traveling in a mini-bus to secure these items.] The grocery
store advertisements in the newspaper thus provide him with a sense of where to obtain items at the best price.

Overall, current newspapers were scarcely used for current informational purposes by Osire inhabitants, although old newspapers circulated in the barbershops, homes [I often observed newspapers being used to assist with igniting fires for cooking. People also read newspapers in front and back of their homes during informal discussions with visitors or friends.] The Osire library had a [informal and unorganized collection] collection of old newspapers and it was also normal practice for people to give newspapers away to someone else once they had used them.

The Internet: According to communication asset maps, social network maps, footprint maps and community maps, unstructured interviews and field notes several participants use the Internet on a weekly and even daily basis to access information that they consider important such as international news media, currency exchange rates, music videos, e-mails, resettlement information and information about foreign schools. Respondents asserted that the Internet allowed them to maintain and regain contact with family and friends, helped them observe refugee-resettlement trends, or served as a means of entertainment for them.

Some participants suggested that the Internet reduced their need to be mobile or to move outside of the refugee camp unless it was necessary. Others offered that it saved them money and time and allowed them to be closer to distant relatives. In accordance with these expressions, many participants mentioned that the Internet served as a portal for them to leave Osire. Additionally, participants mentioned that although they did not
know how to access the Internet, they accompany people that have experience with the internet so that they can view various types of media or perform various Internet facilitated communication activities.

A number of participants maintained that they access e-mail and Facebook each time they visit the Internet center. A number of participants expressed their reliance upon social networking sites as a means for establishing and maintaining communication with family and friends. Most participants explained that they could access the Internet through their cellular telephone or that they would use the cellular telephone that belonged to friend or neighbor that had knowledge of and access to Internet service. They also explained that in the absence of money, phone-facilitated Internet service was the ideal method for accessing information and communicating with family and friends outside of Osire.

*Osire Computer Training Centre*

The Osire Computer Training Centre is Osire’s formal establishment for internet access. Located in the women’s center, it is a small, dimly lit room that has one window next to the entrance of the room. It houses 4 desktop computers, 1 laptop computer and 1 overhead digital projector. Broken and refurbished computer parts sit atop tables and a deep freezer that women use to store meat and fish rests underneath the window. Music usually blares from large speakers which are connected to a desktop computer while people work on their assignments, surf the web or enjoy video presentations that are displayed on a projection screen in the room via the overhead projector.
Residents refer to the training center as the computer center or the Internet café. According to the owner of the Osire Computer Training Centre [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire], who refers to the establishment as an “internet café”, “…among all of my clients who use internet 90% percent are men”. Males primarily use the computers to search the Internet while women use them to engage in software training classes that are offered by the owner for a small fee. The establishment is usually busy with people who are generally working on assignments and information-seeking. It is also busy with the activity of men who view music videos on you tube or audio visual media that has been downloaded by the owner of the establishment.

Overall, interviews captured the sentiments of several male inhabitants in Osire who expressed their reliance upon and preference for Internet facilitated communication. The owner of the establishment [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] provided particulars about the facility via an unstructured interview he explained that, “My Internet is Broadband with the speed of 100.0 Mbps. In Osire for the moment they are many guys who are having 3G Modem… in addition many of the cellphone are having internet facilities. A part of those people with their own 3G’s, the official Internet café in Osire is mine…Many people used to come to me and most of them they ask the same question ‘Brother as you having internet what is going on in our country?’ especially the people from Great Lakes region to find out what is going on in their home news.”

Through a social network mapping elicitation interview [Male 27, DRC] explained, “…when I get some small money I can use the e-mail because I get the message from one brother of mine in Canada, he is the one who call me and tell me I
must use this [referring to electronic mail] to always have the way to communicate with the family…If no money for many things I can get the mobile [referring to a cellular telephone] for one friend here and he get everything in his mobile even I just e-mail my family with his mobile…Like this I make the plan for many things before I have the problem for communicate with him [referring to his brother]…this [electronic mail] is very good for me before I can’t call, the letter is losing, no money for post box [referring to a subscription to a national postal facility mail box], now this way, always we communicate.”

During an unstructured interview [Male, 27, DRC, Osire] suggested that, “these are the things that they must to show people to do in this place…you know I got my small sister in Kenya, never see her from 6 years now, she said she is in Facebook, one guy he is there looking in his Facebook, I just want to know how I can use this program, then he made me an e-mail and show me how to check… he show me about Facebook… I can chat with [states sister’s name], I’m checking now…before I can break something…you’re alone, you know, just don’t know, there’s too much you must know just to do one thing… don’t know what you must know also, always some new program…but I need to connect to family a better way… you don’t have air time for weeks, now I get in the center [the Internet center] and I just look and find my sister in Facebook, she gave me some message for my birthday…even my people from growing up I meet them there in Facebook, this one is the pepele [A Lingala word that means good, meaning Facebook is good] but then next week a new program is there”.
Field notes (N. Matthias, field notes, August 19, 2010) depict a go-along elicitation interview with [Male, 22 Angola, Osire] that partially transpired in the Internet [computer] center. He paid for 30 minutes of internet usage then browsed the Internet mostly looking at American Hip-Hop and Kizomba [An Angolan musical genre] music videos on Youtube. Eventually he visited the Al Jazeera web site. When asked why he was perusing this web site he explained that he could occasionally find “up-to-date” news about Angola and that he wanted to “see the pictures” along with the news reports. After his session ended he remained in the Internet center for approximately an hour viewing East African music videos that the owner of the center had downloaded from the Internet and screened with the overhead projector on a wall in the computer center. He engaged in upbeat conversation with the other patrons in the center about the music videos the entire time. He informed me that he usually checked the Internet every week, sometimes multiple times per week if he had enough money. He expressed appreciation for the fact that the owner would allow him to check the Internet even when he did not have money and that he had prioritized the purchase of a cellular phone that would allow him to access the Internet.

A footprint mapping elicitation interview with [Male, 31, Ethiopia, Osire] illustrated the his usage of the Internet as he stated that, “sometimes it is better to stay inside Osire and save some fare than to go to Otjiwarongo, It’s expensive … money is scarce … I like it … you can go out from Namibia, out from camp, in the web… when you go in Otji [Namibian vernacular abbreviation for Otjiwarongo] you going to do business and return you only see Otji , you return with less money probably… I can
check what is happen in Addis [referring to the capital of Ethiopia] look at my place… to chat with my friends or my people they in Sweden… since we got the account [referring to an electronic mail account] we make a day and a time to be able to chat and we do it if we can for family time from far… they even know when is the best time for putting some money in my bank, I stop looking at the newspaper but I look at the Internet for the best rate for the change bureau if my sisters want to send some money I e-mail them I say ‘O.K. send today, today rate is the best of all’ and by the next two days, three days I can have the money in my account…for this it is the best for checking this rates.”

A community mapping elicitation interview revealed that this participant [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] accesses the internet daily to coordinate and keep track of his resettlement affairs. The participant commented that, “I have to check my e-mail more than 2 times all days because I must to keep on top of my resettlement…I wait to hear from the resettlement sponsors and we communicate like this, this is normal for me…I look at the news about sponsors and agency for resettling the refugees and this is only with internet, with e-mail is the same too, I can look, I can check my status, my program and what they give me for instructions…so how else could this happen here other than the interview time?” [a reference to mandatory interviews that are facilitated by the UNHCR for refugees].

*Osire’s Invisible Billboard Messages*

There are 17 outdoor billboards erected throughout Osire. They are constructed of aluminum or tin sheets and are hand-painted by residents of the refugee camp. The billboards feature various messages in the form of simple sentences pertaining to HIV
and AIDS, domestic abuse, early pregnancy, sexual violence and intercultural relations. The base of the billboards are flanked with the logos and seals of the UNHCR, UNAIDS, AHA, and the GRN. They are replaced in 2 to 4 year intervals presumably in accordance with the cycles of internal communication campaigns.

Fieldnotes [9/8/2011] chronicle a go-along elicitation interview with [Male, 47 DRC, Osire], where it was explained that several billboards located within the camp are “there but invisible”. The participant commented on how he passed by billboards numerous times per day and that they have become part of the scenery in the refugee camp over time.

This was also mentioned in an unstructured interview with [Male, 22, Angola, Osire] whereby the participant contended that, “the posters [referring to public billboards] are now useless, the metal come orange some places, we say we [speaking of youth in the ‘Hollywood’ section of the camp] must take them over with our art stuffs… We make our own [billboards] so for us these things are just here nobody mind it… we even know the lines [referring to the content/messaging on the billboards] from our head without the posters…these SIDA [referring to AIDS] things we just know it from schooling.”

Similarly, [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] offered his opinion regarding the billboards in response to observational-probing questions during a communication asset mapping elicitation interview. He said, “…for me I don't see them [the billboards] helpful”… I don't really know why but I don't see them as something which can make me to change my mind… and they are written in all spoken languages in Osire.” He also suggests that
the messaging that the boards publicize regarding “…HIV/AIDS, early pregnancy, domicile abuse” are “interesting”. Furthermore he states, “I can be interested but they changing the boards only after 3 to 4 years so then I don’t care anymore for them, they just up there.”

During an unstructured interview [Male, 51, DRC, Osire] offered that the billboards are “something you don’t think about anymore after the time is pass now they don’t give you the idea, not even the sentiment [French word meaning feeling] we are with the affiche [French word meaning bill or notice] every time so after years is passing they make to vanish like the merde [French expletive meaning feces] then you never know they make them to be up for people to get the sentiment at all…”

A footprint participant mapping elicitation interview divulged [Male, 42, Angola, Osire] perceptions of the billboard as the participant stated, “…we stop to bother for those sign, not even caring like you caring but these things when we get the ‘New’ [referring to new asylum-seeking intakes] here is good for they to learning Campula…you say to them, you see this sign about the SIDA, the one in French then you turn here, now you going straight to the ‘nother sign it say, ‘go for test’, so you get the next turn…that is how we like those sign for this place… if the sign is not there, the new they can be lost, how they’ll know to go…”

In keeping with this opinion [Male, 27, DRC, Osire] confirmed, “We can put the lacquer over those signs then we can say that we see something happening on them, but for the years Swala they just sit, now they are for the locating and we meeting our people with them so I can say at 14 [indicating the time 2 o’clock p.m.] wait there to the sign for
serologique [French word meaning ‘serological’. This is a reference to a billboard that contains messaging related to obtaining confirmation of one’s serostatus] to block 7.”

Notice Boards

Field notes (N. Matthias, field notes, August 11, 2010 and August 17, 2010) and communication asset mapping elicitation interviews illustrate the significance of notice boards to some of the male residents in Osire. Notice boards are comprised of fliers and posters that occupy physical spaces which constitute a form of non-verbal communication in Osire. There are 5 designated locations where notice boards house various types of announcements or notices. The UNHCR administrative facility maintains an official notice board in addition to the hospital, youth center and women’s center. There is also a notice board situated near a market. These notice board locations have been established by Osire inhabitants as well as UNHCR administration. Billboards may serve an unintended function as public notice boards whereby fliers and posters are placed on them in a few locations within the camp.

Notice boards display vertical communication originating from camp administration to Osire residents, as well as communication between Osire inhabitants. The Osire hospital also employs noticeboards to communicate to camp residents. The announcements displayed via the notice boards serve to communicate health information [HIV testing information, counseling services], economic or transactional information amongst residents [i.e. for sale signs, services] residential organization information [i.e. church meetings, block meetings, office elections], official UNHCR and AHA programmatic events [i.e. ration card distribution, world refugee day festivities].
Permission is not required from any particular entity within the camp for posting announcements therefore residents freely utilize notice boards for their needs.

Participants confirmed that notice boards were useful to them as they exhibited information they deemed critical or beneficial to their personal interests and information needs concerning refugee affairs. The notice boards also enabled one participant to advertise his business. Notice boards provide a means for communication regarding economic and social matters amongst the refugees. The participants perceived them as an accessible, reliable and acceptable medium for relevant communication. Clarification was not provided as to who organizes and monitors the timeliness of the posts.

[Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] explains, “I can't pass without reading those announcements, always when I see them I can notice something new or I stop and review the things because they are on the way to my workplace or also the hospital because I am there for my asthma sometimes…but it’s usually 2 or 3 of them that I am always looking at or passing for some message from the hospital or for my church”

Similarly, [Male 22, Angola, Osire] affirmed that, “…the information are always the way I know about going to the admin because they can put the date for interview so if I can forget I know the details is there I can go past my place or to the market and see about the information… I put my notice to sell some cell phone I was having last month and then I sell them by the next Wednesday because the one who buy them call me from those paper I put on those place…and I know if I will selling some clothes or palm oil from Angola I can put the sign then people can give me business.
[Male, 42, Angola, Osire] mentioned that, “I am putting on every one [referring to each of the notice boards] the event for the Catholic church or sometime the visitor is coming in Osire so I put some advert there and people can know…this is good for the church because in the week not everyone is coming they go only for Sunday sometime, but I can show people in the advert that something you need to be part of is at our church on Thursday or Saturday and then they can know about it very easy…”

[Male, 27, DRC, Osire] stated, “most the time I look for those papers on the board because you can even miss the good thing that you want to know about if you are not checking and for some of my neighbor I can find something they need to know about for the child or for the UNHCR and then tell them if they don’t find it…that is how we are doing here we just find something and we are telling the neighbor or the friend but these board I’m always checking because they are for everybody so we know to look there and even the ones there to those sides they can have some different things on there so I like it if I just check.”

[Male 51, DRC, Osire] explained, “every event for Osire you will find it, but you can also make your own event or your advert to get some customer because you going there to see what is happening in the camp…you can also know how to prepare for customer if there is some event you can be clever and make something for business if you know those things there.”

*Interpersonal Communication*

Counseling Services and Counseling Appointments: Communication asset mapping interviews and social networking interviews revealed that a few participants
voluntarily participate in counseling services offered via the UNHCR and AHA. The services address issues ranging from sexual reproductive health, family planning to domestic violence. Additionally, the UNHCR offers weekly voluntary counseling consultations for Osire residents to voice their grievances and obtain information about their asylum status.

[Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] spoke of his experiences with the counseling services offered by the UNHCR and AHA. “UNHCR receive the refugee once a week on Thursday in so called counseling we just ask for resettlement, ration cards and tell them about sickness issues…you enter in the office after you’re given the number… it’s actually open talking, I’ve been there many times and I was heard…many of us are going for this… then the best way for me is the counseling with the health promoters the other thing which also powerful here in the camp is something of promoting women’s gender balance…those promoters are 4 if I am not mistaken 3 women, 1 man and they are respected because people definitely know then well, the man is my colleague, he is above 40 but the women also are not less than that…

During a social network mapping interview [Male, 48, Angola, Osire] talked about his need for counseling services offered by the UNHCR and Osire health facilities. “I go the for counseling every time if I’m having questions at the admin [referring the UNHCR administration building] even if I don’t need it they will know my face and they see my name they will know this is me… in the month I speak with the worker from the clinic… especially of family plan so to get these information and something for me I have to go to in there.”
Outreach Entities: Communication asset mapping interviews, social network mapping interviews, an unstructured interview and a go-along elicitation interview evidenced a variety of social and political activities that are structured or formalized through member driven camp-based associations, organizations and groups. These entities serve to provide informational resources to their participants as well as the greater Osire community.

During a communication asset mapping interview, [Male, Angola, 26, Osire] elaborated the nature of outreach groups in Osire and how he considers his role as an in his community a form of outreach. I speak Portuguese as my first language but my English is good and I use that language to teach…I speak Umbundu [an Angolan indigenous language] as my mother language and it has been good to know them all…I can go to the parents or other people in the community and help them with things or straighten up the things they don’t understand… some of the older people or even younger, newer people can be ashamed or intimidated to speak in English and sometimes even Portuguese, they are left with Umbundu or others [referring to other indigenous languages from Angola] so if you can speak to them it’s good for them… after church or on any weekend I can go to that side [referring to blocks where the population of Angolan nationals is dense] and speak to people about things, they always have questions and they call me ‘teacher’ because they know I work at the kindergarten…There are also those who go out in the community, UNHCR has planned for them to talk about things …I was a member of one called Life Span Association in 2006 but it is around today still…the volunteers go house by house and in the evangelical church and educate and
bring together people about HIV/AIDS or about the rights for women and violence or even repatriation, they tell the Angolans about it so they can decide to go back sooner… also on the holidays because they know people can be in the house and it’s a good time when they come with the things they want people to know…It is for anybody who wants to do it even the secondary schoolers are doing it for some of the days… they decide on the number of blocks and divide who will go…

During a communication asset mapping interview [Male, 41 DRC, Osire] explained the role of the HIV Task Force in Osire as one of the ways that health issues are communicated throughout the camp. The participant stated, “… the HIV Task Force is just a mixed team of police, UNHCR, Nam Gov [referring to the government of Namibia] and refugees, some teachers and nurses, 20, 30, 40, 50 years in age… my wife was in the last task force of 2009-2010 and she had the job to move around the camp on a monthly basis, really house to house and tell people about HIV but also other the health things…I’m not sure of exactly when it started but I know the members change every 2 years and it is also nice since they get something for their pocketbook since the UNHCR gives them a little money for motivation, so the members are willing to do it…”

Cellular Telephones

Cellular telephones are common amongst the refugees in all three settings. Participants revealed that they may own more than one SIM card or more than one cellular telephone. A number of Osire residents complained electrical outages impacted the reliability of cellular telephone reception. Despite these concerns, participants contended that cellular telephones are the primary means for telecommunication amongst
refugees in Osire. Several participants expressed their preference for the services offered by a mobile telecommunications operator called Leo as there is no minimum price for adding air time to ones SIM card therefore any amount of money would enable one to communicate via cellular telephone as opposed to fixed prices. One shop in Osire is a Leo vendor where airtime can be purchased.

A number of participants suggested that their primary mode and preference for communication was through SMS [short message service or text messaging]. Some claimed that they rarely made telephone calls and that SMS was their primary means for communication because it was the most affordable option. They also mentioned that unlike the Internet, cellular telephones are more personal. Participants explained that they could tailor their phone to their preferences [linguistic] and that there was no shame in using their cellular telephone’s SMS features whereas one might be observed and ridiculed for their lack of proficiency with the Internet and computers. Many suggested that cellular telephones are the most personal and reliable means of communication and that their livelihood and business activities depended on them, thus they survived due to the communication facilitated via their cellular telephones. These attitudes were evidenced through communication asset mapping interviews, unstructured interviews and go–along elicitation interviews.

A go-along in Osire and Otjiwarongo

Field notes (N. Matthias, field notes, August 8, 2010) document a go-along elicitation interview that began at 5:30 a.m. whereby [Male, 33, Uganda, Osire] a coumbi-operator who facilitates transportation between Osire and Otjiwarongo elaborated
how he depended on his cellular telephones to coordinate his schedule for the
transportation of people and goods. This particular morning the coumbi-operator
received at least seven SMS’s and telephone calls from Osire residents that directed him
to their homes or previously determined locations where people or packages should be
picked up for transport to Otjiwarongo. This trip was routine and he insisted that
although his cellular telephone was constantly in use, routine trips as well as several other
occupational and domestic tasks would be impossible to conduct without it. He
explained his desire to purchase a more sophisticated cellular telephone within the
coming weeks so he could engage in cellular telephone banking.

He saw this as a way to manage his savings account and checking account without
having to “queue-up in town when time is not even there to begin with”. He suggested
that his cellular telephone made it possible to accomplish more during his work-week and
that he could maintain contact with his family in Osire and Uganda so that he could
attend to domestic requests and needs while “on the sula”. Furthermore throughout the
seven hours of observation that transpired via the go-along, if he was not driving the
coumbi, he was texting with his cellular telephone.

He held face-to-face conversations with people while texting, glancing up at
them and back down at the cellular phone, he stood in the line at his bank while texting
and he also located one of his bank account numbers that was saved in the cellular
telephone. He paced the aisles in the Otjiwarongo Spar while texting people about the
grocery lists and request they had furnished him with. He called his home to speak with
his wife about her request for toiletries. The routine mobility and logistical requirements stipulated by his occupation necessitate the primacy of his cellular telephone usage.

In contrast, one participant illuminates how a cellphone eliminates his need to be mobile. During a social network mapping interview [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] asserted that, “a call or an SMS is just the same as a visit because we cannot always make the rounds of visits from place to place when the distance is great or outside of the camp sometimes… so people without a phone can be in trouble and can even spend more money or time one way or the other just to make contact with people…how could I even move the way I need to sometimes, the money may not be enough for going around so I don’t need to see a person to do what I need to do with them… the text can make your discussion or you quickly say what you need to… so imagine some of my neighbors are not having the cell phone… but if you ask me is just a basic thing not even like an excess item in life.”

[Male, 18, DRC, Osire] characterized his experiences without ownership of a cellular telephone as “complicated” via an unstructured interview. Prior to the interview the participant borrowed my cellular telephone to send a text. He explained that, “To get a phone is money because I can sell the phone so that’s why I don’t keep the phone but is difficult even to ask people to use the phone, they say ‘buy me airtime’ then I’m not having money… I got 3 SIM card ‘cause I don’t got the phone so I got 2 [SIM cards] can work in MTC then I got one for the Leo… I have to be lucky to get someone with Leo ‘cause people I call, many having the Leo phone…people can even laugh you if you don’t got the phone they think you are the small boy, you are not serious…problem for
me is the call I need to make fast sometimes I don’t have lucky then I can’t speak with some family in Congo nicely…you are not even living the good way if you don’t have the phone here from Osire you need that thing.”

A social network mapping elicitation interview with [Male, 41, DRC, Osire] highlighted a number of issues regarding the usage and perception of cellular telephone communication for refugees. “…I either call and text, who has time for meeting with people? All the people I need to deal with, all the demands here it’s not possible with no mobile… so I can say that my mobile is part of my survival-pack so how can I operate without it? …I’m better off ‘cause for this job, I’ll always have a mobile but the other thing is I have my pay for buying airtime… many people here walk with their SIM card or their mobile, no airtime, no money… I usually lend them mine … I don’t see how without a mobile people do it … they have to borrow and they soon become a problem for the lender … It spares you trips around this place, if you have to walk from block 15 to my office here just to ask a simple question, you’ll pray that you own it… You can almost get to a point to say you have pity for people with no mobile ‘cause I know mine is needed just to keep the small things together, now not having at all, I can’t think about especially because this my only way to communicate in the week.”

The role of cellular telephones in maintaining communication beyond Osire and Namibia was exhibited in an unstructured interview with [Male, 35, Angola, Osire]. “I can use most of any money I have for the airtime because I call one aunt and my brother in Caxito and they tell me about the all of family and the things happen in home… this is nice ‘cause for me there is no another way for speak to them… I make many things this
way so when I’m sending back in Angola [referring to when the UNHCR repatriates him] I’m talking with my brother to make some plan for me where I can stay, even to talk with some people I can have the work when I get there to work in security guard for office in Luanda…my phone is [inaudible] I need it very much for every plan I’m make for home so I always keep it with the airtime and not to losing it.”

Finally an unstructured interview with [Male, 39, DRC, Osire] highlighted perceptions of the utility of cellular telephone capacity and the role of technical knowledge as an influence in his preference for limited-capability cellular phone models. “I always must have the phone it is the most important... I can stay with my other phone better, this one can make you look clever but I’m not like those boy who know to use computer so you can watch me on this for some minutes then you will laughing, you say ‘this guy he doesn’t know, give him the phone with only the number button...’ This one I can watch the clip if I look to the Internet, somebody they show me but is taking long, I take my time but every time I am getting faster to know how to get internet…for me is good to look the internet to my phone so people can’t shout me about I don’t know how to use computer… so is my own secret then I can go slow…for internet this phone is pepele [a Lingala word that means good] but sometime I only want to talk so the old one is good, new phone is only to make communicate with my people I have in Belgium to the account for Yahoo”.  

Movie Theater

The Movie Theater in Osire is open 6 or 7 days per week. This also depends on the availability of electrical power in the camp. It is situated in the central area of what is
known as town. It is near shops, UNHCR and AHA administrative offices and close to the Women’s Center. A pool table is positioned outside of the theater doorway where men congregate to play pool and engage in conversation. The theater is an unpainted cinderblock, tin and mud room that is approximately 12 feet wide by 25 to 30 feet in length. The interior walls are covered with bed sheets as well as plastic tarps [these items are used to shield the room from light, cold air and rain], while the floors are partially covered with wool blankets. There are no chairs inside of the room, the customers sit on the floor unless they bring their own chair and position it at the back of the room. Movies are shown via a television which rests at the back of the room on a stack of wooden crates that are covered with a pink sheet. A speaker connected to a hi-fi system provides for the amplification of audio.

According to the theater owner, [Male, 27, DRC, Osire] “the theater can hold 60 to 70 people for a show …Monday through Friday people are busy with personal life so my clients are most on Saturday and Sunday ‘cause people use the weekend to see the films…the same is for holidays.”

The movie theater is recognized by the UNHCR but the owner explains that, “I get to use the camp electricity here but it is for a limit and will go off only a few hours or so after 20 [referring to 8 o’clock p.m.] they know is my last show so they put the electricity a bit for the show… but I usually start the first one afternoon or around 13 [referring to 1 o’clock p.m.] and the schedule is there outside from morning so everyone can see then every show is starting after 3 hours.”
Furthermore the UNHCR attempts to monitor the activity within the movie theater as the owner mentioned, “I don’t have support from administration for UNHCR but they sending here sometimes the investigators and they supervisor to see if I show the movie that is good for the children… if I’m having lot of children sometime they can come in and see the movie if it is for children and for the age of the child…but now for my other customer, the most of the client I say 80% can be the man because they come in the day also and in the night, always really...Then if this is not open and I’m busy to make it ready they can be outside with the pool game and talking some things also.”

The owner discussed his intentions to ensure that the movie theater is a venue that everyone in the camp can enjoy he stated, “I keep the price for the show cheap only N$50 but sometime people can watch for free…then the movies, most are in English, I can say 75%, but I let people bring their own program have the language from they country is O.K. too but I check to make sure it good first…so even if no show is happen here some guys stay outside and talking to the friends”.

*The Osire Library*

The Osire Library is situated next to the Osire primary and secondary schools, thus According to Paul Makesa (N. Matthias, field notes, August, 13, 2010), the Head Librarian, students comprise the majority of the library patrons. Men attend the library during the evening hours and overall they visit the library more than women. The Library was built by church sponsors from the United States in 2002. The Library features almost 4,500 books most of which are not related to adult themes, Namibia or the
countries of Origin for Osire residents. Most of the books in the library are outdated. There is an entire wall dedicated to children’s books.

The Osire Library hosts the Osire Boys and Girls Club which is an afterschool program for primary and secondary school students up to the age of 18. The program is facilitated by a male math teacher. Inside of the library is a room which is used for formal conferences and the gymnastics club for youth in Osire. This room also contains a television which is used by men primarily for television viewing during the evening. It is also used for various discussion groups facilitated by UNCHR activities and researchers.

Religious Institutions

Churches and the Osire Community Masjid

There are 22 churches and one Masjid [Mosque] in Osire. The data demonstrates that these institutions play a role in the relay, construction and circulation of information amongst Osire residents who partake in them.

Church and Osire residents

There are Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Anglican, Adventist, Lutheran, and Congregationalist Christian denominations in Osire. Churches hold services on Sundays with the exception of the Seventh Day Adventist church. Several churches host activities in the evenings and family functions or social events for women and youth during weekends.

Osire residents’ participation in church activities is one of the most visible features of social life in the camp. Each Sunday morning the members of my neighbor’s household departed for church before 8 a.m. and returned at midday. During weeknights,
as soon as the sun set, a walk home usually enabled contact with individuals returning home from choir rehearsal or other church-facilitated social activities. Several of the research participants maintained church-attendance within their weekly routines.

Verbal invitations to households and meals were usually accompanied by invitations to attend church engagements. Church activities are publicized throughout the camp, including external church missions to Osire, visiting church leadership, church clubs and special events such as performances. Invitations to christenings or baptisms were extended on at least three occasions. Furthermore, church attendance was one of the times where males, females, youth, adults, families and single individuals are actively engaged in a single public social space.

The number of churches in Osire is striking, in more than one instance two or three-churches are situated directly next to one another. Normally, churches are situated in every block. The façade of some churches are more telling than others. For example many churches were identifiable by the signage and lettering that adorned them or by their church-like architectural structure, while others were unmarked, smaller in size and occupied less area. Some resemble the tin, aluminum and mud-brick dwellings that residents live in.

Sunday morning foot-traffic in Osire was associated with travel to and from church. When passing by the open doors and windows of the churches during Sunday services one could see people inside, seated with their attention affixed in a single direction or you could hear harmonized bellowing voices escaping every orifice.
Communicative Functions of Churches

Church is an important facet of social life for many Osire residents. The communicative functions of church in Osire were evidenced through social network mapping, communication asset mapping, community mapping, life-mapping and unstructured interviews. Participants elaborated on an array of issues that are telling of communicative phenomena through their participation in church activities and interaction with church members. A number of responses demonstrate that marital issues, domestic relations, alcohol abuse, personal economics, home economics, education, leisure, resettlement, public behavior, child rearing, crime, and intercultural relations are subjects that are addressed during church services.

Some participants mentioned that sexual behavior and early-pregnancy were discussed in their church. In contrast, many participants suggested that issues related to sex are never examined in their church. Overall, participants confirmed that scripture, anecdotes, storytelling, jokes, performances and direct address comprise communicative methods employed within their church. In addition, several of the participants or their family members partake in church-facilitated organizations and groups such as choirs, bible-study groups, youth groups and planning committee meetings.

In a community mapping interview [Male, 27, DRC, Osire] discloses his desire for participation in religious denominations other than his own due to the less intimidating communication methods they employ via activities and events to relay information that he is not exposed to in his church. “I go in the next church if they have the acting because they making the show about the things that if you asking ‘bout it
people can know too much in your business or you need to make the meeting with Father then you can feel bad if you ask him some things… you can’t even hear about these in my church… in mass we listening mostly so I like other also because they make some show to tell us about our family and the problems, not to make divorce, not beat lady, keep the child nice… then you can know the right way to be…”

One participant explained that his church does not address sexual issues during church services but instead facilitate youth groups to engage them in dialogue about sexual behavior. Through a communication asset mapping elicitation interview [Male 29, Burundi, Osire] elaborates, “In my church [name of church omitted] to talk about sex is still taboo and even about condoms our church can’t invoke such topic while they are preaching…it has of course youth services such as choir activities the leaders often talks about sexual activities in the refugee camp and how as a Christian one has to abstain getting involved in such activities…they try encourage those who are still virgin to keep going without sex out of marriage…they talk about helping and obeying parents as in concentration places most of children tend to lack obedience…”

In a unstructured interview [Male, 34, Angola, Osire] suggested that, “ For the time I was not going in church but one friend tell me this pastor is funny he’s making everybody laughing and crying same time… also he give the advice for resettle… that way I prepare I can make a plan for my paper and take the interview with UNHCR very serious, even he say to us we must write everything to keep it, to get the name of the one who is keeping interview… he tell us some people resettle then they find life is sad in Europe with the problem… the best when he’s telling us, ‘you get resettlement, you finish
your problem to Osire then you get the tik [ticket] for plane, then you get in the toilet for the plane, you are happy is the first time for plane and second time for toilet, then you lost in the new city, then you having old funny clothes, then you having people look at you, then you have the new problem is start… is good, he can make us laughing.”

An unstructured interview with [Male, 20, Angola, Osire] illuminated his perceptions of the sermons delivered during Sunday services at his church. The participant suggested that they are beneficial to youth in Osire because they present scenarios that encourage deliberation of actions and decisions in the camp as well as outside of the camp without condescension and blame. “I’m sitting in my church four years, ‘cause I’m liking how they talking in there…They never shouting anybody… they don’t talk about you are bad when you do like this, you are bad when you don’t do this, you are good if you do like this…So I can listen no problem when Pastor make the story to get the idea about the bad thing and the good thing in life, how you need to acting… I see he can understand me and those story about some problem you have in camp and out there [reference to outside of Osire]… then they show you the better way for life, every time he saying, “be clever”, “is your choice”, and “you must to think about it” and “you making to decide”…I think it can be good for those primary, secondary small kid… pastor is talking about those small girl, he say ‘you can be the mom and get the baby but then you forget about the education, no going with the friends’… also saying to the boy, ‘you don’t have to drink and fall in the vomit, and your trouser are wetting and you don’t see and shouting in the road, just to be making a good time, you can do it another way’…it can make them to see about the way the life is going, how they gonna make a life.”
During a social network mapping interview [Male, 22, Angola, Osire] explained that he commits to choir activities in his church as it enables him to make productive use of his time, acquire the English language and talk about a variety of taboo issues with his fellow choir members. He explained, “I am with the choir more than other people even outside from church we are together and going around together… I know the people in Osire from my singing in the church that is make me popular here…then I learn English not only with our music but my friends talk to me in the English and the Portuguese so I learn about it fast… if Pastor [name omitted] tell us something is happen in Campula then we [referring to fellow choir members] speak about it after the church even we get home we talking about his program… when he tell people, ‘they are raping these women in Osire they can give everybody sick, they can damage lot of people this way… even the young girl they are raping,’ then we talking in the house about the girl to have the baby and to get in love with the teacher”

Through a life mapping interview a participant described the reception of new asylees and how church services, group and interpersonal interactions provide them with instructional assistance and information-seeking advice for managing domestic and economic affairs as well as transitioning to Osire and Namibia. [Male, 39, DRC] explained, “…it’s good if you are New [referring to new asylees], I like it when I was the new, now if we get some New they come in then Brother [name omitted] tell all the people we are just same, also outside we can be same, we are refugee, Osire is the country now…then we organize 2 or 3 people to make them feel nice, he just tell everybody now to volunteer and meet them after the church in the week also to talk and
to check them about they time here….and invite them in the house to explain them the way to making the food is lasting for one month, to make the paraffin outside the house so the fire is not burn the house, also the way to building, making the brick, then to save the money if they get it never going out and buy Tafel [the brand name for a South African beer] and not to buy lady…also to reading every day is the best, first to see about Osire then to knowing about Namibia then to see what it is back in they country.”

The Osire Community Masjid

According to an unstructured interview with the Imam [Male, 51, DRC, Osire] of the Osire Community Masjid, the institution accommodates Shia, Sunni and Sufi factions, however the Imam offers that, “most Muslims are Sunni converts, they were Christian at a time and came to Islam and there are only 4 of us that are Sufi and then 7 of us are Shia but it is not important for us here, of the women I cannot be sure…but all of us are 120, we are not the most here, just a few so you will see there’s many churches and we have our Masjid…we have our time for Al’ Jumu’ah [Friday] and we make Salat [prayers] and teach in our lecture at that time...they are very good [referring to the lectures] talking of our plans here not only the one for the Masjid but with our family or our project in life.

In addition, a community mapping elicitation interview, a communication asset mapping interview, an unstructured interview and a life mapping elicitation interview reveal that participants attend the Friday night prayer event as they consider it informational as well as spiritually fulfilling. Two participants suggested that they verify information or clarify what they believe to be rumors through discussions with members
of the masjid. One participant mentioned that he is inclined to ask questions about various issues after the Friday prayers because he feels free from judgment. One participant explained that the Masjid is where he became oriented to refugee culture in Osire as a newly arrived asylum-seeker.

In a life mapping elicitation interview [Male, 20, DRC, Osire], “I didn’t talk, I knew some people they come from Bukavu but I was confused, I see the way you know my life now is like the story, I can’t be here I’m from Congo … then Imam [states the name of the Imam] he invite me that time but I was Catholic and he say is o.k. just to help me is not the problem, they have many from Congo… then I just think my life is gone where now I’m in the mosque, I can’t be the good Christian, really don’t think is right…they explain just think you in the new place so you have to think new, this is never the home this in the camp but you are from DRC… they understand me good they tell…is o.k. to be here I’m just need help, refugee is just get help… I start visit every time to the meetings so I learn everything fast about Campula I was not like these newcomer, very quick I came clever and he tell me who to see in UNHCR and introduce me many people they know me now… he give me the advice for survive here, [name of a second individual and member of the Masjid congregation] really tell me for organize my things so I can stop to be confuse…you can know what to do… I get my ration and way to secure my place, also for building my place and the way for traveling and that was good to help me now I come Musulmans [meaning Muslim in French].”

During a community mapping elicitation interview [Male, 47, DRC, Osire] illustrated his perceived informational benefits for routine attendance at Al’Jumu’ua Salat
as, “one thing I cannot pass in the week, I make it 5 times [referring to prayer at the Masjid 5 times during Friday’s] for Al’Jumu’ah, only that day, but every Muslim is there to give each other the idea about things, not just for being the best Muslim…we together then we tell to our brothers, “hey you have to save the money in the bank”…but some the brother don’t learn about this before…then they make it record, all the document, all the people, everything for making the account in town [referring to a bank account at a bank in Otjiwarongo]…then you can find new people they want to sit for Khutbah [lecture] since the neighbor tell them ‘brother tell us the way to get account in the bank and show us to ask for the passage document [referring to an exit permit]’…time for the Friday praying you asking if they give refugees money, sometimes it can be true but you have to ask Imam and other brothers…you know people give stories here so you need to know if brothers also thinking this is truth before you can ask UNHCR then you can be wrong”.

Similarly, in a communication asset mapping interview [Male, 31, Ethiopia, Osire] elaborated about how his interactions with members of the Masjid influenced his position on rumors about the dissolution of the Osire. “We get the news about the camp getting closed and you think it is right because many people think it can be true, you want to know about the things to do next… so we went on Friday we have our big Salat and start to talk about this then some people say it is not true… [name of an individual in a leadership position in the Masjid] here all of us are worried so then we continue about it in Khutbah…all the brothers say their reasons then all of us speak about these idea…we don’t know what is true but decide some of the plan and reason it was never true…”
An unstructured interview with [Male, 18, DRC, Osire] demonstrated the role of Friday prayers in encouraging his confidence to address uncertainty through questions. The participant relayed a scenario whereby, “I’m speaking to [name of an individual in leadership position in the Masjid] sometime in the week then he say you have a good question so you can remember to ask to Al Jumu’ah then more of us will know what to doing about this…I go for Al Jumu’ah in that week and after praying he [referring the individual previously mentioned] say in front to every brother, ‘this young man ask the good question for everybody now must listen’…so I was happy to have that time to speaking about this and no one can get a problem with me in Al Jumu’ah, everybody just see me like someone who is talking good things then after some brother talk with me about this...so to ask the question is not like you ask then people can say you are stupid, so it is good to ask the brother after prayers…I’m always asking after prayers…”

*Intergroup Communication and Intercultural Communication*

*Osire Residents and the Osire Police*

The most prominent instances where intergroup communication is evidenced are via the interactions between Osire residents and the Osire police. This is especially the case in the Osire Police station and at the main gate to the refugee camp. The members comprising the Osire police, unlike the administrative and implementing staff in Osire are not representatives or implementing partners associated with the UNHCR. In accordance with Namibian law, the authority of the Osire police supersedes any authority maintained by the UNHCR and its implementing partners. The Osire police station is staffed by Namibian nationals who are law enforcement representatives in service of the Republic
of Namibia. They are essentially a local extension of the Namibian police and the Government of the Republic of Namibia.

Research findings indicate that communicative exchanges between the Osire Police and Osire residents are the only distinct, observable and admittedly notable encounters of intergroup and intercultural communication in the refugee camp. Inter-gender, international, inter-ethnic, inter-religious and inter-occupational engagements are seemingly natural aspects of socialization and communicative activity for Osire residents. Thus Osire residents maintain voluntary as well as obligatory inter-group relationships within the Osire Community.

According to participants, this is not the case as it pertains to the relations between Osire residents and Osire Police. Observations recorded in field notes (N. Matthias, field notes, August 6, 2010, August 19, 2010 and August 26, 2010) as well as the accounts obtained via participant mapping and unstructured interviews depict a different view to the relationships between these two groups. Participants suggest that the Osire Police are primarily associated with power accorded to them through their position as Namibian law enforcement.

One dimension of the power dynamic that characterizes the relations between Osire residents and the Osire police is the latter’s ultimate authority over affairs in the refugee camp. Thus entrance to and exit from the camp is solely determined by the Osire police, a factor that participants characterize as essential to relations between the two groups.
Another aspect is evidenced through Osire residents’ perception of the natural privileges bestowed upon Osire Police as non-asylee, non-refugee Namibian nationals who are able to partake of the benefits of citizenship in Namibian society. Some participants contend that they do not consider Osire Police as members of the Osire Community but rather external agents positioned to control it.

Finally, several participants stated that it is their understanding that what appears to be cultural difference dominates the tone and context of communication between them and the Osire Police. This dynamic is often marked by Osire residents’ perceptions that Osire Police intentionally assert and attempt to maintain a stance of cultural superiority and territorialism during their interactions. Several participants imply that Osire Police are xenophobic, ethnocentric and culturally insensitive.

Some participants maintain strategic relationships with members of the Osire Police because they are aware that it will gain them favor in circumstances where they require special assistance. Furthermore some mentioned that members of the Osire Police and Osire residents maintain personal relationships based on the exchange of information about residents and affairs within the refugee camp. Participants also mentioned that they engage in cordial and respectful communication with Osire Police because contact with them is unavoidable but they do not believe that their exchanges are grounded in genuine trust, respect or friendship.

Overall, participants suggested that their relations with the Osire Police are inherently problematic for them and therefore differ from any and all relations maintained
amongst fellow Osire residents as well as Namibian and non-Namibian citizens who are not affiliated with the Namibian Police.

During a social network mapping interview, [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] explained that his relationship with Osire police is characterized by obligatory respect because he must interact with them regularly therefore any relationships that he has with them is overshadowed by their authority and position as enforcement agents and that he is indifferent about relations with them. “… I see them every week or every other, but to be upset with these guys is not a focus for me because they just want to feel good, their life can be even worse than mine here I don’t know…I just get my documents reviewed to get in and go out of camp, then if I need something they must care for I go to them, they know me because of my things I do here…they can be fine but sometimes if they are together they only want to impress and then you get trouble if you not clever...they are police to me that’s all I don’t mind them a lot they are just there but if we are not friend it’s normal ‘cause they have their job so if they don’t like foreigners, if they have a problem with us, it’s the job they have to work around us so it’s their problem not mine…”

During a communication asset mapping interview with [Male, 41, DRC] reveals that his interactions with Osire police are obligatory and that he had negative encounters with Osire police due to an offense that he was accused of. He believes that the police demand respect but lack trustworthiness and that they insult his intelligence. Furthermore he contends that they incite arguments about aspects of their work as to enlarge the expanse of their law enforcement duties. He explained that, “I am always in their place
for the sake of official business and I must go in town...we get along if you can say that exactly but when the incident happened here and I was made to go to court, the same guys you see here are the ones that came to my house there to make sure I slept in the jail that night… so they know me and smile but I know they’ll never be invited to my home for fofou [a traditional Congolese food made from maize meal] and I can’t pass the threshold in their place for pap[a traditional Namibian food made from maize meal]…it’s not the problem about being excited since they wear the uniform and they in- charge, it’s just they remind everyone if they get a chance, even if they don’t get the chance they find a reason for saying ‘you’re not the one, I’m the one’, to make a shouting scene… that’s just it, I can’t respect you just because you’re NAMPOL [acronym for Namibian Police], that’s not my language, you don’t respect me, I’m a big man … they ready to check in this one’s parcel, that one’s pocket, that one’s shoe, for what? Because they having the uniform but it’s not about the job…”

[Male, 31, Ethiopia, Osire] discussed his dissatisfaction with the verbal treatment that some of his colleagues in Osire grant to Osire Police based on their interactions. He suggested that Osire Police boast about their nationality, while highlighting the fact that Osire residents are refugees and asylum seekers. A social network mapping interview details the participant’s attitude about relations between Osire Police and Osire residents.

“..only on and off I have to see them when we in the coumbi to go from camp , they check documents from home affairs…but the way some people are with them It can confuse…one of my friend has taken his document, then he say alright Boss and to the other man at the gate he call him Taté [a word in the Namibian Oshiwambo language
meaning father, sir or respected man] another, Chief, that is nice if you showing you can respect but man’s not your boss, that’s only a police, not the big chief, not my father, not my uncle so why he’s doing that? We don’t have to do it…then you want to get in the camp and they tell you, you like to come and go in their place, it’s their country or ‘you move in my country too much and you must get in and be there by your block, it’s for you, the camp’ …from first I see this I know the heart is not good, these people not okay… having to hear the talk like this if you want to be doing your thing outside Osire, they just want us to be down, they wish we could stay in…”

[Male, 48, Angola, Osire] mentioned that he views the Osire Police as outsiders that are simply employed in Osire. During a communication asset mapping interview this participant suggested that he informs his friends to refrain from challenging the Osire Police because they can wage actions that bear negatively upon their experience in the refugee camp. He explained that he communicates with some members of the Osire Police with Okwanyama as it is originally an Angolan language and that the Kwanyama tribe is comprised of both Angolan and Namibian nationals. He says this gains him small advantages although he does not have genuine camaraderie with the Osire Police. “…we having only the small things that we can say for each other but they like it I’m speaking Kwanyama… they laugh sometime but I tell them you are the funny Kwanyama is mixed it with the others but my Kwanyama is the first one…then it is not my tribe but I know it very well so they like it and can be easy about some things for me so every time I see one Taté, only in the Kwanyama I’m speaking…I can tell those small boy from my side only listen even if they can get angry to fighting because these man can play with your story
here from Campula and you don’t have one time for argue, ‘no I’m right, they are not right’…They don’t know Campula, we know it, they have the job, they can find how to go around but they just have the place out there… they can be one time just normal then try to shouting you so I’m knowing we are just in same place but not so much friendly.”

A communication assets mapping interview [Male, 27, DRC, Osire] enabled this participant to elaborate his lack of trust as well as his concern about encountering disrespect and ethnocentricity when engaging with Osire Police. “…once you think they O.K. but they can act like they friends with you and is not true…those times they go to the house talk about AIDS with some people I was think these people, they really come to my place they want to know about what is going in here, not because they have the message for the refugee for AIDS…they can ask you the questions now, the way they asking is not right, ’cause we are human we have the mother, the father, they can speak with people sometimes like they are sick from the head…they can give the refugee the reason, many times they can make people mad but we don’t go in that office yet to make problems…and the times they say ‘in your country they don’t have the things like our place,’ but they don’t know, they don’t go in Congo…they think Congo is only 2 million people stay there like Namibia…I just tell them the people in the world know Congo before they know your place…”

An unstructured interview illuminated the lack of approval that [Male, 51, DRC, Osire] has for the disposition and behavior of members of the Osire police while explaining how he maintains a relationship with them as a strategy to obtain information about events and changes in Osire…” being an old man here they don’t get on top of my
head, I can look left, look right I don’t see them but they speaking with the mama’s and the family man like the street kid also, I don’t understand… they talk with people that is the big part for the job for them…but they can say the things about you are in Namibia not in so, so, so place, is like this now before you don’t know up and down now you here … they can ask the personal question , for what they need the personal information is not important for the work…best I just do my ‘bye, hi, how you? okay sharp’ [A South African slang terminology used in Namibia as greeting, a farewell, expression of agreement and enthusiasm] and continue then I talk sometimes with one biggie [elder adult male] ‘cause we are all old, he is old retiring, also vet [veteran of SWAPO liberation wars], so he can see me I’m old, then he just tell me some small thing if it will happen in camp.
CHAPTER FIVE

Tactical Mitigation of Disempowering Circumstances via the Communicative Ecology of Male Refugees: An Analysis of the Research Findings

This chapter will clarify how the research findings were analyzed. It will also present how the analysis of the findings factor into the communicative ecology of male refugees in Namibia. The points of inquiry that guided this study will be satisfied through the analysis. This will offer a view to how the communicative ecology of refugees functions in activating, informing and facilitating tactics that they employ to manage disempowering circumstances.

First, a presentation of the findings constructed through the grounded theory approach will explain the conceptualizations of (1) disempowering circumstances and (2) tactics. Second, the findings which informed the categorical articulation of the concepts of (1) future orientations (2) mobility acts and (3) utilization of communication assets will be defined. The analysis will also situate the findings within the context of components comprising Foulger’s Ecological Model of the Communication Process to illustrate how disempowering circumstances are mitigated via tactics that manifest through participants’ construction of future orientations; their engagement in mobility acts; and their utilization of communication assets.

This will be achieved by providing examples within the findings that correspond to the interactive components of the Ecological Model of the Communication Process (Foulger 2004). The model will be used to exemplify the 2 fundamental roles that Namibia’s male refugees assume within the communicative process. These roles posit
them as (1) creators of messages, languages and media and (2) consumers of messages, 
languages and media.

In keeping with the ecological premise of Foulger’s (2004) model, the analysis 
will evidence findings based on participants’ “relationships, perspectives, attributions, 
interpretations” as well as their role in the continuous transformation and “invention” of 
“language” and “media” (online). It is also worth noting that the model acknowledges 
learning, socialization and the exercise of the imagination in the production and 
consumption of messages, languages and media. The model (Foulger 2004) asserts that 
creators assume the position of consumers in the communicative process when they 
utilize “feedback” to modify their “messages to message consumers” (online).

Coding Procedure for the Development of Categories and Concepts toward the 
Formulation of Grounded Theory

The Atlas.ti software application was used to assist in the development of 
grounded theory based on the generation of 2 significant concepts [tactics and 
disempowering circumstances]. These concepts were determined via the coding of what 
this study refers to as themes, macro-categories and micro-categories. The macro and 
micro categories encapsulate data depictions of how participants evoke tactical responses 
to their experiences. These categorizations were used to develop the themes which 
informed the 2 significant concepts [tactics and disempowering circumstances] through 
the process that will be described.
Themes were constructed through the consultation of macro-categories. For example (see Appendix Q), the future orientations theme was established by comparing, contrasting, merging and reframing macro-categories.

Macro-categories are broad categories, they encompass micro-categories. For instance, with regard to the future orientations theme, macro categories such as, planning and goal setting, religious practices, mobility, self-narrative accounts and familial relations to name a few were informed by micro-categories.

Micro-categories that were considered in the articulation of the macro-categories include, church attendance, prayer, storytelling, visiting children, shopping outside of Osire, bank account and resettlement interviews to name a few. Quotes also formed the basis these categories. This process was performed repetitiously until the 2 significant concepts [tactics and disempowering circumstances] were formed to evolve grounded theory.

Disempowering Circumstances and Tactics

The research findings relay the concepts of (1) disempowering circumstances and (2) tactics through their typification within participant accounts and observed activities comprising the data.

Description of Disempowering Circumstances

This research formulates disempowering circumstances through conceptualizations of power and empowerment. According to Melkote and Steeves (2001), power thrives and is rendered meaningful through “social relations” (p.36). It is evidenced in social actor’s capabilities to transform circumstances without restricting the
capacities of others (2008 Auger, Decoster, and Colindres; Steeves and Melkote 2001). An additional concept of power that is relevant to this study is concerned with control over processes bound by institutional decision-making, known as “power-over” (Melkote and Steeves 2001).

Empowerment in this instance is characterized by a consensual process whereby social actors assume control over the ways that they experience and define their realities (Melkote and Steeves, 2001) at individual as well as collective levels. It is marked by the autonomous development of solutions and measures which result in the crafting and exercise of meaningful changes in the devices which bear upon their lives. It facilitates penetrating transformations that grant them agency to calibrate disempowering circumstances that shade their experiences and classifications as asylum seekers and refugees.

Disempowering circumstances negates social actor’s capacities to exercise personal will, engage in processes, and mobilize resources toward the realization of improved situational outcomes. Through a process of comparison, refinement and redefinition of the data characteristics, 4 themes prevailed toward the conceptualization of disempowering circumstances. This concept is exemplified through accounts, affirmations and actions representative of (1) uncertainty, (2) the perceived loss of self-identity, (3) resource inadequacy and, (4) perceptions of marginality amongst male refugees in Namibia.
Description of Tactics

Carteau (1984) asserts that tactics are the “art of the weak” (p. 38) essentially deployed as “interventions” (p.39) to subvert disempowering circumstances enacted through the realm of “the powerful” (p.17). This concept summarizes the categorical assignment of the phenomena that characterize participants’ active attempts to suppress external forces of structural disempowerment.

The data evidences routine defiance of these forces of structured power through participants’ tactical: (1) construction of future orientations, (2) uptake of mobility and their (3) utilization of communication assets in Namibia.

Future orientations are generated via participants’ (1) projection of themselves elsewhere, their (2) rejection of the refugee status and their endeavors at (3) situational improvement. Mobility acts are performed by participants’ (1) corporeal flight from the designated site for refugee existence in Namibia, (2), their maintenance of social relations throughout the country, their endeavors to (3) generate economic resources and their will to (4) engage with media and information beyond the refugee camp. Utilization of communication assets occurs when participants (1) interact with Information and Communication Technologies, and when they (2) engage with formal and informal institutional resources.
Namibia’s Male Refugees as Creators and Consumers of Messages, Languages and Media Through Future Orientations

**Future Orientations**

Future orientations communicate participants’ self-projection outside of refugee settings, rejection of their refugee status and their attempts at situational improvement. They function as a tactical response and embody prospective solutions to disempowering circumstances. In this instance future orientations host the imaginative, perceptual, interpretive and attributive renderings of their communicative ecology (Foulger 2004). The findings demonstrate that participants actively devise future orientations through their creation and consumption of messages, languages and media.

Such phenomena correspond with Appadurai’s (1990) concept of *Mediascapes* whereby participants form “imagined lives” that depict “their”, as well as “others”’ existence in “other places” via their engagement with “image-centered, narrative-based accounts of strips of reality” (p. 299). Mediascapes serve Diasporas comprised of refugee and migrant populations in their efforts to examine prospects and “fantasies” (p. 299) that they seek actualize via their physical relocation (Appadurai 1990).

**Uncertainty and Future Orientations**

Several participants’ statements reveal that uncertainty about their futures was abated through the interaction of their imagined existence and their position as consumers and producers of media. One example demonstrates audio visual media as a facilitator of imagery which fueled the participant’s imagination and placated the uncertainty
experienced in his current situation. Essentially, his intake of the audio-visual messages assured his certainty about what the future held for him beyond Osire.

Surety is evident in the statements of [Male, 29, Burundi, Osire] as he contends that the, “only way” that he can improve his capacity to “help” himself “…is to go to Sweden or those Scandinavia countries…” Furthermore he suggests, “…I see in Youtube those people from my country they become proper when they get resettle… I can upload my clips on Youtube from there.” Although the participant’s interpretation of becoming “proper” was not articulated, these statements demonstrate his certainty that resettlement will enable him to “become proper”. It can be maintained that the combination of what he has observed in, perceived from and attributed to the portrayals of others from his country informed his position. Thus his consumption of audio visual media has contributed to his Mediascape.

In the following instance, it is not apparent that the participant’s Mediascape has assuaged uncertainty however, his imagined role as a producer of media in conjunction with his desired translocation makes certain his improved existence. [Male, 31, DRC, Windhoek] said, “I got my brother in Boston, he has the good life in USA so how I can be here and stay refugee?” He adds on to this expression by declaring, “… I must get in Boston I can continue to do rep [rehearsal] and our music there then I become international musician not just the … refugee …”

Although it is not stated how he has determined that a “good life in USA” was revealed to him, his words attribute moving to the USA with the dissolution of his uncertain refugee status and thus his ability to use media [in the form of music] to
transform his position from “just” a marginal refugee to an “international musician”, a position of certainty.

Uncertainty was also resolved by participants through their use of verbal language as means to position themselves in their transformed realities. Foulger’s (2004) model describes language as “the content of media” (online) that social actors use to communicate.

In this instance, [Male, 27, Angola, Osire] expresses his concern about the possibility that he may be repatriated to Angola. He states, “…you don’t know if you will kick [be repatriated to Angola] tomorrow, you only know you want to get the different life than refugee.” However, through consideration of his options the participant attributes his multilingual abilities with his perceived competence [self-efficacy] to function outside of Osire.

He states, “… [in] Angola I have my language that is one good thing… I can use English I have now to make some business contracts for the people they need interpreter in Luanda or the border… Furthermore he perceives the usage of his linguistic capacities as a feasible solution toward his desirous attainment of, “…the different life than refugee.” In this instance, the participant’s uncertainty of the future was allayed via self-efficacy attributed to his use of language.

Perceived Loss of Self-Identity and the Future Orientations

[Male, 24, Angola, Osire] negotiates the likelihood of his repatriation to Angola through the admission of his familiarity with Namibia and lack of knowledge of Angola. He declares, “… so when they say you have to go back to Angola I will say no problem, I
can manage … I don’t know Angola, I only know Namibia, Osire… The participant attributes his loss of self-identity to his lack of knowledge of Angola as well as his adoption of Namibian speech traits. Furthermore, he perceives that this may inform Angolans that he has repatriated from asylum.

His concern is vocalized in his statements, “I sound like Namibian also… If I get in Angola people will know he was the refugee that come back …” The participant perceives that his use of the Portuguese language will neutralize others’ perceptions of him as “the refugee that come back,” and compensate for his lack of familiarity in Angola.” This is clarified in his assertion, “I will only use Portuguese … My Portuguese is still nice …” Essentially the participant associates his use of Portuguese as a vehicle to inclusivity in the event of repatriation to Angola.

Resource Inadequacy and the Future Orientations

[Male, 48, DRC, Otjiwarongo] attributes his ability to produce wooden artifacts conducive to income generation and thus his capacity to support himself via business activity in Otjiwarongo. He attests that, “…I don’t have the place but I can have income, everyday income, Otjiwarongo is good because already people know to find me here…for business this is good… He perceives the demand for his creations essential to his survival and future in Otjiwarongo based on their role in enabling him to, “sit … in Otjiwarongo”, where business is possible. In this instance, his production of media in the form of wooden crafts averts resource inadequacy and promotes his capacity to plan for his future in Namibia.
Perceptions of Marginality and the Future Orientation

Some participants expressed notions of marginality that they attributed to their refugee status. This participant attributes the opportunistic advantage that he has over other refugees in Osire to his occupation as a math teacher. However, he perceives his refugee status as daunting and repressive. [Male, 32, DRC, Osire] insists, “…to think of only Osire as life is very poor, refugee is not my surname, is not my genetic code... I have better fortunes than most people here…I teach maths.”

The participant perceives his linguistic abilities and professional credentials as commodities which can be used to produce “opportunities” for him “past Osire walls”. He attributes transformative potential to communicative roles, whereby teaching and verbal language as tools of communication contribute to his imagined future.

Namibia’s Male Refugees as Creators and Consumers of Messages, Languages and Media through Mobility Acts

Mobility Acts

Mobility Acts occur when participants uptake corporeal flight from the refugee camp; seek to generate economic resources; maintain social relations in Namibia and when they engage with media and information outside of Osire. They are performed tactical responses that simultaneously serve real and symbolic ends to thwart disempowering circumstances.

The findings indicate that participants routinely exercise mobility acts to partake in the creation and consumption of messages, languages and media throughout Namibia. This coincides with Aida Miron’s (2009) research on Refugee Spaces in Berlin. The
mobility mapping project highlights the “deterritorialization” (Miron 2009, Appadurai 1999, p.465) of “refugee patterns of mobility and communication” (Miron 2009) past politically defined places within host countries. It confirms that refugees actively dislocate geographical marginality through exploration and formation of social networks within host countries as means to compensate for the absence of various “state functions of support” (Miron 2009). Exemplary views to mobility acts employed by Namibia’s male refugees expound their methods for disrupting disempowering circumstances.

*Uncertainty and Mobility Acts*

Participants’ accounts characterize the impact of uncertainty on their desire to move out of Osire and throughout Namibia. They relay their roles as producers and consumers of messages, languages and media via their mobility acts. Overall, they highlight their aims to counteract uncertainty through the engagement of assets within their communicative ecology.

One of the youngest participants used his social network and the sale of cellular telephones to compensate for uncertainty experienced through his inability to secure financial resources in Osire. His account demonstrates that mobility simultaneously emanates from and alleviates uncertainty and that interaction with social networks outside of Osire grants him access to knowledge that serves to dispel uncertainty. [Male, 19, Angola, Osire] attributed the act of “trekking outside” a countering force to uncertainty associated with remaining in Osire and “suffer like dog.” He stated, “…men won’t be men without money to survive and jobs can’t happen if you stay in Osire…”
The participant attributes mobility with financial security and relief from uncertainty. The participant states, “…I’m leaving when I can, the time, the day is all depending on my money now also if the home affairs will give me the papers to get out.” By engaging in routine mobility the participant ensures a number of objectives: his access to financial resources to ward off uncertainty and surety that he will be able to exit Osire due to the acquisition of financial resources that enable this act.

He also perceives this act as a means to “get clever about the way to live in” Namibia, thus attaining knowledge and neutralizing uncertainty about the environment outside of Osire. This cycle is made possible through the sale of cellular telephones and interpersonal relations in local social institutions and surrounding communities. For instance, the participant explains, “I go to my bru [Afrikaans slang for friend or brother] in DRC and listen some music by the shebeen sometime but then we sula, we organize our things for who is going where to sula those mobile…”

The participant actively engages messages, language and media through socialization in shebeens. This setting facilitates his consumption of messages and language via the mediums of music as well as through interpersonal interactions. His social interactions also constitute the basis for his income generating activity through the sale of cellular telephones.

Furthermore the participant confirms, “I can take the mobile inside and people can buy so if I get out I know I can find the way for having money, in or out…” Thus he avails cellular telephones to Osire residents potentially lending to the landscape of communication assets in the camp and eliminating his financial uncertainty. The
participants account illustrates his interaction with social networks, consumption of, messages, language and media as well as his productive role in transforming the range of communication assets in Osire.

In a second example [Male, 20, DRC, Osire] relays his preference for residence in Windhoek as means to circumnavigate uncertainty that he experiences in Osire. The participant’s rationale for mobility is premised upon comfort that he attributes to his interaction with social networks that provide him with informational, economic and material resources. The participant attests, “I reach in Khomasdal [Khomasdal is a suburb of Windhoek city] … visit in Okuryangava with some friend … I can’t go back … How I’ll be there in Osire? … you can’t know when next you can get some to live from… The participant’s uncertainty dissuades him from returning to Osire. Furthermore he contends that, “Windhoek is better than in Osire … you see things more, my people there show me nicely to survive, I’m just around life there, I see how things is go.” The participant perceives that Osire is deficient of survival resources which he attributes to observing and learning via his social networks in Windhoek. Thus the participant’s mobility is dictated by informational and consumption preferences that are satisfied via his social networks of knowledge.

Perceived Loss of Self-Identity and Mobility Acts

Participants’ accounts are telling of how mobility enables them to interact with their social networks outside of Osire as means for engaging in activities and encounters that re-affirm their personal sense of identity. The admissions of [Male, 41, DRC, Osire] underscore the significance of socialization for purposes of enjoyment amongst refugees.
He mentioned, “…I help out my neighbors and few others that ask with things they need in town… it’s good I go to the shop, do what people like doing, take a Tafel at the lodge, visit my people around town.”

The participant is essentially extending his capacity to tend to the needs of fellow refugees in Osire, however access to social networks outside of the refugee camp evoke his perceptions of his former-self. The participant attributes a sense of self-hood to, “nice little simple things” such as, “people with real basins and toilets in the home” which he associates with, “living before this time.”

Additionally, the participant characterized his encounter outside of Osire as “a small break from camp, a chance to be with different people in town” … and being himself, “without the big ‘r’…” This demonstrates a purely pleasurable dimension of the rationale for mobility outside of Osire. It also alludes to the importance of social networks in enabling participants to maintain and reconstruct semblances of their self-identity.

Resource Inadequacy and Mobility

This instance of mobility presents the participant’s income bearing relationships with non-refugee nationals from his country of origin. These individuals form an income generating social network for the participant. It also demonstrates how a search for economic resources dictate mobility patterns characterized by extended and serial episodes of leave from Osire.

Angola to make the order for uniform …they needed my help …I just help them there 2 days …” This simultaneously illustrates the formation of exploratory socio-economic networks that refugees form based upon supplying resource demands in Osire.

For example, the participant details resource seeking routes of mobility outside of Osire through his travels from the capital city in order to secure imported foodstuffs with a fellow refugee. “I get in Okahandja … 3 [three days] I’m with [states the name of a man] also he’s the refugee, we get the good fish … from Angola … the dry one … we buy all then want to selling in Osire for Angolans…”

The participant explains the serial pattern of mobility that he plans to uptake, which will result in the entry and subsequent exit from Osire in a four day span of time. “…morning we move here … I’ll get in Osire tomorrow then waiting for the card after some 3 or 4 days … then after I get out again to see those brother and get again.” The participant’s account exemplifies the reach and diversity of social networks maintained by male refugees as well as the breadth of their mobility in pursuit of economic opportunities outside of Osire.

Perceptions of Marginality and Mobility

The issue of marginalization is brought forth through the account provided by [Male, 40, DRC, Otjiwarongo] within the context of income bearing mobility, linguistic capabilities and relations within social networks. The participant’s ability to speak fluent Afrikaans in addition to his mother tongue, Lingala contributes to the demand for his skills amongst fellow refugees during their informal trade activities. The participant states, “…if one of them come and say we need to push some curio, come with… I’m
going in the lodge and help, Boer they can cheat, but if they see this one is speaking Afrikaans they come nicer ‘bout things…”

The participant’s linguistic ability neutralizes exploitative instances that may occur during the payment negotiations between refugee traders who engage with Afrikaans speaking shop owners. The participant explained, “… I know Afrikaans too, so they can’t make problem …with me… these people can get cheat if I am not talking for them…Congolese get me to push for them… Angolan business they get me… then they give me money.” The refugee community perceives the participant’s linguistic abilities as an equalizing asset in business negotiations with Namibian nationals. Thus the participant’s role as a linguistic mediator is mutually beneficial to himself as well as the refugee community. He is essentially lends to the communicative ecology of male refugees due to the linguistic abilities that he avails to his social network. Consequently, his skills determine his ability to generate income and dictate his mobility patterns.

Namibia’s Male Refugees as Creators and Consumers of Messages, Languages and Media through the Utilization of Communication Assets

Participants’ accounts characterize the impact and mediation of uncertainty through their use of and interaction with their communications assets. Communication assets in this case comprise human relationships, ICT’s as well as the sense-making process which inform participants’ understanding and definition of their experiences. Participants relay their roles as producers and consumers of messages, languages and media via their engagement with the communication assets at their disposal. Overall,
they highlight their aims to counteract uncertainty through the engagement of assets within their communicative ecology.

*Uncertainty and the Utilization of Communication Assets*

A dualistic show of uncertainty manifests through one participant’s account whereby he perceives information technology and social media networks beneficial to his communication needs, however the participant expresses inundation with the developmental pace of ICT’s and the array of “programs” that are “out there”. The participant perceives more communicative options as a challenge to his ability to utilize them. [Male, 27, DRC, Osire] insists, “these are the things that they must…show people to do in this place… one guy he is… looking in his Facebook, I just want to know how I can use this program… he … show me how to check… The participant perceives that Facebook is a feasible way to maintain contact with his family and friends however he attributes the growth and evolution of media and ICT’s to his lack of knowledge and ultimately uncertainty about his ability to use them. The participant explains, “…there’s too much you must know just to do one thing… don’t know what you must know also, always new programs out there… I just look and find my sister in Facebook … next week new programs are there”.

This account presents the dichotomous nature of uncertainty within the communicative ecology of refugees. The participant attributes his ability to communicate freely with access to and knowledge of a particular communication asset, thus eliminating uncertainty of his capacity to use them. However, the participant simultaneously attributes his uncertainty to the abundance and multifaceted nature of the
communication asset, thus daunting his perceptions of them. This demonstrates that a lack of exposure to and limited proficiency with new forms of media and ICT’s may frustrate or intimidate refugees’ future attempts to interact with them due to uncertainty.

This is also corroborated in the findings whereby [Male, 39, DRC, Osire] stated, “I always must have the phone it is the most important... but I’m not like those boy who know to use computer so you can watch me on this for some minutes then you will laughing...”

Perceived Loss of Self-Identity and the Utilization of Communication Assets

One participant perceived the interpersonal dialogues and relationships that he developed through the Osire Community Masjid as instrumental to his readjustment and handling of perceptions of self-loss [Male, 20, DRC, Osire] explains, “I didn’t talk … I was confused… my life now is like the story, I can’t be here I’m from Congo … then Imam [states the name of the Imam] he invite me that time but I was Catholic…”

The participant demonstrates the negotiation of his identity with regard to religion, nationality and his new classification as a refugee. “…I’m in the mosque, I can’t be the good Christian, …they explain just think you in the new place so you have to think new, … this in the camp but you are from DRC... they also understand me good they tell…is o.k. to be here I’m just need help, refugee is just get help…”

Furthermore he attributes his discussions about his perceptions of identity loss as crucial to his ability to function in Osire. “I start visit every time to the meetings so I learn everything fast about Campula … he give me the advice for survive here... so I can stop to be confuse…” The participant attributed his new routine of visitation with and
discussion amongst members of the Masjid a factor in his adjustment as a new refugee as well as his capacity to perceive his identity and his circumstances independently. This illustrates the role of interpersonal communicative relationships as communication assets within the communicative ecology of Namibia’s male refugees.

Resource Inadequacy and the Utilization of Communication Assets

[Male, 41, DRC, Osire] illuminates his perceptions of cellular telephones as absolute necessities in Osire due to their significance in facilitating his daily routine. His statement exemplifies his observations and how he attributes resource scarcity to fellow refugees that do not own or have regular access to a cellular telephone. The participant asserts, “…the people I need to deal with, all the demands here it’s not possible with no mobile… how can I operate without it?”

Furthermore he attributes “pity” to circumstances which prevent others from having access to mobile communication capabilities. “… many people here walk with their SIM card or their mobile, no airtime, no money… I usually lend them mine … you have pity for people with no mobile.” The participant perceives cellular telephones as instruments which are crucial to normalcy and the capacity to thrive under the circumstances of being a refugee in Osire.

Perceptions of Marginality and the Utilization of Communication Assets

One of the most notable instances of marginality through the utilization of communication assets transpires in the relations between Osire residents and the Osire Police. The Osire Police are technically communicative installations within the camp as they serve informative roles with regard to the laws and policies of the camp. They also
maintain a regulatory role on the movements of the refugee population whereby they interface with them upon entry and exit from Osire. Their duties also include the enforcement of Namibian law and protection of Osire residents. Thus this instance exemplifies perceptions of marginality as it takes form through communicative encounters between these two groups.

Several participants perceived that their interpersonal encounters with Osire police are characterized by the leveling and negotiation of power. In this instance [Male, 31, Ethiopia, Osire] contends, “…they tell you, you like to come and go in their place, it’s their country… ‘you move in my country too much …get in and be there by your block, it’s for you, the camp’…” Furthermore, the participant suggests that his fellow refugees use social typifications and names which exalt Osire police during verbal communication encounters with between them. He perceives this as an unnecessary relinquishing of power to the police. For example, the participant mentions, “…one of my friend say alright Boss and to the other man …he call him Taté [a word in the Namibian Oshiwambo language meaning father, sir or respected man] another, Chief…that’s only a police not my father, not my uncle so why he’s doing that? We don’t have to do it…” Finally he interprets verbal communication from police as expressions of their desire to maintain a position of marginality for Osire residents. He states, “…they just want us to be down, they wish we could stay in…” This account highlights attributions, perceptions and interpretations of imposed structural marginality through formal communicative entities within the communicative ecology of male refugees.
CHAPTER SIX

Implications of the Study

This study examined the role the communicative ecology of male refugees in Namibia through an assessment of three interconnected points of inquiry. The aim of the first point was to characterize phenomena which animate the communicative ecology of male refugees in Namibia. The research findings demonstrate that the essential facilitative components of the communicative ecology of Namibia’s male refugees are: their social networks and interpersonal relationships, their interaction with ICT’s and, their communicative capacities including linguistic skills and creative artistic expression.

The second point questions the ways that the communicative ecology of Namibia’s male refugees constitutes the articulation of relevant communication methods and communication channels amongst refugee populations in the country. The study evidenced male refugees’ active consultation of tactics that they mobilize to counter disempowering circumstances. These tactics are inherently communicative and consciously waged to serve their ends. They may also be engaged by the greater refugee community.

The third point endeavors to understand aspects of their communicative ecology that delineate sense-making processes which can inform health communication initiatives. Sense-making was revealed in the tension generated through participant’s attempts to understand, negotiate and resolve disempowering situations that contextualized their experiences. This was observed through participants’ expressions of
uncertainty; perceived loss of self-identity; their pursuit of tangible and social resources; and their stated contempt for the marginalization that their refugee status manufactures.

Overall the study confirmed that social networks and the interpersonal communication inherent within them comprise the most salient aspect of the communicative ecology of male refugees.

The findings impart several implications for future research. They also provide meaningful guides to action for entities charged with crafting policies that shape public health, national information and communication agendas as well as the management of refugee affairs. Finally, the realm of health communication practice is especially poised to benefit from the findings toward the design, implementation and evaluation of communication programs concerned with MCP as a driver of HIV incidence.

Presentation of these implications begins with a discussion of the future of communication research amongst refugee populations as it pertains to methodological constraints. It also highlights limitations and gaps evidenced in the discourses pertaining to male refugees.

The Challenge of Conducting Traditional Ethnographies in Refugee Camps

Future consideration of academic research carried out in refugee camps should recognize structural issues as a constraint to the execution of traditional ethnographies. There is no singular international policy that regulates access to refugee camps. In most instances, UNHCR approval of research proposals does not automatically grant access into refugee camps. The official decision to permit entry and thus duration of entry is the
left to the sole discretion of the national government of the host nation that houses the refugee camp.

In Namibia, entry into Osire is attained through permission from The Commissioner of Refugees in the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration (Namibia Refugees Recognition and Control Act 1999). The decision to permit entry into the refugee camp is [ideally] based on a review of researcher credentials and the proposed research. This may pose a challenge to non-refugee, individuals who intend to conduct research amongst refugee populations but hold no formal affiliations with organizations that have mandate over or association with refugee affairs in designated refugee settings.

Temporal restrictions posed by the issuance of entry permits in formally designated refugee settings warrants the consultation of non-traditional ethnographies. The social scientific community should consider this an impactive structural issue that shapes the nature of ethnographic research in refugee camps amongst their residents.

*Communication Research in Refugee Settings*

Taking into account some of the structural restrictions of ethnographic research in refugee camps, officiating organizations tasked with conducting studies in refugee settings such as the UNHCR, UNAIDS, UNICEF as well as governing bodies of host nations, should consider addressing research gaps on refugee populations. Where communication research is concerned, studies should focus on the activities within refugee camps.

Ecological models of communication should be considered more rigorously to locate and analyze situational and contextual sense-making communication processes
amongst refugee populations. In particular these studies should seek to examine how multiple forms of communication interact with the sense-making processes, information needs and communication preferences of camp residents in comparison to their communicative practices.

They should also seek to examine channels and manifestations of power amongst refugees and the various formal and informal structures within the camp to better understand how these entities interact [or not] to impact communication flows as well as access to media and information. Such studies could potentially lend to the body of knowledge regarding how situational contexts associated with refugee status and residence in refugee camps dictate the range of communication entities that refugee populations engage.

This study demonstrates that perceived loss of self-identity and perceptions of marginality interact with, resources scarcity and uncertainty thus resulting in refugee flight from designated settings. Future research should seek to examine male refugee sense-making to determine how the situated circumstances prevent or delimit the enactment of traditional roles and norms which may define or comprise selfhood perceptions and sociocultural identity. In this instance, factors such as acculturation can be explored to better understand how the cultures of the ethnic populations in the host nation impact refugees who move between the camp environment and that of the host community.
Reframing the Discourse on Male Refugees

Although not wholly exhaustive, the literature review conducted for this study availed an abundance of work about male refugees within the context of psychological traumas, sexual and gender-based violence, as well as studies that draw comparisons between the KAP of refugees and host communities with regard to HIV. Overall, where male refugees were mentioned, official studies focus on the dynamics of empowerment and disempowerment as these phenomena pertain to gender constructs, culture and their impact on female (Peacock et al., 2009) refugees. This is also reflected through the larger body of literature which examines the interplay between gender and HIV in Africa (Peacock et al., 2009).

Future research should concentrate specifically on factors that allude to the lack of agency and disempowerment experienced by male refugees in refugee settings. A refocusing of the lens through which gender relations and gender roles are enacted in refugee settings should be examined thoroughly to unveil the confluence of sense-making, disempowerment, culture and gender.

There is a need for research that specifically focuses on the state of male refugees’ KAP regarding MCP, HIV and AIDS in nations where MCP are drivers in HIV incidence. This research should consider how experiences in host nations shape disempowering circumstances such as uncertainty, perceived loss of self-identity, resource inadequacy, and perceptions of marginality. These studies should examine how such factors bear upon mobility, risky behavior, health-seeking behavior as well as interpersonal and intergroup communication for male refugees. The findings can fuel
formative studies to guide national and programmatic policies as well as health
communication practice.

The Policy Environment and Communication for Refugee Populations

This study has evidenced that Namibia’s national policies on HIV and AIDS
prevention and treatment include language that acknowledges the need to serve and
engage refugee populations. The Namibian government also provides refugees with
medical care for the treatment and management of HIV and AIDS (UNHCR 2006). This
includes free ART’s (UNHCR/WFP 2008) as well as counseling services in clinical
institutions nationwide (Republic of Namibia 2007).

Although refugee populations are acknowledged and served through Namibia’s
national policies on the prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS, the same cannot be
said for information and communication policies which structure the agendas for
addressing HIV and AIDS prevention throughout the country. With regard to the policies
that mandate Namibia’s national MCP SBCC campaign there is a lack of coordination
between Namibia’s National Policy on HIV/AIDS (2007) and the Broadcasting Policy for
the Republic of Namibia (2009) as it pertains to the inclusion and targeting of refugee
populations in MCP campaign frameworks. This is alarming as research indicates that
refugees may be vulnerable to social sexual networks, poverty and mobility which are
known drivers of the uptake of MCP in Namibia.

There is no existing policy documentation that indicates that refugees are
researched for inclusion in Namibia’s national MCP SBCC campaigns. In addition there
is no coordination between Namibia’s national MCP SBCC campaign and Osire’s
existing health campaigns (see Appendix R, S, T). The same proactive responses which avail HIV and AIDS medical care to Namibia’s refugees should be invested in SBCC for this population. Therefore refugee populations should be included in the Namibia’s MCP SBCC campaign frameworks and jurisdictional issues between the Namibian government and the UNHCR should be revised to enable the coordination of these efforts.

*Health Communication Practice and Refugees in Namibia*

Refugees’ communication preferences should be thoroughly understood for their utility in facilitating their information, socialization and economic needs as these phenomena were the most salient grounds for refugee mobility amongst participants in this study. The information needs of refugees may transcend what they can access or what is being provided to them by implementing and administrative organizations thus refugees may rely on social networks for compensatory information.

This study demonstrates that refugee social networks form the most important aspect of their communicative ecology. Social networks serve as information stores and transmitters and are known to be inherently communicative. Refugee social networks must be explored for their communicative role, especially as with regard to the diffusion of information. Official assessments of communicative entities within refugee camps and amongst refugee communities are imperative, including communication asset and communication sense-making audits.

*ICT’s and the Communicative Ecology of Refugees*

Study findings also indicate that cellular telephones and social media were particularly useful and important to the participants’ information and communication
needs. The communication preferences and need of refugee populations may be efficiently and effectively satisfied by various forms of information technology such as cellular telephones and the Internet. Communication programs may aim to employ wireless and mobile communication viral campaigns that can be accessed by refugees via mobile devices or the Internet. These technologies may also be used for information campaigns similar to those in South Africa that transmit daily text messages via cellular telephones to remind HIV infected persons to upkeep their daily ARV regimens\textsuperscript{iv}. 

Formal programs, which avail training on the use of mobile and Internet driven communications may serve refugee populations and the interests of host nations as it pertains to the circulation of information. For instance the use of Twitter and dedicated linguistically tailored Facebook pages may serve to field inquiries, assess refugees preferences through polls, disseminate information about refugee-status related interviews, vaccinations, and the distribution of other essential tangible and information resources.

*Health Communication Practice and Positive Reinforcement*

Findings in this study suggest the importance of family in the future orientations of the participants. The objectives of communication campaigns for refugee populations may supported by employing family as the basis for positive reinforcement and the actualization of behaviors which ensure health.

Furthermore this study revealed that uncertainty, the perceived loss of self-identity and perceptions of marginality were prominent factors that engaged participants’ sense-making, influenced their communication preferences and encouraged their uptake
of mobility. Campaigns should specifically address the complexities associated with these issues as they pertain to an improved future for refugee populations.

Positive appeals to refugee future orientations may serve these ends. The pro-social communication initiatives deployed within host nations should be designed to enable refugees to provide direct input and fundamental participation toward the development and implementation of health communication campaigns. Creative methods for the inclusion of future orientation narratives may be employed to construct positive appeals that resound with the aspirations and sensibilities of refugee populations. Such messages can reinforce notions of stability, celebrate and recognize the importance of familial and social relations and encourage the uptake and maintenance of socially desirable behaviors.
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APPENDIX A: Geographical Map of Namibia and Surrounding Countries
APPENDIX B: Geographical Map of Namibia Indicating Osire
APPENDIX C: Osire Refugee Camp Aerial Map Sketch

APPENDIX D: Semi-Structured Interview Transcript with Nawa Life Trust Representative

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW
[Female, E, Otjiwarongo, NAWA LIFE TRUST]
7 pages total

Interview duration: 21 minutes and 56 seconds- July 28, 2010, Otjiwarongo, Namibia

RES: indicates researcher
E: indicates participant

RES: “What is your, name, title and affiliation?”

E: “My name is [states first name and INAUDIBLE-surname] I am the regional Coordinator for Central –central meaning I am supervising for Omaruru, Grootfontein and Otjiwarongo. My task is actually to, I am the link bet the head office and the community action forum which is the volunteers actually working within the communities (stated above).”

RES: “and the name of your organization…”

E: “Is Nawa life trust...Nawa Life trust is an organization…we are actually… it is the human center of communication...we are giving prevention methods-prevention messages through IPC interpersonal communication where we are going out to the groups to tell them about prevention, how you can prevent yourself, if you are looking for treatment, and also the one thing is we don’t deliver services we only create demand for the services.”

RES: “In terms of some of the communication that Nawa Life Trust has developed for this area or the areas that you are responsible for, what are they, are they specific campaigns, what are the names of the campaigns and what is the purpose of the campaigns?”

E: “We are in 3 campaigns (INAUDIBLE-ethnic name) It’s the break the chain campaign, where we are working on things like Who are you connected to? Who is he connecting to and Who is she connected to? And ….break the chain our audiences are cohabiting and single and married people from 15 to 25 years and older and then we are having the one on testing which is strong men get tested.”
That one is mostly targeting men because we are having the problem with men going for the test. And then we are having the latest one that we launched next month which is the alcohol one, where stand up for alcohol problems and so on and it is because most of the research in the beginning, when we did the assessments it was like the alcohol is the main problem that they’re having and from the alcohol problem is when people are having unprotected sex after having their drink and it’s from there that the campaign and the break the chain... when they send out that having more than one sexual partner the infection rate is a bit higher and that is how it was launched.

RES: So what exactly is used to communicate these messages to people is it like strictly interpersonal communication is it posters, is it pamphlets…

E: We are actually having a lot of ways to communicate...we are having mass media where it is coming out in TV in newspapers in radio and so and then we are having the MCP activation promotion it is also—it is not a strict target group but this one we are doing with people that are coming by and then you just tell them about the sexual network and if they understand what is the sexual network. And also we are asking them what can be the risk when you are in a certain sexual network and what can you do as a person where the reduction is coming in with using of the partners and so on... And then we have the interpersonal tools… with the interpersonal tools we are having the flannelgram, the Philip Wetu which is the film and then we have the picture codes. With all these tools we are going to a group, with people that are...because usually we (INAUDIBLE) in 2006 we were doing awareness giving but as of 2010 we STARTED WITH behavior change communication. So what we are doing is we go to a fixed group like a choir or a group of people that are meeting several times and then we go back with the same tools like with the flannelgrams we go back because we want people to may be listen and then go to their office and think about it what can he or the person personally what can he do with the information that this person got and then the person will come back for the next session like in the next week or the next day so what we are doing is the person will have like 4 sessions that well be part of and then after all the 4 sessions mostly with the film we ask them as a community or as a group of people that have watched these things, what do you think, what can you do, what can you do within your community you know, you say, these are questions that are following up, you ask them if these things that they saw is happening in their community and they will may be say “yeah, yes it’s happening”, and yeah and you ask them now we saw what is happening and we are saying it’s happening in our community, what are we going to do now. So that’s how we follow up, and we are having 3 interpersonal tools that we are using Where they have to see there are [INAUDIBLE: 4 times coming back to see? ] b/c it’s divided into sections like 1-2-3 and 4 and then with the last session we always ask them we saw all these things that are happening now, what do we think...what can we do from here?”
RES: “What are some of the other implementing organizations that you work with, that you may collaborate with, Nawa Life Trust?”

E: “I should say New Start. New Start is mostly, we are also referring people to new start we are also having now the ARV clinics but usually we’ve been in Omaruru… I think for the assessment we collaborated with New Start and it worked very well…b/c we were doing the activation, the promotions now, now with the promotions what we are doing is we would explain to the people the sexual networks, and then from the there we ask the person what can be the risk and they tell us the risk and then you will and them what can you do now and then will say “No I will go for a test…” and then we ask them” if the test was here now would you test yourself”? And then the person will say “yes” and then you just tell the person, “ no the test is just next door or just behind the wall” and the people will just be tested and its working very well b/c that time we give the person the information and then person is using the services also b/c with collaboration I think it works very well and that’s why I would like us all to… because we are all fighting for a common cause so it’s better to work together then to duplicate things…I came and tell the people these thing and then my ‘nother partner comes and he also tell the people these things…also it’s like the information is getting boring to people. So it’s better we do it together, they get the information at the same time and the services at the same time. I think that's what works very well…”

RES: “So is it only New Start that you are collaborating with or that you work with in some capacity or it is other organizations?”

E: ‘Up to now I should say we also worked with red cross in Grootfontein, up to now within my sites that I supervise I should say it’s only news start and the red cross.”

RES: “In terms of research that maybe you’ve been involved with or that you know that Nawa Life Trust has done, regarding MCP who is the target of this research, like who are you researching primarily?”

E: “It’s actually people who are cohabiting meaning people that have lived together for a very long time without getting married and then of course this person...they say they get tired of this person and they go and look for another partner [interruption-phone rings-phone is answered]…and then we are having married couples men who are married and women who are married, but mostly with married couples they don’t see the risk. Because a woman would think I am married, I’m at home, the man will bring the salary for me but then she don’t know the risk that is involved when her husband is having another
girlfriend…And it’s also not only with HIV it also gets social because if a man is having another girlfriend he has to also give the girlfriend something because she has to be supported financially and she also wants him to be there the time that it is may be not possible for him to be there, she will demand for him to be there and those things will also bring friction now into the relationship and those other things that we are having…”

RES: “So In terms of your research …the people that are being researched in terms of gender is it male or female, and in terms of ethnicity, what are the ethnicities and in terms of nationality is it limited to Namibian citizens?”

E: “I should say our research is not limited to any, because our programs are theme based. Like the break the chain it’s people cohabiting singles and married ages 15-25 and older. And with alcohol it’s again men, it’s also male and female ages 15 and older with strong men get tested it again male ages 15 to older. So again we are working with themes and again everything is having its own target audiences.”

RES: “So how about the languages that some of the communication are available in are their different languages or what are some of the languages that some of the communication are available in and maybe if there is research what are some of the languages that the fieldworkers or may be the researchers what languages are they speaking and using to do the research.”

E: “Usually when we are getting into a community we find from the community which language would be more appropriate to use when we are having a community meeting, what languages we should use. Then we make those people available who will be translating and things like that so we make our IEC materials also if ..b/c there is the office in Rundu, so we translate our IEC materials also to the languages that we are operating in. If there are Oshiwambo then Oshiwambo material will be there if it’s … Actually we don’t have Damara-Nama but usually the Damara-Nama speaking people they understanding Afrikaans so we will translate the things to Afrikaans and they will use the Afrikaans version. Then the others will be like Oshiwambo, Rukwangali, Kavango, and so on…yeah and Otjiherero…”

RES: “So like here in Otjiwarongo, what languages would researchers use to facilitate the research?”

E: “Actually we are diverse and the thing is you will use Otjiherero, you will use Oshiwambo you will use Damara-Nama, you will use Afrikaans or English because we are diverse.”
RES: “In terms of the refugee population that is here in Ojtiwarongo, some of them speak English, some of them speak Portuguese some of them speak Lingala some of them even have even learned some Namibian language because they have been here for a while…Are there any interactions in terms of the research with refugee populations?”

E: “Not actually because the thing is we don’t, we don’t, that is why I said we are not limited to a certain group, we are not limited to Namibians we are not limited to whoever. But if it comes that, that certain person is part of a group where we are going to do our activities then definitely they will be part of it. And I think in Rehoboth there is a place where refugees are staying and our people are also having activities with them. So we are really not limited we just give out the messages to anybody who is saying this person can be [INAUDIBLE] campaign that we have been working on… So be a Zambian, being an Angolian, you are also a person like a Namibian and things can happen the same things can happen to you can also happen to a Namibian because you are also part of Namibia now as you are in Namibia.”

RES: “You said in Rehoboth there are a place where there are refugees, they are living there?”

E: ‘Yes they are living there…’

RES: “A lot?”

E: “Like a camp, I don’t know if it’s like a camp but it’s like block –E and those things there…so there is a certain place where I think it’s the Zimbabweans, I am not so sure but I think it is the Zambian’s or the Zimbabweans…And our people are also [INAUDIBLE] with the people there.”

RES: “And there they speak English, both of those groups?”

E: “Yeah”

RES: “So translation wouldn’t be an issue”

E: “Yeah”

RES: “So in terms of past research has any research been done in like some of the languages like Portuguese or Lingala or Swahili like the facilitation of the research?”

E: “The thing is like the tools that we are using, they is also used in other countries so I think that’s where they are doing the translation because I think that is where
they are doing the translations because here the people usually that we are having even if they are from another country they will be speaking of English so then even if we are having someone else from another country then we will use English but the same tools that we are using are used in other countries like Botswana and South Africa so usually I think the translations are done by their people.”

RES: “Do you know of any communities locally like here in Otjiwarongo where people are not speaking English?”

E: “There can be, but are very few, there can be...like older people, I should say older people, they will have a problem with English, but mostly people from the 90’s, 2000’s ... not really but also with our volunteers we have the diverse we will have the Kavango, we will have the Herero, We we’ll have the Oshiwambo, We will have the Damara-Nama, We will have the Shumbundu. we’ll have a diverse not like focused on one tribe, they are coming from different…”

RES: “Any volunteers speaking non- Namibian languages?”

E: “Yeah I’ve got one, in Grootfontein, she’s actually all the languages…all Namibian languages including Portuguese, she’s talking everything.”

RES: “So she speaks all the Namibian languages and Portuguese”

E: “Yeah”

RES: “You guys don’t necessarily do outreach for services or anything like that?”

E: “No we just create demand for the services that are there. We will tell people if you want to be tested where you must go where you should go and so on, if you are HIV positive and you want treatment where you should go. Those are the things, We just create demand for services that are there we don’t provide services.”

RES: “So there’s no specific communications or programs geared toward any refugee populations her in Namibia or the community?”

E: “I can’t tell you that surely not that I know of because of I think these things usually for the refugees are done only by the Ministry of Education, and then if there are problems then they will collaborate may be with Health and then they will do it with [INAUDIBLE] . But mostly when we are having the health days and so on then they are usually brought down from Osire because they are staying in Osire so they are brought down from Osire if we are having activities like
health activities, independence whatever, they take them and brought them down.”

RES: “So they have what you said are health days?”

E: “Like TB Day, Like world AIDS day, Malaria Day, Like Cancer Day.”

RES: “So like the official UN Days?”

E: “Yeah they are brought down to Otjiwarongo or wherever the things are in Otjozondjupa...If thing is in Grootfontein they will be brought there, if it is Otjiwarongo they will brought people, if it’s in Tsumkwe they will take them there if it’s in Otavi they will be brought there.”

RES: “Do you know if…you might know, the people that they do bring from the refugee camp are they a certain age or is it just anybody who wants to come?”

E: “No anybody who wants to come. Because they are usually taking part of the Government [INAUDIBLE] like a big part and they will go and so whoever wants to come they will go.”

RES: “O.K. I think pretty much…”

E: “No they are really part of Namibia, I think, because they are usually brought down when we have the national events they are always brought down to wherever the event is taking place. That’s what they usually do…We don’t have any problems that are dealing with them like fixed but when we have the National events then all the organizations are coming together all the stakeholder and then they are brought down.”

RES: “I think that is it for now, Thanks, o.k., thanks for the interview”
APPENDIX E: Model for an Ecology of Communication
APPENDIX F: An Ecological Model of the Communication Process
APPENDIX G: Photo of Participant Sketching a Participant Map
APPENDIX H: Photo of Participant Mapping Interview
APPENDIX I: Participant Map Example
A determination has been made that the following research study is exempt from IRB review because it involves:

Category 2. research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior

Project Title: Assessing the Communicative Ecology of Male Refugees in Namibia: A Study to Guide Health Communication Interventions on Multiple and Concurrent Sexual Partnerships

Primary Investigator: Nadia Mariah Mathias

Co-Investigator(s):

Advisor: Rafael Obregon

Department: Communication and Development Studies

Robin Stack, CIP, Human Subjects Research Coordinator
Office of Research Compliance

Date: 07/29/10

The approval remains in effect provided the study is conducted exactly as described in your application for review. Any additions or modifications to the project must be approved (as an amendment) prior to implementation.
APPENDIX K: Permit to Enter Osire Refugee Camp

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

THE HOLDER
MR/MRS/M/S/DR/PROF. Notia Marish Nathias

Is granted permission to visit Osire Refugee Camp, For the period commencing
1 August 2019 and ending 31 August 2019.

Remarks: To visit friends in Osire

Commissioner for Refugees as contemplated in Section 6 of the Namibian Refugee Recognition and Control Act No. 2 of 1999.

Note: This document is to be submitted to the Camp Administrator on arrival at Osire.

Date: 
Time: 

This document is only applicable within Osire Refugee Camp or any other identified protection center.

Commissioner for Refugees' signature

MEMORANDUM

It is hereby certified that this is a true copy of its original document and that there is no information that attaches has been altered by any unauthorized person.

1 Aug 2019
8/4/2010

John Sereda is also sort of an agency, he is also an interpreter. He has been in care for 12 years and now lives in Kinshasa. He is disabled. He speaks English, Portuguese, Kiswahili, Lingala and French. He used to work in the Health Center in Ouvina and he also worked on the ADR Newsletter, doing illustrations. He told me that the services as well as information in the health clinic are either unused or underutilized by refugees b/c of stigma associated with HIV and AIDS. He explained that many of the employees at the clinic are refugees. He says that the employees working at the health clinic engage in gossip and disclose the HIV status and health conditions of the refugees that present at the services at the health clinic. He says that people don't like to go there even when they have problems which require
APPENDIX M: Field Notes Example [PART 2]

medical care. Also be said that as a procedural standard, when patients visit the health clinic they're complaints of sickness and pain are met with the administration of an HIV exam. "In this way the results are received by the workers/employees in Osire and the results are known by them even before patients get to know the results." He explained that one might be employed in the hospital/health center and disclose on individual health status or HIV status to family members in the refugee community causing the spread of gossip throughout the camp.

TC explained that official estimates of the number of refugees residing in Osire are actually underestimated. This need to be confirmed though. He said that there are around 8,000 more than 6,000 refugees residing in the camp. He also explained that refugees are key as individuals may seek to sell their problems and concerns to. Need to find out...
APPENDIX N: Field Notes Example [PART 3]

2/5/10 (DEC Day #1)

A very productive day today of really conducted 3 interviews in DEC.
All very mapping but nevertheless they were helpful B.C. they illuminate some issues, key points and connected some notions that I have. I can start building up some theories.
I will use mapping exercises mostly in Osiri (for now I think).
The 3 interviews, all spontaneous, the first a group interview with 4 very reluctant generic refugees from Angola. The second a quick interview with a Nubian woman, a 21-year-old Damara lady and finally an interview with an elderly male refugee from Angola who functioned as
Dear Asylum Seekers / Refugees:

When it is the time to write an editorial, the writer always has to look at what is happening around. That is, important and relevant issues be(th)ing other people must be apprised of. That is our custom at the Voice of Refugees when we want to release our quarterly newsletters.

We all know which events made head lines last year, in Namibia with regards to refugees/asylum seekers’ matters; be they good or bad. The questions, however, remain in each one of us: what will this year—2007—be like? Will it be different from 2006? Or the authorities will continue chasing their slogans on three durable solutions to please the International Community as they are used to? Or the endless violation of refugee rights?

The year 2007 started with the coming to Dateen Refugee Camp of the UNHCR/Namibia Senior Protection Officer and the election of the Camp Committee. In the mind of Asylum Seekers/Refugees, ‘Protection Officer’ means, in some way a ‘relief to their problems’. But this is not the case with the UNHCR/Namibia Protection Officer. In this Camp the Protection Officer’s presence means ‘the intimidating officer’s presence’. Dear Asylum seekers/Refugees, don’t you think that it is high time to demand all evil things that the predators said to have primarily been sent to help but to be cut advocates but have with the complicity of other authorities in this country, turned out to be enemies?

You witnessed what went on in this year’s elections. (Continued on Page 13)
APPENDIX P: Photo of Participant Mapping Interview with My Son
APPENDIX Q: Examples of ‘Future Orientations’ Concept Coding
APPENDIX R: HIV Messaging on Billboard in Osire
APPENDIX S: Namibian National MCP SBCC Campaign Material ‘Break the Chain’
APPENDIX T: ‘Break the Chain’ Materials Translated in the Otjiherero Language
ENDNOTES

i ‘Future Orientations’ conceptualizes an area of the study findings however the name of this categorical concept was initially vocalized by Dr. Karen Greiner during a discussion of these findings.


iii The Silozi people inhabit the Caprivi strip where Namibia’s greatest HIV prevalence is evidenced to date (UNAIDS 2010, online). Caprivi borders Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

iv Irregular Migrants are considered mobile populations who either bypass or fail to comply with emigration regulations in their country of origin as well as the inability or failure to meet immigration requirements within their destinations with respect to employment, entry, residence and the duration of visitation (IOM 2010, Koser 2005; Lackzo and Matilla 2004).

v See IOM/PHAMSA/PPR (nd) Corridors of Mobility: Mobility and HIV vulnerability factors in four sites along transport corridors in Namibia. International Organization for Migration.


viii According to Amnesty International, internally displaced persons who seek refuge due to fear of persecution, environmental catastrophe and civil conflict are not regarded as refugees. See the Amnesty International web page on refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons Accessed June 6, 2010 from https://www.amnesty.org/en/refugees-and-migrants


xi Estimates vary from official sources ranging from as low as 6,500 refugee residents

xii Official estimates of HIV prevalence within the entire refugee population in Namibia are unavailable within formal sources.

xiii Internal migration is characterized by the temporary or permanent movement of individuals and groups within a country (IOM 2010)

xiv Urban refugees are defined as refugee populations residing in and around urban environments without the benefits and protections afforded to them by the UNHCR (Dryden - Petersen, 2006)

xv The most proximate town to Osire Refugee camp is the town center of the Otjiwarongo district, which is approximately 140 kilometers from the refugee camp (UNHCR/WFP, 2006), while Namibia’s capital city, Windhoek is approximately 240 kilometers from Osire (UNHCR, 2008).

xvi See UNHCR 2006, IOM 2010

xvii Since 2006, when MCP was initially addressed through national campaigns in Namibia, refugee populations have remained absent from their frameworks.


xix This is evidenced through the variety of linguistic and cultural representations employed via communication materials. However, aside from the English, languages spoken by refugee populations have not been incorporated into the design of messages and communication materials.

xx These languages are not native to the majority of members comprising refugee populations.
Flannelgrams are used to engage community workshop participants in story telling around MCP issues.

This has been determined via a review of the current campaign materials, activities and communicative methods comprising the ‘One Love’ Campaign as well as Namibia’s national award winning ‘Break the Chain’ Campaign. See the ‘Break the Chain’ campaign, [accessed online August 25, 2010 : http://www.ehubonline.org/7842/] as well as the Desert Soul ‘One Love’ Campaign [accessed online May 29, 2010: http://www.onelovesouthernafrica.org/index.php/countries/namibia/]


According to Pfuhl & Henry (1993 as cited in Althiede 1995), The effective environment comprises experiential and attributive meaning that social actors assign to their physical and social environment.

See online resource http://davis.foulger.info/research/unifiedModelOfCommunication.htm Accessed 7/30/2010

Communicative ecology is situated within the socio-ecological realm.


See the description of the constant comparative method in See Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L.


see Goldhaber and Krivonos 1977

see Jeffries 2008

The go-along is referred to as an experience as this paper recognizes the experiential constituents of the go-along for both ethnographers and participants as symbiotic and reflexive vehicles for learning

The guesthouses function as sites for socialization amongst nationals hailing from the respective countries of origin of the owners of the establishments. Some guesthouses in Windhoek North and Windhoek West cater to Angolan nationals while others cater to Congolese nationals. Usually these establishments function as bars and restaurants. They may also accommodate traders, transients and transactional sex workers.

Windhoek North and Windhoek west are the most proximate neighborhoods to the down town Central Business District in the City of Windhoek. These locales are both inhabited and traversed by members of the Angolan and Congolese refugee communities as well as former refugees and permanent residents who hail from these countries.

I was not prepared for several instances that turned out to avail interview data, these occasions were unexpected and impromptu opportunities

I only required his assistance when I engaged in conversation with Portuguese-speaking persons or if I required translation of signage in Owire that communicated in Portuguese.

Refugees who are camp-based but uptake in regular travel outside of the refugee camp.

I am positive that I actually engaged in unstructured interviews with more than 39 participants however I have recorded the interactions with only 39 participants.


Referencing Husserl’s explication of the given, latent, conscious, subconscious, physical and intangible aspects comprising and guiding one’s reality and sensibilities. See, The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology, 1936

My husband and I were unwed until our marriage in July 2010.

Ugali is maize meal that is cooked to the consistency or mashed potatoes a hardened, sliceable cake. It is a major food staple for people from Kiswahili-speaking East African nations. It accompanies practically all meals after breakfast. Ugali is also similar to Fou-Fou although Fou-Fou, in this case is the name that nationals from the Congo use when referring to this prepared food staple.

Baluba or Luba is the ethnic group in Congo that my husband hails from. The phrase simply means Baluba Child

Sakuma wiki and rabe are collard greens which is not a staple food in Namibia, however they are common in places where many refugees originate. Refugees grew collard greens throughout the refugee camp as this was the most common and flourishing vegetable source within the camp.
When women had to queue for any reason, I was asked to come along and queue with them... It became normal and I expected this whenever I was with women. I would also hold their place while they did other things. This was especially the case during the week of benefits and rations verification in Osire Refugee Camp.

This was really a time for bonding with the wives, sisters and female relatives of the males that I interviewed. Most of the times women and small children would gather water at the pumps although men would occasionally be there. Sometimes this would take almost 45 minutes because we would stay at the pumps and help other women collect water while talking with them.

Hollywood is a section within the refugee camp that was formed by young men who love what they call “action-packed”, feature length American films. The youth congregate near a Hollywood sign and perform rap music routines and socialize with ‘girl’ that pass by.

For some reason, people deemed it important almost and as it seemed, compulsory to show me their pit latrines. This was the case in Osire and Otjiwarongo. In some cases in Katutura, Windhoek a few research participants made reference to the fact that theirs was the sort of toilet that I did not know when they directed me to it.

On at least four occasions I had been asked by individuals to accompany them to see what would happen during a verbal confrontation. I had the feeling that I was there as an extra set of eyes or to ensure that people would not lie or misbehave. I also believe that people took me along to prove that they were honest and that others were dishonest. Additionally, I would be asked by others about what had happened. In this way I was ensuring that the accounts of the confrontations were true.

Several people handed me their telephones so that I could converse with whoever was on the line. They often called people and then informed people that they would speak to me and that I was Tshikuna’s wife.

Kwassa Kwassa refers to a Congolese music genre and in this case it also refers to the musician that performs it.

Somo Trop is a Lingala phrase which means it is over my head, out of my hands or not in my control based on various descriptions that were provided to me.

Solola Bien is a Lingala phrase that means say good things or speak nicely.

Um, Dois, Três means 1, 2, 3 in Portuguese.

Ahlan wa Salahn is a greeting for welcoming and warming the presence of people that you meet in Arabic. I used this with the Elders that I communicated with at the Osire Masjid, per their instruction or with the few Arabic-speaking Sudanese inhabitants in Osire.

Hakuna wasi wasi is a Kiswahili phrase that translates to ‘no worries’ in English.

Salama Salamini translates to “I am in a complete state of peace” in Kiswahili.

‘Droit chemin’ means the right way or the right path according to Congolese people that I used the phrase with.

In some ways I saw this narrative as a means for blaming and rationalizing the fragmentation of families within refugee communities. It appeared that the story conveyed that women are the cause of broken homes and the loss of familial linkages amongst refugees and that women are irrational.

Refugees commonly used the word kick to refer to repatriation.

In this case bridging social capital was most evident whereby the participant was a valuable intermediary between his respective ethnic community and nationals from the host community. See Halpern, D. (2005). Social Capital. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Formal communication activities appear to impact upon overall communication activities and experiences. This is due to the fact that implementing and administrative organizations communicate to residents based on organizational events and requirements. This particular August was said be “typical” because of the ration card distribution event, which generates an influx or urban refugees who seek their benefits.

Refugees commonly used the word kick to refer to repatriation.
