

**The impact of Human Migrations on the Intangible Cultural Heritage Assets at the Area of  
Destination: a case study of Rwandan Refugees in Ngara, Tanzania .**

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Cultural heritage studies carried out in Tanzania have contributed towards our understanding of the existence , management, conservation and protection of various cultural heritage assets in the country. However, these studies have placed more emphasis on the tangible cultural heritage, while intangible cultural heritage has attracted relatively less attention, moreover, of the little that has been done on intangible heritage none has focused on how intangible cultural heritage can be impacted by mass migration, particularly refugees in the destination location. Using Rwandan refugees in Ngara District, Tanzania as a case study, this research aimed at examining the impact of human migrations on intangible cultural heritage assets at destination. It sought, first of all, to understand the geographical and cultural background of the study area and secondly to examine the refugee settlement and interactions with the host community. Based on the available information obtained through the qualitative approach which employed in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, documentary sources and non- participant observation methods, this study has come up with a number of the area are perpetuated through day-to-day undertakings of social situations and institutions. This exposes it to the influences of human migration. Secondly, ethnic conflicts in Rwanda were the source of a large number of Rwandans taking refugees in Ngara, Tanzania were with the assistance of relief agencies, the refugees were accommodated in temporary settlements and camps. The hardships experienced by refugees in the settlement and camp, together with various activities of refugees and the mere large number of their population, acted as catalysts towards the interactions between them and the host community of Ngara. These interactions paved way to the impact on the local host's intangible cultural heritage. Thirdly, the presence of refugees in Ngara district in the 1960s and 1990s led to some notable positive and negative effects. The positive effects manifested themselves in various domains such as the cultural values, skills connected to materials culture and religious beliefs and practices of the area. Although negative effects on the same domain have also been identified, according to this study, these do not compare with the positive effects. The study also

proposes a range of ways of managing and protecting the positive effects, as proposed by the local people. In conclusion, we note that rapid movement and settlement of a large number of migrants in one locality accompanied by interactions between these migrants and the host community fan the flames of change on the intangible cultural heritage of the host community. The change can be both positive and negative. Against this background, the study then recommends various means for managing and protecting the positive changes.