

**Returning to Rebuild: Forced Migration, Resource Transformation  
and Reintegration of Liberian Returnees from Ghana and Guinea**

By Jennifer Amanda Coffie, BA, MA

A thesis submitted to  
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Political Science  
Carleton University  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada



Library and Archives  
Canada

Published Heritage  
Branch

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque et  
Archives Canada

Direction du  
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file Votre référence*

*ISBN: 978-0-494-94527-8*

*Our file Notre référence*

*ISBN: 978-0-494-94527-8*

#### NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

#### AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

---

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

## **Abstract**

This dissertation is a comparative study of Liberian refugee returnees from Ghana and Guinea, their engagement in post-conflict peacebuilding and highlights their resource transformation experience. At the core of this inquiry are the issues of how the structures of forced migration interact with the refugee's agency to transform the resources of the refugee returnee and how the returnee's deployment of their resources towards their individual reintegration are connected to their country of origin's post-conflict peacebuilding activities. The study argues that the resource transformational experience of returnees is a result of the complex interplay between the structures of forced migration and the refugee's agency. Drawing on social constructivism's mutual constitution of structure and agents, the study highlights the various structures that refugees encounter as having different influences on different agents (refugees). It also provides a context within which to understand and examine how refugees as agents operate within structures of constraint and opportunity, which more or less likely leads to resource gains and losses. It further posits that returnees deployment of their resource towards their reintegration activities have direct links to peacebuilding which makes the returnees active participants and not passive beneficiaries of the process.

Using the 'most similar systems', the study specifically compares the transformations in resources of Liberian refugee returnees from Ghana and Guinea beginning from flight, exile and ending with returnee's reintegration after return. The violent displacement of Liberian refugees across West African countries led to major material, social, personal and cultural resource losses among the refugees. However, the asylum phase provided them with either opportunities or constraints that transformed their resources as well as the structures (conditions) of asylum. The study reveals that although Ghana and Guinea are similar economically, due to their different political and security situations, they provided starkly different conditions of asylum. These differences in asylum conditions coupled with the refugee factors such as their pre-flight resources and agency accounts for the comparatively less resource gained by the returnees who sought asylum in Guinea to those who were in Ghana. Subsequently, the different return and reintegration experience has also resulted in the transformation of the returnee's resources. Nonetheless, the study reveals that each group of refugees returned to Liberia transformed and with varied resources which have been very crucial in the returnees effort at rebuilding their individual lives, the aggregate results the current study suggests highlights their participation in Liberia's peacebuilding.

## **Acknowledgements**

In writing this dissertation, I benefitted immensely from the support, guidance and generosity of a number people and institutions and I wish to take this opportunity to sincerely thank them.

My first and foremost gratitude goes to Liberian refugee returnees who gave me permission to study their forced migration experiences, resource transformation and their lives back in Liberia. I am particularly indebted to the returnees who participated in this research for their selfless sacrifice of time, for openly sharing their experiences with me and for teaching me a great deal about courage, resilience, and strength.

My sincere thanks go to Professor Chris Brown, my supervisor, whose gentle yet poignant guidance gave profound meaning to my work. My doctoral research would not have been possible without his constant support, understanding, and reminders to move forward despite all personal challenges. His confidence in me as a student and researcher gave me the courage to persist with this work.

I am very grateful to my dissertation committee members: Dr. James Milner and Dr. Blair Rutherford. Since the early stages of my dissertation, Dr. Milner has challenged me to bring the best out of me as a researcher and to think about the potentials of the research to academia as well as for the participants. Professor Rutherford has been very generous with his time, edited the entire draft and provided me with constructive suggestions on how to get a better product.

I will also like to acknowledge my former lectures at both University of Ghana and Brock University who have all contributed to my current accomplishment in academia. From University of Ghana, my particular thanks to: Dr. Bofo-Arthur, Dr. Gyimah-Boadi, Dr. Takyiwaa Manu, Dr. Essuman-Johnson and Dr. Kwesi Yankah for their continuous support and encouragement. I do not have the words to express fully my thanks and gratitude to Dr. Pierre Lizee, Dr. Havina Dashwood, and Dr. Livianna Tossutti of the department of political science, Brock University. I am forever grateful for their warm welcome when I first arrived in Canada, to pursue my MA. They encouraged me to pursue my research interest and provided me support to overcome my initial home sickness. I cannot for a moment forget the late Professor Edward Prempeh, who was my academic adviser when I enrolled at Carleton University. His words of encouragement and motivation were invaluable to me during the early stages of my doctoral studies and stayed with me throughout the process of researching and writing this dissertation.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support and assistance of Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC), UNHCR-Monrovia and United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), all of which helped me to gain the trust of the Liberian returnees in communities in and around Monrovia and Voinjama. To Cllr. Wheatonia Dixon-Barnes of LRRRC and Col. Fuseni, 2008-2009 Commander of the Ghanaian Battalion of UNMIL, I thank you sincerely for hosting me and facilitating my field research work in Liberia.

I am blessed with a wonderful family whose love and support has guided me through my doctoral studies. I am forever grateful to my mum Elizabeth Davis for her endless love, generosity and unconditional support. Most importantly, mum thank you for introducing me to the first group of refugees and for teaching me the invaluable lesson of helping people overcome challenges. To my godfather, Mr. Harry Worwornyo thank you and I will forever be grateful for your unconditional love and believing in me capabilities. Moreover, I am very grateful to my dearest partner Andy, for been the source of energy and encouragement particularly during moments when I thought this project will not be completed.

I am grateful to my friends and colleagues June Payne, Darryl Ambroseman, Frank Ohenmeng and Levi Roberts for their support, friendship and encouragement throughout the process.

This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from Carleton Research Grant and the Ghana Education Trust Fund which provided financial support for my fieldwork to enable me complete my doctorate.

In the end, I am solely responsible for any shortcomings associated with this dissertation.

## **Abbreviations**

**AFL: Armed Forces of Liberia**

**AFRC: Armed Forces Revolutionary Council**

**AGDRA: Assemblies of God Development and Relief Agency**

**AHEAD: Agency for Holistic Evangelism and Development**

**AI: Amnesty International**

**ALCOP: All Liberia Coalition Party**

**ARC: American Refugee Committee**

**ASC: American Colonization Society**

**AU: African Union**

**BNC: Bureaux de Coordination des Refugies**

**BNCR: Bureau National de Coordination des Réfugiés**

**BTC: Barclay Training Center**

**BTC: Barclay Training Center**

**CCF: Christian Child Fund**

**CP: Comparative Politics**

**CPA: Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Sometimes referred to as Accra Peace Agreement)**

**CSA: Civil Service Agency**

**DAFI: German-funded Albert Einstein Academic Refugee Initiative**

**DDRR: Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration**

**ECOMOG: ECOWAS Monitoring Group**

**ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States**

**FADA: Foundation for African Development Aid**

**FIND: Foundation for International Dignity**

**GEMAP: Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program**

**VP: Voluntary repatriation**

**GRR: Global Refugee Regime**

**PSC: Peace and Security Council**

**R2P: Responsibility To Protect**

**CA: Constitutive Act of the African Union**

**GEMAP: Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program**

**GOG: Government of Ghana**

**GOL: Government of Liberia**

**GRB: Ghana Refugee Board**

**HC: High Commissioner**

**HRW: Human Rights Watch**

**ICGL: International Contact Group on Liberia**

**IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons**

**IGO: Inter-Governmental Organization**

**iGOL: interim Government of Liberia**

**ILO: International Labour Organization**

**IR: International Relations**

**IRC: International Rescue Committee**

**IGO: Inter Governmental Organizations**

**IRC: International Rescue Committee**

**IRCC: International Red Cross Commission**

**JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency**

**JPC: Catholic Justice and Peace Commission**

**LEAP: Liberia Employment Action Programme**

**LECBS: Liberia Emergency Capacity Building Support**

**LEEP: Liberia Employment Emergency Programme**

**Liberia Opportunity Industrialization Center (LOIC).**

**LNP: Liberian National Police**

**LPC: Liberian Peace Council**

**LPRS: Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy**

**LRRC: Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission**

**LTRC: Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission**

**LURD: Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy**

**MOU: Memorandum of Understanding**

**MPEA: Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs**

**MSFs: Médecins sans Frontières**

**NADMO: National Disaster Management Organization**

**NCDP: National Capacity Development Project**

**NGO: Non-Governmental Organization**

**NMP: National Mobilization Program**

**NPFL: National Patriotic Front of Liberia**

**NSAs: Non-State Actors**

**NTGL: National Transition Government of Liberia**

**OAU: Organization of African Unity**

**OSCE: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

**PRC: People's Redemption Council**

**RUF: Revolutionary United Front**

**TOKTEN: Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals**

**ULIMO-J: United Liberation Movement for Democracy**

**ULIMO-K: United Liberation Movement for Democracy**

**UNCIVPOL: UN Civil Police Components**

**UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

**UNMIL: United Nations Mission in Liberia**

**UNO: United Nations Organization**

**UNOMIL: United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia**

**PBC: UN Peace building Commission**

**UNPBF: United Nations Peace Building Fund**

**UNSG: United Nations Secretary-General**

**USCR: United States Committee for Refugees**

**USCRI: United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants**

**WFP: World Food Program**

**ZOA: Dutch Refugee Assistance**

## **List of Figures Maps and Tables**

<b>Figure 1.1.</b> Figure showing the constitutive relationship between structures and agents of forced migration and their impact on refugee returnees' resources.....	92
<b>Figure 1.2.</b> Study's Conceptual Framework.....	111
<b>Map 4.1.</b> Liberia: Counties, County Capitals and other Major Towns.....	135
<b>Map 5.1.</b> Refugee Camp locations in Ghana (2003).....	190
<b>Map 5.2.</b> Refugee Camp locations in Guinea.....	215
<b>Table 2.1.</b> World and African Refugees for Selected Years.....	25
<b>Table 3.1.</b> Designation of study's conception of asylum conditions.....	117
<b>Table 4.1.</b> Fighting Groups and Main Counties of Operation in Liberia.....	143
<b>Table 4.2.</b> Pre-War Age Profile of the Returnees.....	148
<b>Table 4.3.</b> Pre-War Employment Status of Returnees.....	150
<b>Table 4.4.</b> Pre-War Assets of Returnees.....	150
<b>Table 4.5.</b> Pre-War Marital Status of Returnees.....	151
<b>Table 4.6.</b> Pre-War Family Responsibilities of Returnees.....	152
<b>Table 4.7.</b> Pre-War Volunteering Activities of Returnees.....	152
<b>Table 4.8.</b> Pre-War Language Profile of Returnees.....	153
<b>Table 4.9.</b> Pre-War Occupational Skills of Returnees.....	154
<b>Table 4.10.</b> Pre-War Formal Education Status of Returnees.....	155
<b>Table 4.11.</b> Returnees Resources Losses before flight.....	156
<b>Table 4.12.</b> Returnees Resources at the Beginning of Flight and Arrival in Asylum.....	169
<b>Table 4.13.</b> Returnees Resource Losses during the Flight Phase.....	170

<b>Table 5.1.</b> Population of Liberian Refugees in Ghana and Guinea (1996-2004).....	212
<b>Table 5.2.</b> Returnees Occupational Activities in Asylum.....	244
<b>Table 5.3.</b> Returnees Sources of Returnees Income in Asylum.....	245
<b>Table 5.4.</b> Returnees Educational levels attained in Asylum.....	246
<b>Table 5.5.</b> Returnees Occupational Skills Acquired in Asylum.....	247
<b>Table 5.6.</b> Returnees Volunteer Activities in Asylum.....	250
<b>Table 5.7.</b> Other Forms of Social Resource of Returnee’s in Asylum.....	252
<b>Table 6.1.</b> Figures of Liberian Refugee Repatriation from Guinea: 2003-2010.....	272
<b>Table 6.2.</b> Figures of Liberian Refugee Repatriation from Ghana: 2004-2010.....	284
<b>Table 6.3.</b> Returnees Material Resources After Return.....	289
<b>Table 6.4.</b> Returnees Cultural Resources After Return.....	292
<b>Table 6.5.</b> Formal Education Level of Returnees After Return.....	295
<b>Table 6.6.</b> Number of Children under Returnee’s Care After Return.....	295
<b>Table 7.1.</b> Employment Profile of Returnees.....	295

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Abbreviations.....	iv
List of Figures, Maps and Tables.....	viii

### Chapter 1. Introduction to the Study

1.1.1. Background of the Problem .....	1
1.1.2. Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study .....	5
1.1.3. Research Objectives and Questions.....	12
1.1.4. Organization of the Study.....	15

### Chapter 2. Context of Study: Forced Migration and the Politics of Peacebuilding in Africa

2.0. Introduction .....	21
2.1. Structures of Forced Migration Central to the Study.....	22
2.1.1. Forced Migration in Africa: Causes and Scale.....	23
2.1.2 The 1951 Geneva Convention, the 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention.....	26
2.1.3. Rules and Norms for Protecting Refugee Rights in Africa.....	30
2.1.4. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Refugee Protection.....	35
2.1.5 African States and Provision of Asylum.....	41
2.1.6: Searching for Solutions for Forced Migration .....	46
2.2. Mapping Peacebuilding.....	54
2.2.1. Peacebuilding: Concept and Policy.....	55
2.2.2. Peacebuilding in Africa: Actors and Factors for Sustainable Peace.....	60
2.2.3 Refugee Returnees' Reintegration as a Challenge to Peacebuilding.....	66
2.2.4. Refugees' and Returnees' Reintegration Vital to Peacebuilding .....	69
2.3. Summary and Conclusion.....	72

### Chapter 3. Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

3.0. Introduction.....	76
3.1. Social Constructivist Framework.....	76
3.1.1. Norms as Social Structures.....	80
3.1.2. Social Actors.....	82
3.1.3. Agency of Social Actors.....	85
3.1.4. Deploying Structure's Double Impact.....	89
3.2. Conceptualizing Refugee Returnee Resource Transformation .....	93
3.2.1. Operationalization of Refugee/Returnee Resources.....	95
3.2.2. Conceptualizing links between Returnee Reintegration and Peacebuilding Experiences in Light of Returnee Resources .....	98
3.2.3. Hypotheses for the Study.....	103

3.2.4. Study's Conceptual Framework.....	107
3.3 Research Methodology.....	112
3.3.1. Choice of Research Method and Selection of Cases.....	112
3.3.2 Selection of Research Participants.....	118
3.3.3. Instrumentation.....	119
3.3.4. Data Collection .....	121
3.3.5. Archival Research.....	123
3.3.6. Data Analysis.....	124
3.3.7. Limitations of the Study.....	125
3.4. Summary and Conclusion.....	129
<b>Chapter 4. Leaving Liberia: War, Flight and Resource Losses</b>	
4.0. Introduction.....	131
4.1. The Liberian State and Violent Conflicts.....	134
4.1.1 Military Tyranny.....	138
4.1.2. 1989-2003 Civil War.....	141
4.1.3 Ending the Violence and the Cost of the War.....	144
4.2. Pre-Flight and Resource Profile of Returnees .....	147
4.2.1. Pre-War and Returnees Resources.....	147
4.2.2 Pre-Flight Resources Losses.....	155
4.3. Flight and Returnees Resource Transformation.....	158
4.3.1. Flight Testimonies of Returnees from Guinea.....	158
4.3.2 Flight Testimonies of Returnees from Ghana.....	162
4.3.3. Flight and Returnees Resource Transformation.....	166
4.4. Summary and Conclusion.....	172
<b>Chapter 5. Providing Asylum for Liberians in Ghana and Guinea</b>	
5.0. Introduction.....	177
5.1. Ghana and Provision of Asylum.....	179
5.1.1. Liberian Refugees in Ghana: Arrival, Settlement and Movement.....	181
5.1.2. Asylum Law and Policies.....	186
5.1.3. Ghana Refugee Board (GRB).....	191
5.1.4. UNHCR- Ghana.....	191
5.1.5 Refugee Status Determination and Issuance of Documents.....	193
5.1.6 Economic Conditions and Refugees' Livelihood.....	195
5.1.7. Provision of Services: Refugees' Access to Education and Health Care.....	198
5.1.8. Security Conditions and Refugee Protection.....	204
5.1.9. Official Views on Durable Solutions and Options for Liberian Refugees.....	207
5.2. Guinea and Provision of Asylum.....	210
5.2.1. Guinea's Response to the Liberian Refugee Crises.....	211
5.2.2. Asylum Law and Policies.....	217
5.2.3. The Bureau National de Coordination des Refugies .....	219
5.2.4. Status Determination and Issuance of Documents.....	220
5.2.5. Economic Conditions and Exile Livelihood Strategies.....	221
5.2.6. Provision of Services: Refugees' Access to Health and Education.....	224

5.2.7. Security Conditions and Refugee Protection.....	227
5.2.8. The UNHCR and Guinea.....	232
5.2.9. Official Views on Durable Solutions for Refugees.....	236
5.3. Asylum and Returnee Resource Transformation.....	239
5.3.1. Returnees Arrival Testimonies.....	239
5.3.2 Asylum and Transformation of Returnee Material Resources.....	242
5.3.3 Asylum and Transformation of Returnee Cultural Resources.....	245
5.3.4 Asylum and Transformation in Returnee Social Resources.....	250
5.4. Summary and Conclusion.....	255

**Chapter 6. Returning to Liberia: Structures of Repatriation, Refugee Agency and Resource Transformation**

6.0. Introduction.....	261
6.1. Repatriation of Liberian Refugees.....	263
6.1.1. The Accra CPA.....	265
6.1.2. Agreement on Refugees and Displaced Persons.....	265
6.1.3. The UNHCR Repatriation Program.....	266
6.1.4. Liberian Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission.....	269
6.2. Repatriation of Liberian Refugees from Guinea.....	270
6.2.1 Returnees Journey from Guinea to Liberia.....	274
6.3. Repatriation of Liberian Refugees from Ghana.....	278
6.3.1. Returnees Journey from Ghana to Liberia.....	284
6.4. Repatriation and Transformation of Returnee Resources.....	287
6.4.1 Returnees Material Resources.....	288
6.4.2 Returnees Personal Resources.....	290
6.4. 3. Returnees Cultural Resources.....	290
6.4.4. Returnees Social Resources.....	295
6.5. Summary and Conclusion.....	298

**Chapter 7. Returnees (Re) integration and Peacebuilding in Liberia**

7.0. Introduction.....	305
7.1. Peacebuilding in Liberia.....	306
7.2 International Organizations and Peacebuilding in Liberia.....	307
7.3. Reforming the Security Sector.....	309
7.3.1 Returnees Personal Resources and Domestic Security-Rebuilding.....	313
7.4. Economic Recovery.....	317
7.4.1 Returnees Material and Cultural Resources towards Economic Recovery.....	321
7.5. Good Governance and Political Institutions.....	329
7.5.1. Returnees Social Resources and Strengthening Good Governance.....	331
7.6. Seeking Justice and Reconciliation for Social Cohesion.....	336
7.6.1. Returnees as Agents for Social Change and Social Cohesion.....	340
7.7 Challenges of Returnees (Re) integration.....	343
7.7.1 High Unemployment.....	344
7.7.2. Access to Public Service: Education and Health Care.....	345
7.7.3. Housing and other Infrastructural Development.....	347

7.8. Summary and Conclusion.....348

**Chapter 8. Conclusion of Study**

8.0. Research Problem Revisited.....354  
8.1. Summary of Findings and Theoretical Implications.....355  
8.2. Policy Implications and Recommendations.....367  
8.3. Agenda for Future Research.....376

**Appendices**

**Appendix A:** Copy of Research Ethics Clearance Certificate.....380  
**Appendix B:** List of Liberian Government Department Participants in the study.....381  
**Appendix C:** List of International and Local NGOs Participants in the study.....381  
**Appendix D:** Standard Questionnaire Instrument for Returnees .....382  
**Appendix E:** Standard Consent Form for Interviews.....389  
**Appendix F.** Standard Letter of Information for Interviews.....390

**Bibliography**.....392



## **Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study**

### **1.1.1 Background of the Problem**

The return and reintegration of refugees have never been more important for the process of post-conflict peacebuilding than they are today. Throughout the World, almost every peace accord of the post-Cold War era testifies to this demand and expectation. The recognition is increasing that the return of forced migrants is not merely a humanitarian and socio-economic issue, but a political one that complements other activities designed to produce political, social, and economic stability in countries affected by war (see Chimni, 2002; Black, 2006; Koser, 2009). Specifically, the return of refugees is argued to be a major indicator of the peace at the end of the conflict. As observed by Fagen (2009:32), “finding a durable solution for displaced populations is a significant bellwether for the success of the overall peace process”. In an address to the UN Security Council, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2009) argued “the scale of return and success of reintegration are two of the most important tangible indicators of progress in any peacebuilding process” (as quoted in Koser, 2009).

This policy imperative is closely linked with the increase in the number of refugees who have returned to their home state in recent decades. The UNHCR estimates that between 1990 and 2010 about 12.5 million refugees returned to their countries of origin, either independently or as part of an organized program. For example, in 2007 -- of the past five years, the year with the highest repatriation numbers -- an estimated 734,000 refugees repatriated voluntarily. The main countries of return were Afghanistan (374,000), Sudan (130,700), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (60,000), Iraq (45,400), and Liberia (44,400) (UNHCR Statistical Year Book, June 2007).

Return may, moreover, be a solution to the challenges presented by protracted refugee situations in Africa and Asia (see Crisp, 2005; Loescher and Milner 2005; Loescher et al., 2008). As observed by Harrell-Bond (1989: 42), policy makers therefore regard repatriation as a durable solution to the refugee crisis; hence, there is a need to create favourable conditions for large scale return of refugees. Refugees themselves generally assume that most of them will, eventually, return to their own country or community (Allen and Mosink, 1994; Kibreab, 1999). These issues have brought returning refugees within the scope of political action, policy design and academic research. Refugee returnees' participation in the process is, however, often overlooked. They are rarely present during peace negotiations, and peacebuilding activities often marginalize them (Adelman, 2002; Fagen, 2009; Koser, 2009).

A goal of this study is to better understand how refugee returnees engage in the process of peacebuilding. Most political science – particularly, international relations (IR) -- discussion on forced migration and peacebuilding is of little help in this regard. The literature on the politics of peacebuilding in Africa as such has been limited in its discussion of the links between forced migration and the political process of peacebuilding (see Ali and Mathews, 2004; Keating and Knight, 2004; Furley and May, 2006; Francis, 2008). This scholarship is highly focused on the institutions of state, which regard local actors, such as returning refugees, as beneficiaries of the process of peacebuilding implemented by either the state or international governmental organizations (IGOs). To the extent that refugee returnees are considered at all, most of the literature assumes that refugees return because states and IGOs tell them to. Refugee returnees are therefore assumed to be reactionary, to have no agency when they return and limited

attention is paid to their reintegration as well as their engagement in rebuilding the community of return.

The state-centric and institutional bias approach, moreover, dictates that the return of refugees be considered a fulfillment of a policy requirement of peace agreements. From this point of view researchers have paid close attention to the numbers that arrive, because they are a barometer for both the successful return of refugees and an end of refugee crises, as well as a major step towards sustainable peacebuilding (Chimin, 2002, 2003, Essuman-Johnson, 2011). In addition, the practice among scholars of peacebuilding generally is to present refugees as a subsection for discussion within a book chapter or in an article that focuses on it. For example, a review of three major books on building peace in Africa -- *Durable Peace: Challenges for Peacebuilding in Africa*, *Building Sustainable Peace*, and *Ending Africa's War* -- emphasizes this assertion. The refugee issue does not have a single chapter dedicated to it, although chapters are dedicated to gender, former combatants, as well as to the various strategies of peacebuilding.

Similar to peace and conflict research, the forced migration literature emerging from international relations (IR) and policy discourses is largely shaped by the behaviour of states and IGOs in refugee situations. The result is the almost exclusive focus on understanding both states' and IGOs' responses in addressing the needs of mass influxes of displaced people (Jacobsen, 1996; Chimni, 1998; Milner, 2009). Efforts are then dedicated mostly to evaluating the design of state and IGO interventions (see, Dowty and Loescher 1996; Cohen and Deng 1998; Lischer, 2005; Finnermore and Barnett: 2004; Loescher et al, 2008; Cohen, 2009; Milner, 2009) and to the analysis of the implications of different asylum conditions for both the affected populations and the receiving communities and countries (see Kulman 1990; Kibreab 1990, 1996, Weiner

1992, 1996; Jacobsen 2002; Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006). Less often, these studies analyse in detail the refugees' experience of flight and return, and "few authors have attempted to investigate the experiences of the returnees themselves" (Cornish et al., 1999:265).

On the other hand, the relatively few attempts at addressing the return of refugees and peacebuilding have emphasized two main points. First, research on refugee returnees calls for a conceptualization of returning refugees as a complex movement of people that presents a number of challenges for the post-conflict state and the returnees. For example, a growing number of scholars researching peace and conflict, especially in Africa, have focused on refugees and returnees as "spoilers" whose activities are identified as sources for the internationalization or regionalization of the conflicts that produced them (Mills and Norton, 2002; Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006). Others have stressed that returning refugees may be seen as transferring the burden from the host state to the home state (Blitz, Sales and Marzano, 2005). They suggest that since most of the host states in the global south are themselves saddled with economic and developmental challenges, and the influx of refugees is considered a burden, returning them at the end of the conflict constitutes relief of a burden for the asylum country. These studies therefore conclude that for the home state, the return of thousands of refugees is sometimes perceived as a transfer of burden, because, along with its other challenges of rebuilding, it has to allocate scarce resources to the returnees' reintegration (Allen and Morsink, 1994; Black and Koser, 1999; North and Simmons, 2000; Stølen, 2007).

In contrast, others have observed that peacebuilding stands to benefit from the resources and skills of refugees after they return (Kibreab, 2002 and 2006; Petrin, 2002; Black, 2006). This still, however, leaves the following questions. First, how do returning refugees

acquire the resources? Second, how does the returnees' deployment of these resources towards their reintegration connect with the community and state peacebuilding agenda and, in effect, make them participants in the process? In any case, as observed by Blitz, Sales and Marzano (2005), there is little empirical evidence to substantiate this bold claim.

### **1.1.2. Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study**

This study recognizes the meaningful contributions of scholars towards an understanding of the links between forced migrants and post-conflict reconstruction. It is suggested, however, that further studies are equally needed to broaden existing knowledge of the connection between forced migration and peacebuilding. First, the study opines that IR scholarship on peacebuilding and forced migration has not adequately addressed issues of how refugee returnees effectively engage in peacebuilding. This shortfall leads to assumptions about refugee returnees as a burden or a challenge; as passive recipients of handouts, or beneficiaries of the process of peacebuilding (or both). This situation, the study contends, is due to the state centric and top-down approach that favours institutions and elite actors over locals in the policy and practice of peacebuilding, as well as in the provision and practices of asylum. Existing policies and research have not opened up spaces and opportunities to harness and promote effective participation of locals, including returnees, such as could lead to local ownership of the process: something advocated by both policy makers and practitioners and researchers (see Caplan, 2004; Chesterman, 2004; Chandler, 2004; Narten, 2008; Barnett and Zurcher, 2009).

The current policy and practice of peacebuilding, this study notes, turns refugee returnees into objects through a narrow focus on state institutions and IGOs. In such a

framework, refugee returnees are thus presented as passive, and as recipients of charity from the state or IGOs, rather than as active participants in their reintegration and in the socio-economic, political, and security transformation of their society. This notion is reinforced by forced migration research that often draws on concepts of loss, stress, and trauma to depict the refugees as traumatized and victimized, and as threats to national and regional security (Crisp 2003; Jamal, 2000; Merks, 2000). However, as Harrell-Bond (1999) argues, “the emphasis on the perception of refugees as weak, dependent and deficient has serious consequences, because it reinforces simplistic images of refugees as passive, vulnerable, and powerless, and, therefore, overlooks the complex socio-economic and political circumstances of their displacement” (p.150).

Second, the study suggests that existing approaches are narrow because they are limited to the time and space, within which return occurs, with a few extending to the life of the returnee in their country of origin. Peacebuilding literature in particular focuses on refugee return and reintegration, as if they occur in a vacuum, with no link to the other phases of the forced migration experience. Forced migration studies, on the other hand, are predominantly concerned with the flight and asylum phases of the refugee predicament. Thus, in addressing this shortfall, the study suggests that the need exists to adopt a comprehensive approach towards the question of the connection between forced migration and peacebuilding. This is to suggest that the analytical framework of the discourse has to incorporate returnee reintegration as an inseparable component of the entire forced migration experience, which is not independent of the flight and asylum experience. To comprehensively analyse this issue, the current study notes, it is first necessary to examine the forced migration experience as encompassing three phases (flight, exile

and return) and a transformation in returnees' resources as a result of their individual experiences. Integrating return and returnees' reintegration activities into the entire forced migration experience allows for a systematic analysis of the strategic relationship that exists among the structures (constraints and opportunities) as presented by each phase of the forced migration experience. Furthermore, it opens up spaces for a discussion of the agency of refugees, without undermining their motivations or initiatives, and for engagement of refugee returnees, which is instrumental in their individual and societal transformations.

The study notes, therefore, that this limitation is a feature of both IR scholarship and policy discourse on forced migration and post-conflict peacebuilding. Forced migration studies disregard the significance of the space (structures) of peacebuilding for understanding returning refugees' relationship with their country of origin,<sup>1</sup> and the peacebuilding literature includes surprisingly little work on refugee returnees as actors with agency. Thus, the study hopes to place refugee returnees in the political discourse on peacebuilding by bringing in refugees as agents: not to superimpose them on the structures of the state and the IGOs, but to demonstrate how they co-exist with these structures. Emphasizing refugee returnees and addressing state and IGO behaviour during forced migration and peacebuilding enable the study to transcend the refugee centric bias of forced migration studies (Chambers, 2008).

Furthermore, the study suggests that the experiences of forced migration are varied, not just because of the refugees involved, but also because the structures they encounter differ,

---

<sup>1</sup>For the few exceptions, see the *Refugee Survey Quarterly* (2009) Vol. 28 No. 1 Edition on "Displacement, Peace Processes and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding" for a collection of articles on the importance of addressing population displacement for sustainable peacebuilding.

leading to their adoption of different responses and strategies. This dissertation therefore contends that to transcend this limitation, research on refugees in general, and particularly on the engagement of returnees in peacebuilding activities, can adopt an analytical framework that recognizes the variations in the structures that refugees encounter. Second, it acknowledges that the strategic choices made by refugees can result in transformations that cannot be predicted by the researcher or assumed to be static.

Finally, the study opines that other studies' opposition to refugee returnees' possession of resources that could be deployed towards peacebuilding activities are valid inferences, but not representative of all refugee returnee situations in Africa. As rightly noted by Blitz, et al. (2005) very few empirical studies (mainly on economic migrants)<sup>2</sup> have been conducted, and the objection is based on assumptions. In view of the lack of data on the issue, these assumptions have been presented as symptomatic of refugee returnees, and to support assertions that returning refugees lack resources. It is, moreover, this kind of claim that presents the refugee as someone appearing at the borders of the asylum state without resources, and sustains the notion that they are a burden. However, as other studies (Jacobsen, 2002; Kibreab 2002, 2006) have shown, refugees arrive in asylum with resources that are deployed to their needs and to the communities that host them. Moreover, notwithstanding the dearth of empirical studies on links between the deployment of returnees' resources towards their individual activities and the state's peacebuilding agenda, the objection has lingered, and has sometimes been presented as an

---

<sup>2</sup>For studies on economic migrant returnees and their development potential, see Diatta M., and Mbow N. (1999) "Releasing the Development Potential of Return Migration: The Case of Senegal" *International Migration* Vol. 37 No. 1.; Ammassari S. and Black R. (2001) "Harnessing the Potential of Migration and Return to Promote Development: "Applying Concepts to West Africa" *International Migration Research Series* No. 5. and Thomas-Hope E. (1999) "Return Migration to Jamaica and its Development Potential" *International Migration* Vol. 37, No.1

accurate portrayal of refugees in Africa. This study thus draws on narratives of Liberian returnees formerly exiled in Ghana and Guinea to show that returnees' reintegration activities have links with peacebuilding which collectively represent their engagement in the process. Hence, the study argues that the conditions often associated with refugee agency and the state of their resources are ones that need to be empirically studied through a context driven analysis, rather than simply assumed.

To address the above noted limitations, the current study adopts a theoretical and analytical framework mainly from political science: i.e., IR<sup>3</sup> and comparative politics (CP). It also borrows extensively from forced migration (refugee) studies from other social science disciplines. Following its interdisciplinary approach, the study adopts a social constructivist analytical framework. In this study, therefore, social constructivists' notion of agency and structures as mutually constituted is employed to achieve the following: first, to discern the nature of the structures that refugees, as agents, encounter: how do these structures constrain and enable the actions of refugees; how much freedom do refugees, as agents, have in doing what they do, as they are both enabled and constrained by the structures? Second, what are the transformational experiences of the refugee (agent) and of the structures as a result of this encounter?

Moreover, the application of the social constructivists' approach of mutual constitution of structure and agency makes the agency and resourcefulness of returnees central; it opens up

---

<sup>3</sup>Situating the current study within International Relations is consistent with Loescher, Betts and Mohane's work on the refugee question and its relationship with international politics: particularly, how it relates to foreign policy decision-making and implementation, as well as the application of IR theories in analysing forced migration issues and situations. For a thorough discussion see the introductory chapters of *Refugees and International Relations*, edited by G., Loescher and L., Monahan (1989) and *Refugees in International Relations* by Betts and Loescher (2011).

ways to qualify the engagement of refugee returnees in post-conflict reconstruction. “It also becomes possible to identify the consequences of lost resources/opportunities and to seek the relevant conditions and policies to create and benefit from new opportunities” (Essed et al., 2006:16) both in asylum and at home. What this study hopes to achieve is to demonstrate the agency and resourcefulness of refugee returnees without denying the reality of the challenges faced by both the refugees and the societies of return.

In addition, the study uses both Jacobsen’s (2002) conception of the refugee resource and the Resource Base Model (RBM) of Refugee Well-being (Ryan et al., 2008) to introduce the concept of “returnee resource” as an analytical construct with which to examine the effect of the forced migration experience on refugees and the connections between its deployment towards returnees’ reintegration and peacebuilding. The study posits that the starting point for examining the links between refugee returnees and peacebuilding is analysing the transformations in their resources (material, social, political, and cultural) that result from the complex interaction of the agency of refugees returnees and structures during their forced migration experience. It further posits that it is necessary to recognize refugee returnees as active participants in that experience. Finally, it notes that not only are these resources deployed towards the returnee’s needs; they also become assets for the society engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding.

It is important to note that social constructivism as a theory has not been neglected in the study of forced migration issues in political science, especially by IR scholars. For example, constructivism has been used to explore the creation and dissemination of norms guiding refugee situations across the globe, especially by the UNHCR. These norms are related to burden-sharing (Betts and Durieux, 2007), repatriation as the preferred durable solution for refugees (Barnett

and Finnemore, 2004), and widened coverage of where and how to protect refugees, and who is protected (Crisp, 2008). These studies highlight both the agential and structural role of the UNHCR as an institution created by states and that has, over time, become an autonomous body that develops rules for states and refugees. In spite of their contributions, these studies have been marked by a neglect of the refugee as an actor with agency. That is to say, their main focus has been on the state as the generator of refugees or the institution of return, and on other institutions, such as the UNHCR. They have thus implicitly contributed to existing notions of refugees as passive victims awaiting solutions. The value that the current study adds to the larger ongoing studies of forced migration through social constructivism's analytical framework is the inclusion of the refugee as an agent. As an agent, the refugee returnee is not simply to be influenced, but is an individual (or a group) capable of influencing the policy formulation and implementation of the state and of IGOs such as the UNHCR.

Aligning itself, therefore, with studies that recognize the complexity of the forced migration experience (Ager, 1999; Cornish et al., 1999; Crisp, 1999, 2000; Bariagaber, 2006) and its impact on returnees, the present research examines transformations in returnees' resources. It also analyses the deployment of returnee resources for the purpose of reintegration and how these activities collectively represent returning refugees' participation in peacebuilding. In particular, focusing on social constructivism's mutual constitution of structure and agency, the study identifies the various structures that refugees encounter as having different influences on different agents (refugee returnees). It also provides a context within which to understand and examine how refugees and returnees, as agents, operate within structures of constraint and opportunity, which more or less likely lead to resource transformation (gains and losses).

In sum, understanding the structures of forced migration as both enabling and constraining, and how refugee responses (agency) contribute to losses of and gains in their resources, the current study offers insight into how asylum can be a place of opportunities, and not just one offering protection to fleeing individuals and groups. Correspondingly focusing on the deployment of returnees' resources towards their individual reintegration and connections with the broader post-conflict reconstruction, the study contributes to knowledge on the politics of peacebuilding, and provides empirical examples of how local actors – i.e., returning refugees -- participate in the project of peacebuilding and provision of asylum. Moreover, the novelty of the study's adoption of social constructivism is in its focus on the refugee as an agent: that is, as an active and capable actor whose actions (agency) can transform or reproduce, or both, the existing structures, as well as their resources.

### **1.1.3. Research Objectives and Questions**

This dissertation is a study of the engagement of returning refugees in post-conflict peacebuilding, in their capacity as agents whose resources and skills are transformed as a result of their forced migration experience. The two main elements of this research are: first, to understand the transformation of refugee returnees as a result of the complex interplay of, on one hand, the various structures of forced migration, as both constraining and empowering; and, on the other, the choices and decisions of refugees. Second, to examine how individual refugee returnees' reintegration activities collectively represent their participation in the process of peacebuilding, and are not a burden on or simply beneficiaries of the process. Therefore, the study argues that refugee returnees are agents with resources to be harnessed for peacebuilding

upon repatriation; however, enabling conditions in asylum and after return must be provided to attain this core policy assumption of peacebuilding. Through a comparative study of the case of Liberian refugees exiled in Ghana and Guinea, and who have since returned to Liberia, the study emphasizes the resources and agency of refugee returnees, without denying their reality: especially those living in Africa. The study therefore makes two broad claims.

First, it argues that as agents, returning refugees deploy the resources towards their individual reintegration, which collectively reveals their participation in the country of origin's peacebuilding. Thus, the study contends that examining the links between returnees' reintegration activities and the peacebuilding process is a better indicator of how refugee returnees engage in post-conflict peacebuilding than the established notion of using the number of returnees. Furthermore, addressing the post return lives of refugees enables the study to transcend the assumption that the forced migration experience ends with return.

Second, the study argues that the forced migration experience is transformational, so that the refugees who return are not the same individuals who fled. This is to suggest that displacement into different socio-economic and political spaces with different structures leads to changes, especially in their resources, that should be conceptualized and theoretically analysed, and not assumed, by the researcher. Moreover, during this process, the individual's agency is retained despite high restrictions on the available choices and that such agency is consequential in the transformation of returnee resources.

The overall objective of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of the complex relationship between the forced migrant's experience and peacebuilding processes, in marked

contrast to most analysis of forced migration and refugee returnees' agency, and their participation in post-conflict peacebuilding after return.

Some of these counter arguments, as suggested above, include that:

1. Refugee returnees are passive throughout the forced migration experience and after return.
2. Refugees are reactionary to the structures of forced migration, such as the global refugee regime and the asylum states.
3. Refugees return to be a burden on and a challenge to the process of post-conflict peacebuilding.
4. The return of refugees is just a fulfilment of a peace agreement, and their presence and numbers are indicators of their participation in peacebuilding.

The study establishes and supports the above argument empirically with a detailed comparative case study of Liberian refugee returnees from Ghana and Guinea. The general argument, however, may extend to situations of forced migration and post-conflict peacebuilding in developing countries: specifically, in Africa.

Therefore, the research presented here seeks to answer two main questions:

- 1) How does the forced migration experience transform refugee returnees' resources? This question is further disaggregated into two sub-questions to achieve the above-stated objectives:
  - 1a) What structures of forced migration constrain, and which stimulate, returnees' resources?
  - 1b) How do refugee returnees, as agents, respond to the structures of forced migration and its effect on their resources, as well as on the structures?

Accordingly, at every phase of the forced migration experience these two sub-questions are addressed; the resulting transformations (gains and losses) in returnees' resources are presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

The study's second main question is:

2) How do returning refugees participate in the country of origin's post-conflict peacebuilding activities?

In addressing question two, the study examines the resources that returnees return with to the country of origin, and how the returnees' deployment of these resources towards their reintegration, are linked to peacebuilding strategies, as explained in Chapters 2 and 3. The findings and discussion in Chapter 7 are primarily based on question two.

Answers to these questions, it is hoped, will yield lessons, and show policymakers the best practices with regard to developing enabling asylum structures and the treatment of refugee returnees as participants in, and not beneficiaries of, the process of peacebuilding. Furthermore, the findings from the study will help to determine an alternative theoretical model and analytical approach for explaining and understanding the transformational effect of forced migration, as well as links with the cases of peacebuilding practices.

#### **1.1.4. Organization of the Study**

The next chapter elaborates on the contexts of the study by introducing the various structures that refugees encounter during the experiences of flight, living in exile, and process of repatriation. The structures addressed include the global refugee regime that governs the refugee situation in Africa and domestic state refugee policies and practices. The discussion focuses on

the OAU and UN Conventions on Refugees, as well the UNHCR. These are identified as the governing structures that provide the framework for both refugees' and the other national and international organizations' engagement with forced migration situations in Africa. Second, the chapter presents a brief discussion of the literature on the politics of peacebuilding, and the current debate on the factors in sustainable post-conflict rebuilding. This section maps out the practice and conceptualization of peacebuilding in Africa as an institutionally focused project, that the current study notes, constrains the participation of returning refugees.

Chapter 3 introduces and discusses the study's adopted theoretical framework, and outlines the research methods. Beginning with social constructivists' understanding of structures and agency, and its application to the current study on forced migration, it proceeds to introduce the concept of returnees' resources, and how the various phases of the refugee experience transform it. This is followed by a discussion of the study's conception of how returning refugees' deployments of their resources towards their individual reintegration are collectively connected to peacebuilding strategies. Finally, the section on the research methods includes discussion of the various instruments of data collection and analysis.

This study does not follow the case-by case examination approach to research questions. Rather, it follows the study's conception of the forced migration experience of the returnee as encompassing the three related phases of flight, living in asylum, and return; the respective structures and the refugee's agency are designated as the independent variables. Thus, the next three chapters (4, 5 and 6) broadly present the various structures the research participants encountered, their responses, and the transformation that the returnee resources underwent as a result of the encounter and of the refugee's strategic choices. Chapter 4, therefore, discusses the

civil war as the main cause of the Liberian refugee situation and of the flight patterns of the Liberian refugee returnees who sought asylum in Ghana and Guinea. The chapter notes that the war conditions of Liberia presented mainly structural constraints that resulted in returnee resources losses. The research participants' decision to flee, and their choice of asylum destination and mode of transportation, was driven by the losses experienced or by how the war impinged on their means of living. While the objective of this chapter is to analyse the effect of flight on the resources of refugees and the strategic choices of refugees as they fled to safety, it also sets the background for later discussion of post-conflict peacebuilding in Liberia.

The focus of discussion in Chapter 5 is the asylum phase of the forced migration experience. It extensively discusses the provision of asylum by the study's selected two host countries (Ghana and Guinea). It begins with the reception, settlement, and asylum administration by the state and the UNHCR. The discussion of asylum administration focuses on the refugee policies and programs of the host country dealing with the refugees, and the activities of the UNHCR as the major international organization in the experiences of the refugees. The objective of this chapter is to examine and distinguish the various conditions that the returnees encountered during the period of asylum. The chapter reveals that transformations in the returnees resources are largely, but not exclusively, explained by variations in asylum conditions, such as the asylum policies and practices, and the political and security conditions. The refugees' agency was, however, a major determining factor in their strategic choices and in their ability, or inability, to harness opportunities and overcome constraints: which, over time, resulted in resource gains or losses. Moreover, the findings in this chapter demonstrate how the presence and activities of the refugees influenced the formulation of asylum policies and practices within

both countries. Finally, this chapter presents the findings on returnees resources, and comparatively examines the resources losses and gains of the two groups of research participants. The data reveals that both groups of returnees experienced resource gains and, sometimes, renewed those lost as a result of the war and flight conditions; however, those from Ghana gained more cultural and material resources than the returnees exiled in Guinea.

In Chapter 6 the study examines the policy, practice, and politics of repatriation of Liberian refugees from Ghana and Guinea. Divided into two main sections, the chapter begins with a discussion of the structures of the process, such as the planning and implementation of repatriation by the state (asylum and home) and the UNHCR. Although the returnees were not consulted during the planning by the various institutions, the chapter notes that just as during their flight and asylum, refugees were active participants in the decision and process of returning. Through their decisions, such as on when and how to return, the returnees demonstrated their agency, which resulted in changes in both the asylum states and the international policy and practice of repatriating the refugees: hence the variations in the process in the two countries. Furthermore, the return process also resulted in further transformation of the returnees' resources, and the effects are examined in this chapter. Through the narratives of the returnees, this chapter concludes that flight and return are not mirror images of one another; however, the common thread, as revealed in the data on returnee resources, is the further losses they experienced, and how the individual returnee's strategies (agency) to overcome the constraints minimized the resource losses, and transformed the process and practice of return.

Chapter 7 is a presentation of the returnees' deployment of their resources towards their individual reintegration. These choices and decisions by the returnees, the current study

notes, highlight the aggregate result of the returnees' engagement with the peacebuilding process in Liberia. The chapter notes that both the policy and practice of peacebuilding in Liberia are predominantly top-down and institutional, making the returnee a recipient and a victim, rather than an active participant. The study finds, however, that there are correlates between the returnee's reintegration activities and the peacebuilding agenda of Liberia. Furthermore, the chapter concludes that the limited material and cultural resources of the returnees from Guinea compared to those of their fellow citizens in exile in Ghana notwithstanding, returnees have not been idle, waiting for handouts, but have engaged in activities to rebuild their lives, something the study contends aggregately reflects their engagement with the process of peacebuilding.

Finally, Chapter 8 is the conclusion of the study. It presents a summary of the findings, and makes recommendations for further studies and formulation of policy towards refugees, returnees, and peacebuilding. The chapter affirms the study's claim that, ultimately, the refugee returnee is transformed by the individual choices they make in response to either the constraints or opportunities of the structures of forced migration. That is to say, refugees never return the same, and their deployment of resources towards their reintegration as active citizens collectively results in their engagement with the process of the community and state reconstruction activities. Drawing on the findings of previous chapters, this chapter concludes that as active and not passive, refugees and returnees, as agents through their decisions, reproduced and changed existing structures. Ultimately, the chapter recommends a contextualization of the provision of asylum as not simply a humanitarian gesture, but rather as a space for renewal, enhancing and gaining of resources. The study concludes that the paternalistic approach towards refugees by state and international organizations, whether during flight,

asylum, return, or the process of peacebuilding, detracts from the potential and the engagement of the individual refugee returnee: something the current study does not support.

## Chapter 2. Context of Study: Forced Migration and the Politics of Peacebuilding in Africa

### 2.0. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to situate the study within the literature on forced migration and the politics of peacebuilding in the context of Africa. It has two main sections: first, it discusses the main concepts that inform the dissertation, which are structures of forced migration. This section reviews the structures that refugees, as agents, encounter during the experiences of flight, living in asylum, and the process of return. The discussion focuses on the global refugee regime (GRR)<sup>4</sup> and the OAU Convention, which together serve as the governing structures of refugees in Africa. The study notes that the GRR, which includes the 1951 UN Convention, the 1969 Protocol on refugees and the UNHCR<sup>5</sup>, with the OAU's 1969 Convention, collectively have created the norms, rules, and practices of refugees' rights, states, and IGO responsibilities in Africa. In addition, this section presents the situation of refugees in Africa with respect to the causes and the scale of the problem, and asylum policies and practices of African states. The second section of this chapter is a review of the literature on the politics of peacebuilding in Africa in general, emphasizing the debate on the role of refugees in peacebuilding. This section presents the home state to which forced migrants return as one

---

<sup>4</sup>A regime is defined as the governing arrangements that affect the relationships of interdependence; or, more precisely, the networks of rules, norms and decision-making procedures that regularize behaviour and control its effects on the actor's expectations, and converge in a given issue area. This definition combines the one submitted by Krasner and the one by Keohane and Nye, because it accepts the argument by Krasner that his definition is consistent with that of Keohane and Nye; although Donnelly J. (1982) "International Human Rights: A Regime Analysis" *International Organization*, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 599-642 argues the opposite. See Krasner S. (1982) "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables" *International Organization* Vol. 36, No.2 pp.185-205, and Keohane and Nye (1977) *Power and Interdependence* (Boston: Little Brown), p. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Presenting the global refugee regime as composed of the OAU and UN Conventions on refugees and the UNHCR is consistent with Betts' (2009) characterization of the international refugee regime. See Betts A. (2009) *Forced Migration and Global Politics* (Wiley-Blackwell: Oxford).

engaged in peacebuilding activities, and in which the returnee's individual life-rebuilding efforts are considered part of the broader post-conflict reconstruction.

## **2.1. STRUCTURES OF FORCED MIGRATION CENTRAL TO THE STUDY**

One of the objectives of this comparative study is to understand the resource transforming experiences of Liberian refugee returnees who were exiled in Ghana and Guinea. To understand those changes and the distinctive resource categories of these two groups of returnees, one must understand the various structures encountered by the agents (refugee returnees) as both enabling and constraining and, at the same time, as existing in a constitutive relationship with the agents. Through a review of both the literature and the policy, the following section describes: the GRR, with a particular focus on the African refugee situation; the OAU Convention, asylum policies and practices of African states<sup>6</sup>; and the relationship of these to the agent, i.e., the refugee returnee. It is important to understand what these structures are, and why they are central to a discussion of the agency of the refugee returnees, of the transformation of resources, and of the returnees' engagement with the process of peacebuilding. Furthermore, the discussion below follows the theoretical position of this study that agents and structures are not different, but parts of each other. The presentation of the various structures thus reflects the rights

---

<sup>6</sup>The study's classification of the UNHCR and of states as structures is consistent with the constructivist's position that certain agents can be structures, and vice versa. For example, Barnett and Finnemore (2004) present the UNHCR as an agent to the states that created it; in that representation, the state, which IR theorists (Waltz 1979 and Wendt 1987 and 1999) have presented as an agent in the international system structure, then becomes a structure.

and duties that they accord the agent -- that is, the refugee<sup>7</sup>; and the refugees' agency is demonstrated in their response to their encounter with the structures.

### **2.1.1. Forced Migration in Africa: Causes and Scale**

Refugee situations are not new to Africa. According to Veney (2007:3), "the continent's history before and since its introduction into the global system is replete with forced migration phenomena: the slave trades to the Americas, Europe, and Asia, as well as the numerous instances of forced migrations that occurred during the colonial period". Notwithstanding these historical factors, the current refugee problem in Africa commenced on the eve of the transition from colonialism to independence (Hamrell, 1967; Chambers, 1969). Africa, even since independence, continues to be a prolific producer of refugee situations.

The "changes during this era compared to others are demonstrably in the magnitude and the cause of the refugee situation" (Crisp, 1999). For example, in 1960, often regarded as Africa's independence year, in which 17 African states became independent, "there were only 300,000 refugees, which doubled by the 1970s" (Adepouju, 1982:22). Moreover, as can be seen in Table 2.1, at the beginning of the 1990s, a period considered by the UNHCR as a decade of repatriation (Loescher et al., 2008), Africa experienced an increase in its refugee population, which peaked in 1995 and accounted for 40.1% of the world refugee population. The numbers began decreasing again, however, so that at the beginning of the new millennium, Africa accounted for 30% of the world refugee population. In 2010, although Africa's refugee

---

<sup>7</sup>According to Sugananmi, (1999:378) "an agent is an entity which is a subject of rights and duties within a given social structure".

population more than doubled that of the year 2000, its percentage of the world refugee population increased to 31.2%.

Furthermore, as noted by Crisp (2000), and as suggested by the figures in Table 2.1, the movement of refugees in Africa is a "two-way process". While some displaced populations have fled, seeking asylum outside their country, others have been moving back to their homelands. For example, according to UNHCR statistics, the three largest refugee exoduses of 1998 all took place in Africa: from Sierra Leone (280,000), Sudan (37,000), and Angola (33, 000). So did the largest repatriation movements: to Liberia (236,000) and Sierra Leone (195,000) (as quoted in Crisp 2000:159).

**Table 2.1. World and African Refugee Numbers for Selected Years:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>World</b>	<b>Africa</b>	<b>Africa % of the World</b>
<b>1974</b>	14,195,451	1,105,217	7.8%
<b>1977</b>	8,485,347	1,692,041	20%
<b>1980</b>	15,965,250	4,045,200	25.3%
<b>1983</b>	7,186,200	1,921,000	26.7%
<b>1986</b>	11,698,000	4,524,800	38.7%
<b>1989</b>	15,093,900	4,524,800	30%
<b>1992</b>	16,647,550	5,340,800	32.1%
<b>1995</b>	14,896,087	5,972,881	40.1%
<b>1998</b>	11,480,860	3,345,407	29.1%
<b>2001</b>	12,129,572	3,627,130	30%
<b>2004</b>	9,592,796	3,135,792	32.7%
<b>2007</b>	31,678,924	10,731,600	33.9%
<b>2010</b>	33,924,476	10,587,000	31.2%

Source: Compiled and computed by author from UNHCR (1974-2010): *Annual Data on Population of Concern*.

Refugee flows from the newly independent countries of Africa have multiple sources that are different from that of twentieth century European refugees, which were mainly ideological, with the exception of the situations in the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union (Zolberg *et al.* 1989; Loescher and Monahan, 1989). From the early 1960s to the late 1970s, many of Africa's refugees were the product of independence struggles and wars of national liberation, notably in countries such as Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Rhodesia, South Africa, and South West-Africa.<sup>8</sup> Since the 1980s, however, some refugees have fled from repressive African governments, such as those of Mobuto Sese Seko (Zaire), Mengistu Haile Mariam (Ethiopia), and Idi Amin Dada (Uganda). Another source of refugees of the post-decolonization era that is considered rare in Africa (Kibreab, 1985; Veney, 2007) is inter-state wars, such as those between Ethiopia and Eritrea and between Ethiopia and Somalia. Finally, the numerous intra-state conflicts, such as those of Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Chad, and others, have become the major source of forced migration.<sup>9</sup>

Persistent instability, fostered by the inability and unwillingness of political actors to deal with social and political problems, made flight the only option left to secure their survival. Kibreab (1985) has attributed the progressive increase of the African refugee population to the

---

<sup>8</sup>This group did not qualify to be categorized as refugees under the terms of the UN Convention, as discussed below. To the newly independent African countries and the OAU, however, they were refugees of the kind who are referred to in the literature as liberation or freedom fighters. See Kibreab G. (1985) *African Refugees: Reflections on African Refugee Problem* (Africa World Press: Trenton).

<sup>9</sup> It is important to note that the problems that created the refugee situations in Africa were neither entirely local, nor solely African. Veney (2007:4) has argued that "dynamics associated with the Cold War, especially the superpower rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union, not to mention the machinations of the former colonial powers, the destabilization of Apartheid South Africa in the southern African region and the interstate struggles for regional supremacy, played a major role in engendering the conditions and conflicts that forced tens of thousands of African civilians into exile".

politico-economic problems and contradictions that have marked governance in Africa in general. This assertion remained true through the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century (see Table 2.1). Accordingly, Bayart (1986) argues that an alternative response to the legitimate aspirations of society through the development of relevant institutions, mechanisms and structures of government, as opposed to the practices of neo-patrimonialism, might have averted the numerous socio-political and economic tensions. Moreover, Zolberg et al. (1989) conclude that the lack of a conflict resolution mechanism and the absence of state and civil society institutions make the problem of forced migration in Africa a stubborn one.

### **2.1.2 The 1951 Geneva Convention, the 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention**

In the contemporary state system, the practice of identifying individuals as nationals is associated with the state's responsibilities towards them. A national has the right to be protected by the government of his or her country while at home or in a foreign country (Blavo, 1999:12). In light of this, it is incumbent on any foreign national entering another country to make sure that they declare their identity and intent to the country they are entering. By doing this, the newly arrived person becomes a responsibility for protection of the country of entry. Ensuring the safety of a foreign national and their access to rights, livelihood, and the possibility of integrating, and of their ability to leave for another country, is both a "human rights issue and an inherent part of international politics" (Betts and Loescher, 2011:1).

The issue of the identity of the refugee has been considered in much detail at the international level in the context of the suffering masses that fled their homelands during the two World Wars. In the 1920s and 1930s two primary international instruments were adopted and

applied to the concept of the refugee. These instruments specifically enumerated the categories of persons who qualified for international assistance and, initially, were applied mainly to Europeans (Blavo, 1999:13). After World War II, new international definitions and regulations were adopted by the United Nations Organization (UN), referred to as the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to Refugees.<sup>10</sup> The 1951 Convention, also called “the wall behind which refugees can shelter” (Refugee Magazine, 2001), is of significance to all contracting states and signatory governments in their efforts to identify persons as refugees and promote their welfare.

The 1951 Convention defines a refugee as a person who, “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it” (article 1.2 of the 1951 Convention). The definition featured temporal and geographical limitations (Zetter, 1999), reflecting the context within which the Convention was formulated. Originally the concerns and experiences of European states during and after World War II dominated the Convention’s agenda and, consequently, restricted its mandate to “events occurring in Europe before January 1, 1951” (article 1.B:1, 1951 Convention). As new refugee matters came into focus in various regions of the world, however, the need arose to make the Convention applicable to such “new refugees”. The Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (UN, New York, January 31, 1967) was prepared and submitted to the UN General Assembly in 1966, and was adopted on October 4, 1967. Its main objective was to expand the 1951 Convention to embrace refugees in places other than Europe. Doing so

---

<sup>10</sup>Hereafter referred to as “the 1951 Convention”.

“eliminated both the temporal and geographic limitations in the scope of the Convention”

(Zetter, 1999:51).

The Protocol is nevertheless an independent instrument, so that parties and states have to sign it separately. The 1951 Convention includes the following limitations: "For the purposes of this Convention, the words ‘events occurring before 1 January 1951’ in article 1, Section A, shall be understood to mean either (a) ‘events occurring in Europe before 1 January 1951’; or (b) events occurring in Europe or elsewhere before 1 January 1951”. Each Contracting state shall make a declaration at the time of signature, ratification or accession, specifying which of these meanings it applies for the purposes of its obligations under this Convention” (Article 1 B (1) of the 1951 UN Convention).<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, as observed by Loescher, (1993:73) since the 1967 Protocol did not tamper with the 1951 definition of a refugee, regional organizations, such as the OAU, formally began to do so.

By the early 1960s the majority of African states had, with much turmoil and bloodshed, attained independence from colonial rule. Large scale movements of people, both within and across national borders, ensued. Thus, arguing that the existing UN framework was inadequate to deal with the massive migration, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted the “Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa,”<sup>12</sup> emphasizing the "African Refugee Situation" (Murray, 2005). The OAU member states argued, for example, that the 1951 Convention was biased in favour of their European colleagues in its definitional

---

<sup>11</sup>As of October 1, 2009, 141 state parties had signed both the 1951 Convention and the Protocol, and 147 had signed one of the instruments. Four states -- Congo, Madagascar, Monaco and Turkey -- had adopted alternative (a), which is a limitation of geographical location. Turkey expressly maintained its declaration of geographical limitation upon acceding to the Protocol; Madagascar and Monaco have yet to sign it.

<sup>12</sup>Hereinafter refer to as “the OAU Convention”.

restrictions and, also, with its focus on social and economic rights. As noted by Goodwin-Gill (2009: 3), the “1951 Convention focuses on matters such as social security, rationing, access to employment and the liberal professions, betrays its essentially European origin”. Furthermore, he notes that “it is here, in the Convention articles dealing with social and economic rights, that one still finds the greatest number of reservations, particularly among developing states” (ibid.).

These reservations notwithstanding, the OAU created a Convention that adopted the basic elements of the 1951 Convention’s definition of a refugee, with an extension that specifies the circumstances under which African refugees have been uprooted. Therefore, article 1 (2) of the 1969 OAU Convention definition of a refugee adds a second paragraph as follows:

The term ‘refugee’ shall also apply to every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality.<sup>13</sup>

By comparison with the UN Convention, the OAU’s is applauded for expanding the definition of refugee. For example, the OAU’s definition is considered broader, because it recognizes that “the bond between citizens and state can be severed in diverse ways, persecution being but one” (Shacknove, 1986: 276). Furthermore, unlike the UN’s, the OAU Convention unambiguously stated that repatriation of refugees to their country of origin should take place on a voluntary basis (see article, 5: 1). According to Goodwin-Gill (1989:258), article 5 of the OAU

---

<sup>13</sup>A full text of the OAU Convention Concerning Specific Aspects of the Problem of Refugees in Africa can be found at the [www.africa-union.org/Official-documents/Treaties\\_Conventions\\_Proctocols/Refugee/Convention](http://www.africa-union.org/Official-documents/Treaties_Conventions_Proctocols/Refugee/Convention).

Convention, which stipulates the conditions and practice of voluntary repatriation, “was the first international instrument of its kind.” In this respect, Crisp (2000:160) observes that “Africa established new and improved legal standards for the treatment of the refugee population”.

Therefore, the discussion in this study follows the OAU’s definition of refugees, and notes the following as the fundamental characteristics of an African refugee:

- a) the person is outside the country of their nationality; that is to say, they are not a refugee until they cross an international border;
- b) the person is unwilling or unable, for the time being, to return to their homeland because their freedom or personal security would be at risk there; and
- c) the persecution they fear is directed against them personally or against a group to which they belong, or they are indirectly affected by some internal conflict or attack on their country.

In the current study, meanwhile, refugees who have gone to their own country or community are described as "refugee returnees".<sup>14</sup>

### **2.1.3. Rules and Norms for Protecting Refugee Rights in Africa**

Both the OAU and the 1951 Conventions outline the rights of refugees during their period of asylum. They also set out the international standards for the treatment of refugees, and safeguards their rights and prohibitions on expulsion or forced return (*non-refoulement*). This is the core principle of the global refugee regime and of the OAU Convention that prohibits states

---

<sup>14</sup>It is important to note that while refugees are not the only part of the population to return after the cause of displacement ceases to exist, the current study uses the term "returnees" to refer to refugee returnees, and the terms are used interchangeably. Additionally, the population that remained with their country of origin are referred to as "internally displaced persons", and those who have gone back to their communities and homes are described as "stayees".

from forcibly returning an individual to a country in which they face a well-founded fear of persecution. For example, article 2 of the OAU Convention stipulates, first, that Member States of the OAU should strive, consistent with their own legislation, to receive refugees, and to secure the settlement of refugees who, for well-founded reasons, are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin or nationality; and, second, that no one should be subjected by a Member State to such treatment as rejection at the frontier, return, or expulsion, that would compel them to return to or to remain in a territory where their life, physical integrity, or liberty would be threatened.

In addition to the core protection of *non-refoulement*, the 1951 Convention prescribes freedom from penalties for illegal entry (article 31) and freedom from expulsion, except on the most serious grounds (article 32). Article 8 seeks to exempt refugees from the application of exceptional measures that might otherwise affect them by reason only of their nationality. Moreover, article 9 preserves the right of states to take “provisional measures” on the grounds of national security against a particular person, but only “pending a determination by the contracting state that that person is in fact, a refugee and that the continuance of such measures is necessary ... in the interests of national security”.

Other rights refugees enjoy include social, civil, and economic. These are enumerated in Chapters 3 to 4 of the 1951 Convention. For example, Chapter 3, titled "Gainful Employment", outlines refugee rights in relation to wage-earning employment (article 17), self-employment (article 18) and liberal professions (article 19). Chapter 4 deals with socio-economic issues: housing (article 21), education (article 22), and labour legislation and social security (article 24), while article 26 addresses the right to free movement of refugees. Moreover, Chapter

4, which is titled "Welfare", outlines refugees' rights to food (rationing), housing, and education. Each of these articles within the 1951 Convention underscores the need for refugees to be treated favourably by states and organizations that host them.

Furthermore, both the 1951 and OAU 1969 Conventions require that persons needing the protection of governments other than their own acquire "Refugee Status" in order to distinguish themselves from other immigrants. The refugee status determination is the prerogative of governments, who then become obligated to the people they recognize as such. The OAU Convention stipulates that Member States should endeavour to grant asylum to those who seek it; and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that "everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution". These instruments affirm the need for governments to grant asylum seekers refugee status according to their own criteria, which may be consistent with the global refugee regime.

As most African refugee situations have demonstrated, however, and illustrated by the cases in this study, where there is a mass movement, determining eligibility on an individual basis is impractical; hence, the 1969 OAU Convention, for example, allows for the granting of refugee status to a group that shares a cause of flight. This procedure is known as *prima facie*<sup>15</sup> refugee status determination (Rutinwa, 2002). Governments, however, still reserve the right to select individuals and screen them to determine their status. In the status determination, other factors -- such as the social, economic, and political -- influence the decisions of governments. These influencing factors have resulted in a variety of categories of refugees (Blavo, 1999 and

---

<sup>15</sup>In this case individuals need not submit an application for status determination. This was the situation in Ghana and Guinea with respect to the status determination of Liberian refugees. See Chapter 5 for further discussion of the status determination processes employed in Ghana and Guinea, and the related challenges.

Joly et al., 1992).<sup>16</sup> These categories are legal constructs that “affect important aspects of a refugee’s experience that range from legality and duration of residence in asylum, access to assistance, services, and the labour market and possibilities for family reunification” (Castles et al., 2002:121). The different statuses also distinguish refugees as not a generic group of people, but individuals with different rights.

Through their ratification of the 1951 Convention, states agree to provide certain facilities to refugees, including administrative assistance (article 25); identity papers (article 27); travel documents (article 28); the grant of permission to transfer assets (article 30); and the facilitation of naturalization (article 34). Furthermore, the 1951 Convention proposes, as a minimum standard, that refugees should receive at least the treatment that is accorded to aliens generally. "National treatment" -- that is, treatment no different from that accorded to citizens -- is to be granted in respect of a wide variety of matters, including: the freedom to practise religion, and as regards the religious education of children (article 4); access to courts, legal assistance, and exemption from the requirement to give security for costs in court proceedings (article 16); and the provision of elementary education for refugee children (article 22, para. 1).

Within Africa, the global refugee regime and the OAU Convention play an important part “in the protection of refugees, in the promotion and provision of solutions for refugees, in ensuring the security of states, sharing responsibility, and generally promoting human rights”

---

<sup>16</sup>Joly *et al.* (1992) have identified five types of refugees in Europe: i) conventional refugees, recognized on the basis of the 1951 Convention; ii) mandate refugees, recognized by the UNHCR, but not by the host; iii) humanitarian refugees granted the right to stay on humanitarian grounds, implying fewer rights than come with conventional refugee status; iv) de facto refugees, who are refugees in practice, but have not sought refugee status for various reasons; and finally, v) refugees in orbit, representing those who move between different countries in search of a more permanent status. These categories are used by Blavo (1999) to describe the refugee situation in Africa.

(Goodwin-Gill, 2009:6). Due, however, to the non-binding nature of these instruments, states can only be requested to cooperate, and to implement policies that will give refugees these rights. That is to say, since these international instruments neither oblige a state to provide asylum, nor provide for the sharing of responsibilities, states have adopted, and continue to implement, restrictive practices that do not correspond with international standards; yet they face no consequences.

Notwithstanding the existence of these norms, it is observed that refugees in Africa experience various restrictions on their rights to protection and denial. For example, as noted by Rutinawa (2002), the granting of refugee status on a *prima facie* basis reduces the bureaucratic challenges. It does not, however, guarantee their protection and welfare, because this form only allows them to remain in an asylum country. Furthermore, although article 26 of the 1951 Convention requires refugees to be accorded the right to choose their place of residence and to move freely within the host country, “most African states require *prima facie* refugees to live in designated camps and settlements, with some requiring refugees to seek permission to be able leave” (Rutinwa, 2002:15). This has created a situation in which asylum states contain refugee movements, and deny them rights, thereby leading to what Smith (2004) describes as the “warehousing of refugees and a waste of humanity”. Other areas where refugees living in Africa are noted to experience restrictions include the rights to post-elementary education for refugee children, and the right to be given identity papers or travel documents, and the right to engage in gainful employment (Rutinwa, 2002).

These restrictions on refugees’ rights are a concern for both the refugees and the UNHCR, which continues to report them in its annual "Global Reports". Most notably, refugees

in developing countries face material hardship and physical insecurity, especially in protracted situations where they are confronted with serious restrictions on their human rights. An area of restriction important for this study is that of their socio-economic rights. These include constraints on refugees' ability to engage in agricultural, wage earning, income generating opportunities and to own fixed property such as land or houses. As noted by the UNHCR, (see UNHCR Annual Global Reports) these and other rights denied to refugees make it difficult for them to engage in meaningful livelihoods. Thus, the study assesses how refugees respond to these structures of restrictions and the effect that it has on the returnees' resources.

#### **2.1.4. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Refugee Protection**

The General Assembly of the UN, by resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950, replaced the International Refugee Organization (IRO)<sup>17</sup> with the office of the UNHCR, effective January 1, 1951. The High Commissioner's primary responsibility is "to provide international protection to refugees by assisting governments to seek permanent solutions for the problems of refugees". The organization's protection functions specifically include "promoting the conclusion and ratification of international Conventions for the protection of refugees, supervising their application and proposing amendments thereto" (par. 8 a) of the Statute annexed to resolution 428 (V)).

---

<sup>17</sup>The International Refugee Organization (IRO) was not, however, the first international organization dedicated to helping refugees. In 1921 the first Refugee High Commissioner of the League of Nations was appointed. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (UNRRA) assisted seven million people during and after World War II. The IRO, created in 1946, resettled more than one million displaced Europeans around the world. (Achiron, 2001: 7-8).

While the General Assembly created the UNHCR, and gave it a mandate to provide international protection for refugees, “states took care that their momentary humanitarian sympathies did not compromise their sovereignty” (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004:73). Under the 1950 Statute, decisions on asylum and refugee protection are the prerogative of states; the UNHCR thus operates under the supervision of states (Kegan, 2006). Another source of constraints on the UNHCR is the time limit placed on the office of the High Commissioner and its mandate. Initially, the mandate was regularly renewed for three years; the renewal period later became five years, until 2003, when the General Assembly decided “to continue the Office until the refugee problem is resolved” (GA, Resolution 58/153 of 22 December 2003, para. 9). Finally, since its mandate takes effect after the flight of a population has occurred, the UNHCR, as observed by Loescher (1989:19), “cannot intervene to protest against the cause(s) of forced migration”.

The UNHCR has, after 60 years of operation, shifted from an organization with authority, delegated from states, to acquire the status of expert authority, and become the lead international institution for refugee protection (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004). Some of its achievements include the extension of its activities from asylum to return, expansion of its mandate to include working with IDPs and extension of the working definition of a refugee. A combination of factors accounts for this shift. They include world events especially those in Africa, such as the Algerian civil war, which broke out in 1954, and the decolonization process in that continent, which resulted in the influx of forced migrants into countries outside Europe, and through the determination of various High Commissioners of UNHCR (see Coles 1989; Loescher 2001; Barnett and Finnemore, 2004; Betts and Durieux, 2007; Crisp, 2008).

Accordingly, Coles (1989:381) summarized the changes as follows. “Once the UNHCR had been mainly a small European migration organization constrained by refugee definition and with assistance to only Europeans as a consequence of pre-1951 events; now it has jurisdiction and conceptual freedom to operate in the world helping those fleeing not only persecution but also assorted political upheavals”.

The post-Cold-War era, moreover, according to some authors (Loescher, 2001; Adelman, 2003; Kegan, 2006; Loescher et al., 2008; Krever, 2011), has also seen a shift in the UNHCR’s policy and practices. As described by Krever (2011:589), it has moved from its mandate of refugee protection towards “the pursuit of state and not refugee interest”. Krever’s conclusion is based on his evaluation of the UNHCR’s implementation of its core mandate of refugee protection through the principle of *non refoulement* during the 1990s. The importance of this decade as the basis for evaluating the UNHCR’s humanitarian mission is emphasized by Loescher, Betts and Milner (2008), who consider it the period in which the organization underwent its most dramatic transformation. Moreover, this period, as suggested by Table 2.1, witnessed major increases in refugee situations around the world. For example, the violent conflicts in Iraq (1991), the former Yugoslavia, (1992-1995), and Rwanda (1994-1996) were major sources of refugee outflows of this era. In addition, this period was marked by the return of higher numbers of refugees to their country of origin, which led to High Commissioner Ogata’s proclamation of the 1990s as a "decade of repatriation" (see Loescher et al., 2008; Krever, 2011).

As observed by Kegan (2006) and Krever (2011), however, the 1990s were marked by the UNHCR’s dereliction of the fundamental principle of protection. According to Krever

(2011), Loescher et al. (2008), and Loescher (2001), two main causes explain the UNHCR's shift during this era. First, the financial constraints of the organization that have persisted throughout its existence became severe as a result of the increase in refugee operations around the world. The organization operates independently of the regular UN funding mechanisms, and member states are under no obligation to provide assistance to it. The 1950 Statute states that "no expenditure other than administrative expenditures relating to the functioning of the office of the High Commissioner shall be borne on the budget of the United Nations and all other expenditure relating to the activities of the High Commissioner shall be financed by voluntary contributions" (UN GA, 1950: Res 428). Thus, over the years, the UNHCR has relied extensively on its primary donors -- the United States, Japan, Sweden, Germany, the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, and Canada -- to sustain its activities (UNHCR, 2010).

The organization's dependency on contributions from this narrow group of donors, according to Krever (2011:603), has led to the allocation of funding towards "priority areas of the donor state's strategic interest". Moreover, the donor states also exert direct pressure through the earmarking of funds, which allows them to specify the UNHCR's use of their contributions. For example, in 2006 Krever (ibid.) noted that 52.3% of contributions were earmarked for specific countries and activities. Another 27.5% was earmarked for particular geographical regions, leaving only 20% of the funds unrestricted. Thus, Krever concludes that this has eroded the UNHCR's neutrality, and turned the organization's activities into what Loescher (1989) describes as instruments of the state's foreign policy. The UNHCR's dependency on states' contributions, and the effect on refugee protection, came to light during the repatriation of Rwandan refugees after the 1994 genocide. According to Adelman (2003), although UNHCR

officials in the region noted that conditions in Rwanda were less safe for the refugees, who were mainly Hutus, to return, the UNHCR, under the leadership of Ogata, pursued return. In his later review of the Rwandan return process from Zaire, Frelick (2007:33-34) observes that the UNHCR acted under pressure from “the new Rwandan government which had the backing of the United States and advocated for quick repatriation of Hutu Refugees from surrounding countries in particular Zaire”.

The second cause of the UNHCR’s shift from its core mandate of refugee protection towards state interest, as noted by Loescher (2001), is the constraints associated with the increasing number of cases of Western states' adoption and implementation of restrictive asylum policies. Although the UNHCR has a supervisory role over states' implementation of the 1951 Convention, its authority is limited to the promotion and facilitation of refugee protection as provided by the governments of the jurisdiction of their operations (Kegan, 2006: 13). In practice, therefore, the UNHCR operates according to the dictates of the states, and restrictive asylum policies have led to lesser refugee rights and, sometimes, outright contravention of the 1951 Conventions. While Loescher (2001) associates this constraint with Western states, it is important to note that African states, as observed by Rutinwa (1999), and discussed below, are not exempted. Throughout the 1990s a number of African states were noted to adopt restrictive asylum policies, such as denial of entry and forcible return, among others (see Rutinwa, 1999; Crisp, 2000). All these restrictive policies are constraints on the UNHCR in its ability to exercise its mandate and extend protection to asylum seekers and refugees.

While acknowledging the constraints on the UNHCR, the study notes that it is not unique in this respect. As an IGO the UNHCR was created, in the words of Barnett and

Finnermore (2004:73), “to do what states tell it to do”. Thus, states that are party to either the OAU or 1951 Conventions, or both, are not obligated to agree to cooperate with the Office of the UNHCR. As noted by Goodwin-Gill (2009:5), however, although “states generally do not appear to accept that the UNHCR has the authority to lay down binding interpretations of these instruments, it is agreed that the position of the UNHCR generally on the law or specifically on particular refugee problems requires to be considered in good faith”. Moreover, in practice states commonly associate the UNHCR with their refugee decision-making, and the UNHCR gives regular guidance on issues of interpretation. For example, “its *Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status*, published in 1979 at the request of member states of the UNHCR Executive Committee, is regularly relied on as authoritative, if not binding, and more recent guidelines are also increasingly cited in refugee determination procedures” (ibid). Thus, the current study agrees with Loescher et al. (2008: 122) that the “UNHCR remains an indispensable international organization” for both refugees and host states, especially in Africa.

Additionally, the UNHCR, as succinctly argued by Barnett and Finnemore (2004), despite the pressure from states and other constraints, has contributed to the expansion of the refugee definition, and shifted its focus from asylum bias towards addressing the country of origin (in the repatriation and reintegration activities of returnees). Although state pressures are an important part of the explanation for the shift in the UNHCR’s policy on protection, of specific interest here are the organization’s demonstration of agency under such conditions of constraints and its action of transforming the structures that created it. Therefore, the transformation in UNHCR practices illustrates a source of both constraint and opportunities, as well as of the transformational capabilities of the agency, as explained in Chapter 3.

### **2.1.5 African States and Provision of Asylum**

When individuals and groups arrive seeking refugee status, states decide how to respond to their claims, and make provision for their protection during the period of the asylum. How the state addresses the refugee claimants and other related issues during their stay forms its "asylum policy" (Milner, 2009). Consequently, Jacobsen (1996) suggests that host states have a set of three policy choices concerning the treatment and protection of refugees. The first set addresses issues of bureaucracy, legality, and institutions relating to the refugees. The second relates to the government's response to international refugee organizations: primary among them is the UNHCR. The third set of policies concerns the admission and treatment of refugees.

The combination of these three sets of choices in a state's asylum policy leads to a more comprehensive policy that is shaped by both political and humanitarian concerns. Such policies, according to Rutinwa (1999), present refugees with an opportunity for lifelong improvements.

More recently, Milner (2009) has proposed that the asylum policies of African states can be assessed using a spectrum of either "open or restrictive". According to Milner (2009:8), a host state adopts an "open asylum policy when it applies international and regional refugee protection standards, allows access to and cooperates with international organizations, and grants refugees the full range of social, economic and political rights contained in international refugee law such as freedom of movement and the right to seek employment". On the contrary, he contends, a state engages in restrictive asylum policy and practices "when it prevents or frustrates the arrival of refugees, does not apply international and refugee protection standards, does not cooperate with international organizations, and denies refugees the rights they are afforded by the 1951 Convention" (ibid.). The development of these measurements is important for two main reasons:

one, it facilitates policy evaluation and comparison of responses across countries and continents (Jacobsen, 1996); and, second, it serves as a benchmark for states and other non-state actors in formulating their responses to the refugee issue.

Within the context of Africa, authors such as Rutinwa, (1999), Crisp (2000) and Milner (2009) have observed that since independence African states have shifted from open asylum policies towards more restrictive policies. They suggest that from the 1960s to the 1980s, Africa established a reputation as a continent that generously welcomed and provided for refugees (Rutinwa, 1999; Crisp, 2000). During this period, the newly independent states readily acceded to the provisions of the global refugee regime and that of their newly created OAU 1969 Convention. Although the states reserved the right to formulate and implement their asylum policies and programs, these two international instruments became the guiding principle for their provision and practices of asylum. It is important to note that during this period very few African states passed and implemented their own individual national asylum policies. For example, as discussed in Chapter 5, during the influx of Liberian refugees, neither Ghana nor Guinea had a national asylum policy; they thus relied extensively on the OAU Convention in their initial response to the refugee situation.

Additionally, during this period, which Rutinwa (1999:4) labels the “golden era of asylum in Africa”, governments, through their "open door policy", allowed large numbers of refugees to enter and remain on their territory. Many refugees enjoyed reasonably secure living conditions, and were able to benefit from a range of legal, social, and economic rights. Furthermore, large numbers of refugees were provided with land, and encouraged to be self-sufficient. Some states offered refugees the option of permanent settlement, as well as to be

naturalized citizens (see Jacobsen, 1996; Rutinwa, 1999; Crisp, 2000; Milner 2009). Finally, although this era recorded some incidents of deportation and expulsion, most of the states respected the principle of voluntary repatriation (Crisp, 2000), in accordance with article 5 of the OAU Convention.

Since the 1990s, however, authors have observed that this condition no longer exists (Rutinwa, 1999; Crisp 2000). According to Rutinwa (1999), since the early years of that decade African states have engaged in restrictive asylum policies. They have, he observes, demonstrated less commitment to asylum, and abandoned most of the provisions of the OAU Convention by routinely rejecting refugees at their frontiers and returning refugees under conditions that can be considered involuntary or in situations when the cause of their flight still pertains. Moreover, “refugees who manage to enter and remain in the host state receive ‘pseudo-asylum’, where their physical security, dignity and material safety are not guaranteed” (Rutinwa, 1999:1). Therefore, Rutinwa (1999) has referred to this shift as “the end of asylum” on the continent.

The cause or causes of the shift from "liberal asylum towards restrictive asylum" have been discussed in the literature on the politics of asylum and policy formulation of African states (see Jacobsen, 1996, Rutinwa, 1999; Crisp, 2000, Milner 2009). These studies reveal a combination of factors, relating to the state, world politics, and refugees' accounts, in Africa's shift towards more restrictive asylum policies. For example, in an earlier review of the factors that influence the policy choices of host states in developing countries, Jacobsen (1996: 658) notes that during each phase of the refugee experience, a government is “faced with a threefold choice in its response: it can do nothing, it can respond negatively towards the refugees or it can respond positively”. A government's inaction with regard to the influx of refugees, Jacobsen

(ibid.) asserts, is an indication of its limited “capacity for action, [and that it is] unwilling to act or does not consider the appearance of the refugees as a significant matter for its agenda”.

Furthermore, Jacobsen (1996) notes that the decision to react to the influx of refugees is primarily based on the scale of the influx, especially if it threatens to overwhelm the capacity of the local community, or if the presence of the refugees threatens security by encouraging local conflict or incurs the military interest of the sending country.<sup>18</sup>

Concurring with Jacobsen (1996) and Rutinwa (1999), Crisp (2000:162) adds that the “changing character of the African refugee population accounts to some extent for the continent’s declining commitment to asylum”. He opines that the refugees of the 1990s are not “victims of anti-colonial and liberation struggles, therefore, they are unable to count on the support and solidarity offered to refugees of the 1960s to 1970s” (ibid.). Finally, through his review of the asylum policies and practices of Guinea, Kenya, and Tanzania, Milner (2009) concludes that factors both internal and external to the host state, such as burden sharing, regional and international considerations, the scale of the refugee influx, and historical and security concerns have together shaped the policy responses of these states.

Although the growing research on refugee policies and practices has contributed to a better understanding of African states' responses to refugee situations, the current study notes that the studies simplify those responses. In particular, their proposed framework and asylum

---

<sup>18</sup>For a discussion of how the presence of refugees is seen as both a direct and an indirect security threat, see Milner J. (2000) “Sharing the Security Burden towards the Convergence of Refugee Protection and State Security”. *RSC Working Paper No. 4*, (Oxford University: Refugee Studies Centre).

policy formulation discourse focuses too much on the state, which limits the agency of refugees. For example, Milner (2009) notes that the formulation of refugee policies is tangled in a web of domestic interests and international expectations; he adds, “[T]hese factors and others unrelated to the presence of refugees tend to play a predominant role in the formulation of asylum policies, which is incorporated into the broader political calculation”<sup>19</sup> (Milner, 2009:183). While Milner recognizes the influence that refugees as agents have on the policy choices and practices of asylum within the state, his analysis ultimately preserves the state-centric focus of political science. As argued by this study, however, the presence and actions of refugees are consequential factors for the asylum state’s response. Of specific interest here are such questions as how factors associated with the refugees, state’s domestic conditions, and international factors, such as UNHCR activities, cumulatively create the structures of asylum. As illustrated in Chapter 5, the influx of Liberian refugees into Ghana and Guinea led to the formulation of their first national asylum policies and legislation. Moreover, the continuous presence, and increase in the numbers, of the refugees, coupled with Guinea’s domestic security situations, contributed to Guinea’s later restrictive asylum practice. Finally, as illustrated in Chapter 6, the refugees were significant actors in the asylum states’ and IGOs’ repatriation policy and implementation. The current study, therefore, posits that refugees as agents are not simply “consumers” of asylum policies, but that their actions and inaction either shape, reproduce, or change the policy choices and practices of the asylum state.

---

<sup>19</sup>It is important to note that this political calculation and conglomeration of factors in the formulation and implementation of asylum policy is not unique to African states, and that states in other parts of the world have been noted to do likewise, albeit to varying degrees.

### 2.1.6. Searching for Solutions for Forced Migration

The international community, including the UNHCR, views a refugee as having secured a solution to their plight if they have been able to find a safe and permanent (durable) solution through one of the following three means. These are: resettlement in a third country of asylum; local integration in the country of first asylum; and repatriation to the country of origin.

**A) Resettlement:** Resettlement to a third country of asylum is defined by the UNHCR (ExCom, 2003:6) as “the making available in a third country, on a voluntary basis, a permanent residence to a refugee who is in another country, in a manner where the resettled person enjoys...rights similar to nationals” (as quoted in Milner, 2009:49). The practice of resettlement is considered both a solution to the refugee situation and an avenue for other countries, especially those in the West, to share in the burden of the hosting refugees by countries in the Global South (Milner, 2009).

Generally, the UNHCR is involved in seeking out this solution for refugees through settlement officers;<sup>20</sup> it is ultimately, however, the receiving country that makes the final decision on who is accepted. Milner (2009) and Bach (1989) have suggested that states' adoption of resettlement is influenced by both domestic pressure and foreign policy motivations. For example, during the Cold War the US, which is the country with the highest rate of resettlement, “used resettlement not only as a tool of protection for those in need, but, also as a means of highlighting the failures of communist regimes” (ibid.). Furthermore, as noted by Milner (2009), pressure from US-based NGOs, including Refugee Council USA, led to a gradual

---

<sup>20</sup>To formalize the process the UNHCR introduced The Resettlement Handbook in June 1997 at the Formal Consultation on Resettlement. The Handbook was updated in 1998, 2002, 2004, and 2011, and it is accessible in English, French and Spanish. Available online at <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a16b1676.html>

increase in the US's resettlement figures from Africa. The UNHCR thus notes that it is only in circumstances where some civilians cannot repatriate, and are unable to live permanently in their country of first asylum, that resettlement in a third country may be considered the only feasible option (Statute of the Office of the UNHCR, 1996).

While resettlement remains very desirable among refugees in Africa, it is also the least accessible option because of the dynamics involved in its implementation. According to the UNHCR, currently, inasmuch as resettlement remains an option from which some refugees might benefit, the reality is that many more refugees will be left behind for whom alternative durable solutions will have to be found.

**B) Local Integration:** Integration of refugees in the first country of asylum, also referred to as local integration, has always been a guiding principle of the global refugee regime. According to the 1951 Convention, restoring refugees to dignity and ensuring the provision of human rights includes an approach that would lead to their integration into the host society (article 34). Indeed, as noted by Harrell-Bond (2000), the 1951 Convention uses the word "assimilation", which implies the erasure of differences between refugees and their hosts, as well as permanence within the host society.

Local integration, as one of the three durable solutions for refugees, combines the three dimensions of legal, economic, and social and cultural processes (Crisp, 2004). Thus, according to Harrell-Bond (1986:7), integration of refugees is "a situation in which host and refugee communities are able to co-exist, sharing the same resources – both economic and social – with no greater mutual conflict than that which exists within the host community."

Acknowledging the benefits of economic and social cultural integration as an integral part of the

process, Jacobsen (2001) emphasizes the importance of formal legal status. She notes that, ideally, permanent residence or citizenship in the host country is the final step in full integration, since without it *de facto* integrated refugees remain vulnerable.

As with other stipulations of the global refugee regime and the OAU Convention, asylum states reserve the right on how to implement local integration whenever they offer it to refugees. Thus, Crisp (2004:3) describes a host state's offer and practice of local integration as an "assumption that the refugees will remain indefinitely in their country of asylum and find a solution to their plight in that state". Therefore, the key to the implementation of local integration as a permanent solution is the legal framework of the host country that would allow for such a process to take place. It is this framework that legitimizes the integration process; and where this framework is lacking, not only do refugees have inadequate access to social and environmental resources but, more important, such access, if there is any, lacks legitimacy (ibid.).

Although African states have generally been generous in opening their doors to refugees, most of them have been reluctant to promote the idea of local integration for refugees. Security implications and the resource burden of hosting refugees are the main reasons advanced for this stance (see Stein, 1986; Crisp, 2001; Rutinwa, 2002). Thus, Jacobsen (2001) will go as far as to proclaim local integration of refugees in developing countries as a *Forgotten Solution*. Some African states, however, seem to be changing their reluctance about local integration as a durable solution, as refugees are increasingly recognized not as burdens, but as people with skills who can contribute in countless ways to the development of the communities in which they settle (see Chambers, 1986; Kuhlman, 1990). Their remaining in temporary settlements, continually

dependent on international assistance, is thus considered an under-utilization of their potential. This can be avoided through local integration (Martin, 1992).

Moreover, as documented by the UNHCR, since the 1980s countries such as Angola, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Guinea, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Zambia have not only opened their borders to the influx of refugees, but have also offered them the option of local integration. For example, in 1981 Tanzania granted 25,000 Rwandan refugees citizenship. In 2003 it offered 3,000 Somali refugees the possibility of naturalization; and, most recently, in 2008 about 218,000 Burundian refugees were granted citizenship opportunities (Fielden, 2008: 10; Milner, 2009).

**C) Repatriation:** This is where refugees volunteer to return to their country of origin. Article V of the OAU Convention, “which is the only multilateral treaty provision so far concluded for repatriation of refugees” (Goodwin-Guy, 1989:263), stresses the voluntary nature of the repatriation, the importance of collaboration between the country of origin and country of asylum, and the principles that refugees who decide to return should not be penalized and that returnees are to be provided with assistance by the country of origin, the asylum state, and international and intergovernmental organizations to facilitate their return.

The UNHCR’s role in facilitating repatriation is derived from the OAU Convention and the 1980 Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Program, where voluntary repatriation was first examined in detail and its provisions and practices were concluded at the 1985 session of the Executive Committee” (ibid.). The Executive Committee’s program on voluntary repatriation, as noted by Goodwin-Guy (1989), is modelled on the provisions of the OAU Convention. For example, it stresses the essential characteristics of the voluntariness of

repatriation and the participation of both the asylum state and the country of origin. Moreover, it entrusted the UNHCR with the function of auditing the process, including, for example, by evaluating data on the refugees involved, and identifying the refugees involved in the process, as well as information on whether the cause of flight still pertained. At the 36th Session, the Executive Committee (1985:40) endorsed the need for repatriation to be carried out under “conditions of absolute safety”. Finally, the Executive Committee also recognized that voluntary repatriation is the most appropriate solution for refugee problems, particularly when the country of origin becomes independent (ExCom, 1980:18a).

As the lead institution for organized and assisted repatriation of refugees, the UNHCR has a set of conditions intended to facilitate the process and, especially, to make sure it is consistent with the *non-refoulement* provisions of the global refugee regime.<sup>21</sup> Allen (1996:15) lists the following major conditions for fully effecting repatriation as defined by the United Nations:

First it should be ascertained that a substantial and permanent elimination of the factors that caused flight has taken place in the country of origin. Second, the willingness of the refugees must be ensured in order to conduct repatriation on a non-coerced but on voluntary basis; third, government of the country of asylum and origin must agree to ensure the dignified and safe return of refugees by signing the required tripartite agreement with the UNHCR to this end.

---

<sup>21</sup> Non-governmental organizations, states, and multi-lateral agencies can be involved in the process, but the leading role is played by the UNHCR.

These provisions ensure that repatriation occurs under conditions of negotiation, compromise, choices, and communication between the various actors and organizations involved. This experience is generally associated with assisted repatriation. Self-repatriation, on the other hand, is a decision arrived at solely by the refugee (Koser, 1993).<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, these provisions enhance the global refugee regime's ideal of voluntary repatriation and avoidance of *refoulement*. Crisp (2000), however, in his overview of Africa's refugee situation in the 1990s, pointed out that many of the returnees go back under conditions that are far from voluntary, safe, and dignified. Most returns take the form of "repatriation under conflict without resolution of the political issues that originally caused the exodus" (Stein, 1994:68). For most returnees, conditions in exile and the fact that host states are becoming more reluctant to accept refugees for longer periods have resulted in more people returning to their countries of origin when the cause of flight continues. In this situation, repatriation becomes forced. Even in the context of Africa, however, cases of forced repatriation, as noted by Bariagaber (2006), are exceptional and rare.

Arguing for changes in the UNHCR's process of promoting and facilitating voluntary repatriation, Cuny, Stein, and Reed (1992) observe that one of the effects of the new wave of refugee situations in Africa is that voluntary repatriations occur during the conflict without a decisive political event, such as independence. Accordingly, they suggest that the conventional wisdom of voluntary repatriation, as a desirable solution to be promoted, no longer applies.

---

<sup>22</sup> Following Koser (1993), the study uses the term "self-repatriation" in place of the widely used "spontaneous repatriation". The latter, according to Koser, seems to imply that refugees move on impulse, while the former implies that refugees plan for repatriation.

Furthermore, according to Stein and Reed (1993), “in the real world the UNHCR can establish standards it hopes to achieve, but it cannot set preconditions for its participation *and to make demands on sovereign states*” (as quoted in Chimni, 1993 with emphasis added).

Notwithstanding the changing context, African states continue to demonstrate a preference for voluntary repatriation of refugees as a durable solution for the millions of refugees they host. As noted by Whitaker (2002), since the 1990s across Africa governments have hardened their stances to ensure the temporariness of refugee status, something she adds has always been a legal requirement, if not the reality, for refugees. African states' preference for repatriation is reflected in their various asylum policies. The majority of them profess a commitment to the three durable solutions, but practices by and utterances from government officials indicate a strong preference for return of the refugees. Some of the practices by African countries to promote repatriation include denial of permits for refugees to work in the formal sectors, maintaining them in mix-shift camps, and not providing them with the other durable options, such as refugee integration within host countries (Rutinwa, 1999).

Even among critics of the UNHCR's, donors' and asylum states' promotion of and preference for return as a durable solution (Chimin, 1996; Stein, 1994; Kibreab, 1991), the notion is accepted that return is a desirable solution and, at least, that every refugee desires to return "home". “Return to the place one has been violently uprooted from is an overriding preoccupation, bordering on obsession, of most refugee populations” concludes Kibreab about displaced populations in Africa, although pointing out “this is not only true in Africa” (1999:405).

The limitations of the solutions just described have led to discussions about Preventive Protection and Safe Havens. Preventive Protection envisages a long-term solution by proposing a shift in focus away from refugees as a “problem” and toward addressing the causes of refugee flows, so that people are not displaced to begin with.<sup>23</sup> Safe havens are proposed as an alternative to “Preventive Protection”. “Havens”, the idea is, “should be created for the people in the place where they are.”<sup>24</sup> The implication, however, is that people will be kept close to the conflict, and the proposition seems to ignore the issue of later threats this proximity might pose. The acute situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), which is fast becoming a crisis of global proportions, attests to the unavailability of this solution (see Loescher and Milner, 2005).

Although the focus of this study is on Liberian returnees who chose the option of repatriation as a solution, the objective of this research is not an evaluation of the voluntariness or otherwise of the repatriation process as practiced by Ghana and Guinea. Nor is it an enquiry into the most preferred solution for refugees in Africa (see Stein, 1986; Chimini, 1998). It is, rather, about how refugees participate in the process of seeking solutions, in contrast with the approach of states and organizations that assume the necessity of making and implementing decisions for them (refugees). Thus, in concurring with Korac (2003:53), the current study argues that the search for a solution should be understood as “a two-way process, rather than a kind of medication that refugees take in”. In this two-way process, refugees participate in the

---

<sup>23</sup>For a discussion of the origins and implementation of Preventive Protection Policy, see Frelick B. (1992) “Preventive Protection” and the Right to Seek Asylum: A Preliminary Look at Bosnia and Croatia” *International Journal of Refugee Law* Vol. 4 No. 4.

<sup>24</sup>Safe Havens are areas created within the territorial boundaries of a state by the UN through a Chapter VII resolution to protect a group of people facing danger or persecution. This temporary measure was adopted in Iraq to protect the Kurds from the Iraqi military, and in the former Yugoslavia to shield Bosnian Muslims from Serbian and Croatian attack.

processes in which a solution is identified and implemented, and are not regarded as recipients of a solution imposed by states and the UNHCR. The reality, moreover, of most African refugee situations is that no single solution will solve every refugee situation: not even among refugee outflows from the same source.

## **2.2. MAPPING PEACEBUILDING AND RETURNEES' REINTEGRATION PERSPECTIVES**

As stated, one of the elements of this study is to examine how returning refugees and their reintegration activities link them up with peacebuilding as participants, and not simply as recipients, nor as arriving to fulfill a clause in a peace agreement. It is thus necessary to deal with the major lines of argument pertaining to the merits and drawbacks of returning refugees' connection to post-conflict reconstruction, as expounded by scholarship and policy on the subject. Doing so may help shed light on the issue, and provide a more or less complete picture of the arguments surrounding the proposed options in undertaking return as a viable strategy for refugees, especially those located in Africa. The lines of argument are presented below and reflect the views of those who consider the presence of refugees in general, and their return and reintegration, as challenging to peacebuilding, and those who think otherwise. It should be noted here that both schools of thought claim that adherence to their propositions is instrumental in realizing efforts towards better policies to resolve the refugee situation and enhance the practice of peacebuilding, and that it is ultimately the refugee returnee who benefits.

The section begins with a brief literature review of the politics of peacebuilding in Africa: the concept, policy and practice. The study opines that the institutional, top-down and

state centric focus of peacebuilding practices and policies in Africa are a major source of limitations on the engagement of local actors, such as refugee returnees, in the process. That is followed by summaries of the positions expounded by the two schools of thought that differ on the question of the links between the return of forced migrants, their reintegration activities and the peacebuilding agenda.

### **2.2.1. Peacebuilding: Concept and Policy**

Depending on the motives and background of the actors involved (local and international agencies) in the process of peacebuilding, the term “peacebuilding” has come to have and imply a multiplicity of meanings and actions (Bush, 1995). In general, however, the broad working conception put forward by a former UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to the UN General Assembly, that peacebuilding is part of an overall “peace process”, has been very influential. Boutros-Ghali saw “peace” as a process spread along a continuum of events, which included preventative diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. In short, the Secretary-General viewed the first three stages as follows: “Preventative diplomacy seeks to resolve disputes before violence breaks out; peacemaking and peacekeeping are required to halt conflicts and preserve peace once it is attained” (Boutros-Ghali, 1992: 6). From this perspective peacebuilding is the subsequent period, the one of unified response, designed to rebuild civil society and “support structures with the objective of strengthening and solidifying peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (ibid.). Among other things, peacebuilding activities would include creating an environment where “disarming the previously warring

factions and the restoration of order, the custody and possible destruction of weapons, and repatriating refugees” (ibid. 16) would take place.

This definition and operationalization of the concept of peacebuilding was innovative, and contributed to the restructuring of the international community’s and aid agencies’ involvement in rebuilding states; however, a point of view needs to be considered. In a 1996 review, Tschirgi argued that such a conceptualization of peacebuilding is limited by its narrow focus on the “immediate humanitarian and security tasks that confront the international community”, and that it falls short of contextualizing the “complex emergencies and post-conflict transitions within a broader systemic framework” (Tschirgi, 1996: 20). A broader systemic model needs to include practical and theoretical questions about the internal dynamics of states that have collapsed and are on the road to reconstruction and reconciliation (ibid.). The UN Secretary-General’s 1998 report to the Security Council, titled *The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa*, is seen as an attempt to address the alleged narrow focus of the conceptualization and practice of peacebuilding espoused in the *Agenda for Peace* document. The 1998 report identified post-conflict peacebuilding as consisting of the actions undertaken at the end of a conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of armed confrontation. The report further described in more detail what is needed in the aftermath of conflict:

Societies that have emerged from conflict have special needs. To avoid a return to conflict while laying a solid foundation for development, emphasis must be placed on critical priorities, such as encouraging reconciliation and demonstrating respect for human rights; fostering

political inclusiveness and promoting national unity; ensuring the safe, smooth and early repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons; reintegrating ex-combatants and others into productive society; curtailing the availability of small arms; and mobilizing domestic and international resources for reconstruction and economic recovery. Every priority is linked to every other, and success will require a concerted and coordinated effort on all fronts (UNSG 1998 Report on Conflict and Promotion of Durable Peace).

Although the 1998 report was seen to be more elaborate, Matthews and Ali (2004) questioned the idea of defining “peacebuilding as the last phase of the conflict cycle; beginning when a ceasefire brings the fighting to an end and efforts are initiated to revive a country’s economy, to rebuild society and to restore its polity”, suggesting that “the process of peacebuilding can begin while a conflict is still ongoing or even before civil war had begun in earnest” (Matthews and Ali, 2004: 6). Peacebuilding, they note, is a complex historical process of socio-economic and political renewal involving global actors, as well as local dynamics.

Another set of issues that was seen as constituting a gap in the conceptual model of peacebuilding as initiated by the UN relates to the scope of the activities, the time frame and the question of supervision and coordination of the various agencies involved (Stedman and Rothchild, 1996; David, 1999; Matthews and Ali: 2004). The empirical evidence for peacebuilding initiatives suggests that building peace involves long-term activities, and most of the cases in Africa have not produced lasting peace because of the haste and impatience of the organizations involved (Stedman and Rothchild, 1996; Adebajo, 2002; Furley and May, 2006).

Accordingly, Matthews and Ali (2004:410) have suggested that, ultimately, war-torn countries will have to deal with four main tasks, which they describe as the strategies for peacebuilding. These are *security recovery, creation of political institutions, economics, and justice and reconciliation*. They add that these strategies are interconnected, and any successful outcome of peacebuilding should be based on the advancement of these elements. The aim of these tasks is, they conclude, to prevent the re-emergence of conditions that gave rise to armed conflicts.

Equally, David (1999) suggests that the success of peacebuilding relies on the implementation of these critical tasks, which is usually undertaken during a delicate period of transition, at which time the outcome is uncertain.

To address the question of supervision and coordination of peacebuilding activities, in 2005 the UN established the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Its core functions, as contained in Secretary-General Annan's 2004 report to the Security Council, titled *A More Secured World: Our Shared Responsibility*, are:

...to identify countries which are under stress and at risk of sliding towards state collapse; to organize, in partnership with national government, proactive assistance in preventing that process from developing further; to assist in the planning for transitions between conflict and post-conflict peace building; in particular to marshal and sustain the efforts of the international community in post-conflict peace-building over whatever period necessary (p.69).

In addition, a voluntary fund for peacebuilding was also established to stabilize financing for such efforts.

Other doctrines and frameworks have emerged that support and attempt to define peacebuilding as an international obligation. For example, in 2001 the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) released its report, titled *Responsibility to Protect* (R2P),<sup>25</sup> which rejects the notion of a sovereign state as an independent political unit allowed to pursue its domestic affairs without external interference. According to *R2P*, “where gross human rights abuses are occurring, it is the duty of the international community to intervene, over and above considerations of state sovereignty”. Endorsing the report, the General Assembly declared that “each individual state has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war, crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” (UN General Assembly, World Summit Outcome, 2005: para. 138).<sup>26</sup> In the event that a state proves incapable of doing so, or is complicit in these crimes, the international community should be “prepared to take collective action in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the UN Charter, including Chapter VII” (Ibid., para. 139).

Similarly, the African Union’s (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC), which is also embedded in the conditionality of sovereignty as proclaimed in *R2P*, was launched in 2003, and upholds the notion of external intervention. The main mandate of the PSC is to recommend to the AU Assembly decisions either to intervene or specifically on issues other than genocide, war

---

<sup>25</sup>The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty”, International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, December 2001, [www.iciss.ca/report-en.asp](http://www.iciss.ca/report-en.asp).

<sup>26</sup> See UN General Assembly, "2005 World Summit outcome document", October 2005, <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/487/60/PDF/N0548760.pdf?OpenElement>.

crimes and crimes against humanity, and that demand an unquestioned response of intervention as dictated by the Constitutive Act (AU CA, 2003, article 4(h)).<sup>27</sup>

### **2.2.2. Peacebuilding in Africa: Actors and Factors for Sustainable Peace**

The above noted multilateral and regional policies and legal frameworks have become useful tools for international organizations developing strategies for intervening in post-conflict situations. This development has, however, sparked debate regarding post-conflict peacebuilding activities. Essentially, there are three sides to the debate: those who argue for external, UN-led peacebuilding; those who argue for internal leadership; and the moderators, who argue for a focus on what factors lead to successful outcomes, whether led internally or externally. The objective in the following presentation is not to resolve the debate, but to present a general overview of scholarship on peacebuilding practices in Africa.

Scholars such as Roland Paris (2003, 2004) have argued that the internationally driven post-conflict peacebuilding project is an extension of the contemporary version of the liberal peace thesis, which posits that democracy and market economies offer the best chances of guaranteeing long-term peace.<sup>28</sup> Paris does not challenge the importance of transforming post-collapsed states into "democratic and "market states. In fact, he calls for the continuation of the liberal peace project under the firm control of the international system. Paris posits that postwar societies need political stability and effective administration of territory, "democratic ferment",

---

<sup>27</sup> For an in-depth discussion on the AU's incorporation of the doctrine of *R2P* as a guiding principle towards addressing security challenges on the continent, see: Tiekou T. and Powel K. (2005) "The African Union and the Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Protectionist Regime for Africa" *International Insights*, July.

<sup>28</sup> Paris, R., (2003) *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2004); "Bringing the Leviathan back in: Classical vs. Contemporary conceptions of the liberal peace," *International Studies Review*, 8:3 (2006), 425–40.

and economic upheaval. He argues that oversight must remain in the hands of international peace builders until conditions are ripe for elections and for the return of the state to domestic actors.<sup>29</sup> Agreeing with Paris, Moore (2000:2) notes that “externally led interventions strengthen the beneficiary state to the extent that it is capable of coping with the ravages of the new world order”. Indeed, he dismisses the call for internal leadership as “nostalgia for the state of the days gone by” (ibid.).

Although the legal and strategic argument noted above justifies the support for external leadership in peacebuilding, others object to this notion. Among them is Krishna Kumar (1997), who argues that although members of the international community may have years of experience and technical knowledge in economic and, to some extent, social reconstruction, they are more limited in terms of political or state rebuilding. Corroborating Kumar, De Waal (1997) asserts that outside interventions interfere with the process, instead of hastening or strengthening it. Clapham (2002:35) goes on to ask whether outsiders can actually reconstruct a state for others. In his opinion, “all states must be built on foundations of strong social capital and indigenous ‘*raison d’être*’”.

In their opposition to an externally led peacebuilding process, analysts of African cases argue for an African approach to peacebuilding as the better path of attaining sustained peace. Accordingly, Murithi (2005) and Francis (2008) contend that since the (neo) liberal peace approach is ahistorical, too general, and unidirectional, it undervalues the variations among cases

---

<sup>29</sup> Paris identifies the presence of electoral systems, effective civil society structures, and the elimination of divisive propaganda machinery as indications of ripeness. He also cites as necessary institutions to regulate economic shocks.

of post-conflict development. For his part, Chandler (1999) contends that the interventionist policies by the UN and the donor communities represent neocolonial and imperialist tendencies. Based on her review of the peace process in Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC, Delay (2006:304) concluded that internal leadership was a better solution. She notes that the pursuit of the neoliberal peacebuilding formula “reinforces the view that the space of African politics is the preserve of the international actors, the domestic political elite and armed movements, to the exclusion of civil society”.

Moderating the ongoing debate on which actor is better qualified to lead a peacebuilding process; Mark Duffield (2001) proposes that the discussion focus on the outcome, rather than on who leads. As long as the process and its outcomes are "felt to 'do no harm' and generally support the conflict resolution and transformational aims of liberal peace it should be permissible and justified". On their part, Newman and Schnabel (2008) suggest the focus should be more on a synergy of effort by insiders and outsiders. From their standpoint, regardless of whether outsiders lead, local actors will ultimately assume the responsibility of consolidating state reconstruction achievements. Newman and Schnabel argue that an impartial external leadership in the short term will provide the buffer for local leaders to renew trust and confidence among themselves.

Also emerging from the camp of the moderators is the debate on whether the peacebuilding process necessarily results in sustainable peace. The thinking in most of this literature is rooted in Johan Galtung's (1969) seminal distinction between "positive (absence of structural violence) and negative peace" (absence of physical violence).<sup>30</sup> Several comparative

---

<sup>30</sup>Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research", *Journal of Peace Research*, (1969), pp. 167-191. Galtung distinguished between negative peace, as the outcome of efforts to stop physical or personal violence

studies concluded that what distinguished the cases of successful peacebuilding (Namibia) from cases of failure (Angola) was the level of international engagement, as well as the presence or absence of “spoilers”: that is, powerful actors, such as former rebel leaders, who oppose peacebuilding (Hampson, 1996; Stedman, 1997). According to Stedman, such parties can only be defeated; they cannot be appeased through negotiations. In Angola, for example, Stedman concluded that it was the absence of peace (re)enforcement which largely undermined international efforts to implement agreements that had been duly negotiated. For his part, Nathan (2001) notes that international peacebuilding efforts have not succeeded in Africa because of the insufficient attention paid to the structural causes of violence within African societies and to the international drivers of the conflict, such as trade liberalization and the market oriented structural adjustment.

Similarly, the nature of the end of the violence is seen as an essential variable in determining the success or otherwise of peacebuilding efforts. The question of interest is thus whether military victory or peace settlement matters more in the attainment of sustainable peace. Comparing cases in Africa and elsewhere, Licklider (1995) and Ali and Matthews (2004) have concluded that military victories return to war less often than do peace agreements. In a related study of mainly African cases, Furley and May (2006) argue that it is not necessarily true that peace agreements are a recipe for a return to war; but, rather, it is necessary to examine the contents and contexts of peace agreements, as well as their implementation.<sup>31</sup> Berdal (2008), on

---

(direct violence), and positive peace, as the goal of efforts to end indirect structural and cultural violence (indirect violence) that threaten the economic, social and cultural well-being and identity of individual human beings and groups.

<sup>31</sup>See also Stedman S., Rothchild D., and Cousens E., (2002) *Ending Civil Wars: the Implementation of Peace Agreements*.

the other hand, argues that post-conflict peacebuilding must be based on an understanding of local political structures that have been shaped, but not obliterated, by the war. Examining post-Cold War post-conflict reconstruction in Africa, Asia and Europe, he argues that the peace reached in situations of both peace agreement and military victories exists at only one level. That is to say, while fighting and large scale violence die with the official end of hostilities, the issues and grievances that first gave rise to, supported and help extend the war are not usually addressed to the satisfaction of many parties, even in the case of so-called comprehensive peace accords, as exemplified in the Bicesse Accords for Angola and the Arusha Accord for Rwanda. Emphasizing an aspect usually neglected by the literature on peace agreement-versus-military victory, Berdal notes that the actors involved in negotiating, drafting and signing of an agreement are equally important in its evaluation. The selection of actors for drafting, signing and implementing peace agreements may not always be comprehensive, and may neglect other actors usually seen as minor.

These works have provided valuable insights and criticism and peacebuilding practices over the years have been enhanced by these different propositions. There is, however, every indication that international organizations continue to direct activities, and the local actors they engage with are limited to the elite such as government officials and organizations. Of particular concern for the current study is the absence of discussion on the engagement of refugees and returnees, although both scholarship and the legal framework see peacebuilding as a precondition for the successful return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs. For example, both the S-G *Agenda for Peace* and the 2001 ICISS *R2P* document emphasize establishing rule of law and a

legal framework to enable the return of refugees and for their political and economic reintegration. Supporting this process, Fagen (2003: 204-206) argues that the reintegration of people uprooted by war is a responsibility shared among the international community and their home government. Accordingly she proposes the following roles for the various institutions. The UNHCR and the host states repatriate refugees, and give the returnees assistance packages. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) inherits caseloads of demobilized soldiers, and is charged with helping their reincorporation into civil society. The home government has to provide security for the returnees, and land and other resources to aid with the process of reintegration. Helton (2002:30) therefore defines peacebuilding as consisting of “efforts by the international community to construct or fortify societies riven by crisis in order ... to encourage the repatriation and reintegration of refugees”.

Two questions that this proposition begs are: how do returnees participate in a process that is institutionally biased and top-down; and, how are the return and reintegration of refugees connected with peacebuilding? Examining these questions is a primary objective of this study. The following section therefore addresses the two schools of thought on the issue of the links between refugee return and reintegration and peacebuilding activities. The literature on this subject is meagre, and the issue, as noted by Zaum (2011:289), “has mostly been ignored”. Indeed, most of the literature on the politics and policies of peacebuilding ignores refugees, whether as former combatants or child soldiers, and women (Koser, 2009). At best, a chapter in a book is dedicated to the repatriation of refugees, with no assessment of their post return activities. The practice, among scholars on peacebuilding generally, is to relegate refugees and returnees to a sub-section of a book or article that focuses on peacebuilding. For example, a

review of three major books on building peace in Africa -- *Durable Peace: Challenges for Peacebuilding in Africa* (2004), *Building Sustainable Peace* (2004) and *Ending Africa's War* (2006) -- verifies this assertion. No specific chapters are dedicated to the question of refugee returnees, although chapters are dedicated to women and former combatants, as well as to the various strategies of peacebuilding.

According to Zaum (op. cit.), the explanation for this omission is that the refugee situation is often regarded as a humanitarian, rather than a political, problem. In responding to this limited attention to refugees by peacebuilding scholarship, Adelman (2002) cautioned international security experts not to dismiss refugees' importance. Notwithstanding this oversight, the section below is an attempt by the current study to track the discussions dispersed throughout the limited existing literature and policy documents.

### **2.2.3 Refugee Returnees' Reintegration as a Challenge to Peacebuilding**

The "idea that refugees would return home if conditions change has evolved from a basic equation of return = homecoming to a more sophisticated debate" (Dona and Muggeridge, 2006:1). During the 1990s scholars of forced migration, like policy makers, viewed return as the end of the refugee cycle: a permanent condition, and a preferred, durable solution to refugee crises (Allen and Morsink, 1994; Stein, Cuny and Reed, 1990). At the end of that decade the idea that return was the completion of a cycle whereby the refugee could be restored to pre-exilic circumstances "back home" was questioned (Black and Koser, 1999). Research with refugees who had "gone home" illuminated the challenges of return, which were characterized by economic, psychological, political, security and social difficulties (Larkin et al., 1991, Allen and

Morsink 1994, Allen 1996, North and Simmons, 2000). Pessimism about the benefits for peacebuilding of repatriating refugees also centres on its sustainability. Asking this question is to go beyond consideration of the success or level of reintegration for individual returnees, and into the area of the sustainability of the process for individual returnees and for the broader society (Black, 2006).

In much of the literature the reality of post-return is characterized by such challenges, and not by fulfilment of the optimistic assumptions promoted within the policy circles of both forced migration and peacebuilding. The practice of return, the studies note, is an admission of failure, and its major objective is to relieve the host state of a burden: refugees. Recent research (Blitz, 2003; Turton and Marsden, 2002) notes that the transfer of human capital based arguments may be overly optimistic (as quoted in Blitz *et al.* 2005: 184). The major issues raised by these studies include the following: “refugees never actually return to their previous homes since post-conflict societies are usually divided; returnees usually have to assert their rights in the face of social and political oppositions because they may be associated with a past regime or attached to a formal elite political or ethnic structure and some are often resented for having left and for the opportunities they might have received abroad” (ibid.). The skills, moreover, that returnees acquired in exile may not match the needs of the home country.

Furthermore, the critics argue, in many circumstances returnees may be perceived as a burden by the stayee population, because their arrival may mean increased competition for scarce resources, such as land, water, forest produce, jobs, housing, and health care, spots in schools, credit facilities, and employment opportunities (Kibreab, 2002). Tapscott (1994:257) says that “returning exiles have, thus, not only exacerbated the problem of unemployment, but [they] also

compete for jobs with the local population”. Stayee populations who take over property (land, housing, farm tools, building materials, livestock and so on) left behind by refugees may resent their return, which may lead to their dispossession. Kabera and Muyanja’s (1994) study of returnees in the Luwero triangle in Central Uganda shows “bitter conflict” over cultivable land between returnees and stayee populations. The process of restitution of housing and land is often characterized by intense tension, conflict recrimination and incessant litigation.

Other studies have noted that the challenges associated with returning refugees and their reintegration are not limited to the returnees, but extend to the country of return. For the home government that is already saddled with the huge challenge of rebuilding a state, the increase in population can make returnees an additional burden and, in some cases, a threat to security of the state. Resources planned for reconstruction can be diverted to meet the needs of returnees (Ghosh, 2000). Drawing on the concept of the "refugee warrior",<sup>32</sup> Howard Adelman has examined the assumption that refugee return is a condition for or, at least, a significant indicator of a viable peace process; and he finds that there is no relationship (Adelman, 2002; see also Eastmond and Öjendal 1999; Chimni, 2003). Contrary to this proposition, Adelman notes, the return of refugees may threaten the viability of peace if they are, or are mobilized as, fighters. In

---

<sup>32</sup>The term was coined by Astri Suhrke, and introduced through the collaborative work of Aristide Zolberg, Astri Suhrke and Sergio Aguayo (1986; 1989), particularly in the book *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*. The term brought attention to an important, yet so far neglected, aspect of displacement. Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguayo define refugee warrior communities as: highly conscious refugee communities with a political leadership structure and armed sections engaged in warfare for a political objective, whether it be to recapture the homeland, change the regime, or secure a separate state (1989: 275). Other authors, such as Fiona Terry (2002), Sarah Kenyon Lischer (2005), and Stephen John Stedman & Fred Tanner (2003), have used the term in their contribution to the larger debate on humanitarianism and specifically how the refugee regime sustained Rwandese refugees who later became the Rwandan war perpetrators in the mid-1990s.

that case, the returnees themselves may represent a security threat and, hence, undermine the peace process.

#### **2.2.4. Refugees Returnees' Reintegration Vital to Peacebuilding**

The idea of returning when the cause of their flight ceases to exist, and the inclusion of repatriation of refugees as a major component in peace accords, have been fundamental to UN-led post-conflict reconstruction activities (Chimni, 1999; Black, 2006). The establishment of legitimate institutions is both important for the peaceful resolution of conflicts that displace societies internally or externally and, as noted by Zaum (2011), a pre-condition for the return of refugees or IDPs and their integration into the post-conflict society. Many inter-governmental and nongovernmental organizations that promote and encourage the return of refugees as an integral part of post-conflict reconstruction share this view. In their operations and policy formulations, the UNHCR and other international humanitarian and development organizations, for example, have concentrated on return as a durable solution to the refugee crises and as *The End of the Refugee Cycle* (Black and Koser, 1999). The various organizations have thus developed a model that emphasizes what are called the "4Rs": Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction. According to Coles (1989), it is a comprehensive and durable solution that avoids exile bias and seeks a genuine long-term solution to the plight of refugees, an enduring objective of the UNHCR. In addition, the UNHCR, in partnership with other developmental agencies, such as the UNDP, has adopted and implemented certain programs to help returnees, including with integration. These include providing materials and economic capital for reintegration activities.

Studies have noted that the arrival and presence of returnees is a major contribution to peacebuilding. They suggest that the return of an exiled population is an indication from the returnees of a renewed relationship between themselves and their state of origin. According to Petrin (2002:6-7), “since refugees signify a breakdown in state – citizen relationship, their decision to return signifies confidence in the country of origin”. Thus, Chimni (2002) notes that the return of refugees and the process of their repatriation is an indicator for the legitimacy of the process of peacebuilding. The numbers of returned refugees subsequently serve as an important barometer of peacebuilding in a post-conflict society (ibid.). The return of refugees is considered a crucial component of the process of post-conflict stabilization. Their arrival and reintegration is seen as furthering the goals of post-conflict reconstruction, such as reconciliation and transition from a war-torn society to a civil society (Jurgensen, 2000).

Moreover, research and policy have promoted return of refugees on the grounds that they are a source of human capital that is urgently needed in their home countries to address shortages caused by the conflict, or the "brain drain" resulting from forced migration. This view is based on the awareness that refugee populations often include quite a high number of professional and skilled individuals, who may have acquired their qualifications before or during the exile period (Kibreab, 2002; Milner, 2011) As noted by Guterres in his statement to the UN Security Council, “refugees return with schooling and skills... Over and over, we see that their participation is necessary for the consolidation of both peace and post-conflict economic recovery” (as quoted in Milner, 2011). Reiterating the significance of refugees' contribution to peacebuilding, Black (2006) asks: “What could be better than using the skills of refugee doctors, teachers, administrators and businesspersons in the reconstruction of conflict-ridden countries by

promoting return?” Seeking to counter this rationale for the promotion of repatriation, Blitz *et al.* (2005) assert that it is dominantly associated with refugee populations in countries that are relatively wealthy, or where education and skills training formed a major part of the humanitarian assistance package.

Others advocate the beneficial links of refugee return and reintegration to peacebuilding, but with certain qualifications and conditions. Stein (1997:161) envisages a danger of repatriation whereby relocation converts refugees into IDPs. He claims that people who are physically at home but are not participating in the economic and political life of their country are still uprooted persons. Hinting at some of the challenges that returnees encounter, the UNSG 2009 Policy Review Committee noted that the lack of coordination among the various agencies and actors in peacebuilding negatively impacted returnees’ reintegration activities.<sup>33</sup> To resolve this challenge, in 2011 the SG issued a policy titled “Ending Displacement in the Aftermath of the Conflict”. The policy, following the peacebuilding strategy outlined above, proposes strengthening the following areas to support a more coherent and effective response to the needs of refugee returnees: Economic and Social Recovery, Protection, Security and Rule of Law and Governance.<sup>34</sup>

Kibreab (2006:29) is of the opinion that returning refugees and their reintegration activities constitute resources rather than liabilities to receiving communities, but this can be

---

<sup>33</sup>For a list of other peacebuilding challenges noted by the Committee, see United Secretary on Peace Building in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict, A/63888-S/2009/304, (SG’s Report)

<sup>34</sup>Since the SG’s program outlined is in reference to returning refugees, the study adopts these programs in its examination of Liberia’s peacebuilding practices and its relationship with returning refugees. Details of these programs are outlined below.

achieved only under conditions of restored peace, with a conducive policy environment. According to Kibreab, the latter means the presence of a well-functioning state: one that is strong, but not necessarily democratic in the conventional sense. The state should be able to protect life and property, be transparent in its administrative practices, and able to deliver services and to establish institutions that promote and enhance social and economic interaction by reducing uncertainty and insecurity. These factors are important to this study, and the analysis of returning refugees' reintegration activities concentrates on how the presence or absence of such factors enables or constrains returnees' engagement with peacebuilding.

### **2.3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The preceding discussion of peacebuilding and, particularly, the two schools of thought regarding the links between returning refugees and peacebuilding invite challenges and criticisms; it is important, however, to note that both schools of thought have made important contributions to our knowledge of the subject. They have identified the interplay between certain conditions on the ground and the involvement of the international and national actors in shaping the degree of benefits and the challenges to the returnee and to the process of peacebuilding. They have yielded pointed policy recommendations for the international and national actors, and for the refugee returnee. The debate so far, though, remains narrow. Although proponents of the value for peacebuilding of returning refugees have strong arguments, they fail to address comprehensively the question of how former forced migrants acquired the resources and skills that, they claim, become available to the peacebuilding process. Inherent in the analysis is a failure to systematically examine return as part of the overall process of forced migration. Return

and reintegration are discussed in isolation from the entire forced migration experience, and without considering "refugeehood" as a *social* process of which the initial stages affect succeeding ones (Bariagaber, 2006: 9) It is necessary to study the forced migration experience over time, recognize that each phase (flight, exile, and repatriation) forms part of a complex whole, and present the various factors, including the refugees' and returnees' opportunities and challenges. As Bascom (1998:176) has aptly asserted, "all facets of the refugee experience – migration, resettlement, repatriation, and reintegration -- represent an ongoing process of choices made and played out in a *changing context of the individual refugee*" (emphasis added). Thus, by limiting the discussion and analysis to the period of repatriation (that is, from when they leave the host state to their arrival in the home country), we miss the opportunity to address the effect that each phase of forced migration has on the return process itself, and on refugee returnees, including their resources and agency in rebuilding their lives: the effect of it the current study posits, makes them active participants of the state's rebuilding process.

The current study also posits that the polarizing position on the issue over-simplify the situation of forced migrants and their participation in peacebuilding. As already noted, "the diversity and complexity of displacement cannot be fully understood by engaging in overly deterministic or simplistic explanations" (Collinson, 2011:322). Similarly, how returnees' connect to peacebuilding is a dynamic process that requires case by case analysis and at best, comparative analysis of similar cases, rather than broad generalizations and assumptions. Concurring with Collinson (2011) and Kibreab (2006), the current study hopes to contribute to the emerging literature on IR and forced migration (see Betts *et al.*, 2011) and, especially, on returning refugees and their reintegration as part of the broader post-conflict peacebuilding of the

country of origin. This will be achieved by first addressing the complex interplay between, on one hand, the experience of the structural conditions of forced migration as constraining and empowering, and on the other the agency of the refugees and returnees through an analysis of their choices and decisions. That is to say, by looking at the effects of different asylum conditions and home state policies, and the refugees' choices and decisions during the entire process, research will be in a better position to answer questions about refugees' resource transformations and about refugee agency in their choices, as well as about how refugees affect post-conflict societies, including the peacebuilding process. Chapter Three elaborates on this concept and its application to the current study.

Requirements such as those noted by Kibreab (2006) and the UNSG are, moreover, important but limited. As suggested by the current study, the identification of such conditions should not be limited to the country of origin; rather they should be observed throughout the experience of forced migration and, most important, during the asylum phase. Such structures, especially during the asylum phase, are likely to enable returnees to gain new, or replenish lost, resources partly because the asylum phase is longer than the flight phase. Second, the UNSG's 2011 policy directive, addressing the challenges returnees face, is problematic. It underestimates the agency of the returnees, and implicitly promotes the idea that they are problems waiting for solutions. Similar to the peacebuilding frameworks and legal doctrines, the UNSG's 2011 proposal extensively emphasizes the role of organizations in resolving the problem: that is, the challenges faced or presented by the refugees. In their largely institutional focus, the refugees are portrayed as receivers, and not as participants. This emphasis on the role of institutions, both

local and international, seems to overshadow the participation of local individuals. In general, local groups in the post-conflict states, such as IDPs, former combatants and refugee returnees, are perceived as beneficiaries of the process, and not as active participants. The current model and practice of peacebuilding generally has very little room for local participation (Caplan 2005); and, as noted by the current study, they largely constrain the returnees' capabilities and potential to engage in the process of rebuilding their country.

Finally, in the foregoing discussion, the study has suggested that the links between returnee reintegration and the process of post-conflict reconstruction in the country of origin are beyond the fulfilment of a peace agreement or the simple empirical evidence of their arrival or presence of returnees in the country of origin. Despite the challenges that accompany the process of peacebuilding as an institutional project, the study contends that the deployment of returnees' resources towards their reintegration has potential benefits for peacebuilding. The theoretical and methodological guide for this line of inquiry is fully expanded upon in the next chapter, and is empirically demonstrated through a comparative study of Liberian returnees formerly exiled in Ghana and Guinea.

## Chapter 3. Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

### 3.0. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter established the context for the current study by reviewing existing knowledge and establishing the current state of forced migration and peacebuilding in Africa. This chapter builds the theoretical framework and methodology as a guide for the study. It has two main sections: the theoretical framework, which begins with Social Constructivism's (SC) approach to the questions of structure, agents and actors agency, and introduces the concept of returnee resources, based on the concept of refugee resources. The second section presents the research methods that guided the data collection and analysis in the study.

### 3.1. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST<sup>35</sup> FRAMEWORK

Constructivism is presented as an alternative to the dominance of neorealism and neoliberalism in the study of International Relations (IR),<sup>36</sup> (Hopf, 1998).<sup>37</sup> It is about “human

---

<sup>35</sup>Constructivism in IR theory is categorized into two main variants: Conventional and Critical, or modern and postmodern. The differentiation between the two groups can be found in their conception of power. Whereas conventional constructivism is aimed at the production of new knowledge and insights based on novel understandings, critical constructivism analyses social constraint and cultural understanding from the viewpoint of a supreme human interest in enlightenment and emancipation. They share a number of positions, however, such as the mutual constitution of actors and structures, anarchy as a social construct, actors' identities, and interests as variables. See Hoffman, M., (1991) "Restructuring, Reconstruction, Reinscription, Rearticulation: Four Voices in Critical International Theory" *Millennium*, Vol.20 No. 2, pp.169-185 for an in-depth discussion of the differences between modern and postmodern constructivism.

<sup>36</sup>In Comparative Politics (CP), the term constructivism, though rarely used, means something different from the IR application (Fearon and Latitin 2000). As argued by Finnemore and Sikkink (2001) and Green (2002), comparativists resist the stricter positivist dictates in non-constructivists' IR and are suspicious of IR constructivists' argument about the influence of international and normative factors on domestic politics. They conclude, however, that CP Constructivism has its own variant in CP research. Four main areas of CP research that are influenced by the constructivist framework are: 1) in the ideas literature, especially its treatment of the role of ideas in economic policy making; 2) in the political culture literature; 3) the debates over the rise and role of social movements; and 4) the literature on identities, which especially reveals possibilities for cross fertilization between the two sub-disciplines of political science.

consciousness and its role in international life” (Ruggie, 1998:856). The basic premise of constructivism is thus that the world is socially constructed. Actors create the world by creating shared intersubjective meanings through interaction in a community; in turn, they derive their identities and roles from these constructions (Searle, 1995; Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001). Constructivists further note that the real world does exist objectively, but it is not entirely determined by the physical and material basis outside human actions; rather, it is socially constructed by shared meanings and understandings (Adler, 1997; Reus-Smith, 1998 and Wendt, 1999).

Constructivism, according to Finnemore and Sikkink (2001:393), is a different kind of theory from realism, marxism and liberalism, because it is not a substantive theory of politics; rather, it is a social theory<sup>38</sup> that makes claims about the nature of social life and social change. Furthermore, they suggest that constructivism does not make claims about the content of social structures or the nature of agents at work. In this sense, they conclude that what constructivism offers to the researcher is a “framework for thinking about the nature of social life and social change but does not produce specific predictions about political outcomes for testing in social science research” (ibid.).

---

<sup>37</sup>It is important to point out that in North America the dominance of neorealism and neoliberalism is associated with IR theory. For a discussion of neorealism and its contribution to IR scholarship see Waltz K.N, (1979) *Theory of International Politics* (Addison-Wesley: Reading MA). The debate between neorealism and neo liberalism is presented in Baldwin D. (1993) ed. *Neorealism and Neoliberalism* (Columbia University Press: New York). Constructivist challenges can be found in Onuf N.G. (1989) *World of our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (University of South Carolina Press: Columbia) Katzenstein P. (1996) *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (Columbia University Press: New York); Lapid J. and Kratochwil F. (1996) eds., *The Return of Culture and identity in IR Theory* (Lynne Rienner: Boulder).

<sup>38</sup>Critics of Constructivism argue that it is a method, and its main challenge is theory development. See Checkel, J. (1998) “The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory” *World Politics* Vol. 50 No.2 pp. 324-348.

Another feature distinguishing constructivists from rationalists<sup>39</sup> concerns the ontological proposition in the agent and structure debate in IR.<sup>40</sup> According to constructivists, agents and structures are mutually constituted. A constitutive relationship thus leaves room for individuals or states to influence their environment and to be influenced by it. The agents are not uniformly and universally rational egoists, but have distinct identities shaped by the cultural, social and political, as well as material, circumstances in which they are embedded. They are not static, but ever evolving, as they interact with each other and their environment (Wendt, 1992).

According to Hopf (1998:194), the significance of constructivism for IR is that it has placed sociological inquiry back at the centre of the discipline. Constructivists, he notes, achieve this through the re-imagination of the social as a constitutive realm of values and practices, and situate individual identities and interests within the field of IR. In their survey of constructivists' empirical research, Finnemore and Sikkink (2001) note that various studies have been able to expose the explanatory poverty of analyses of actors that are solely premised on materialism. Furthermore, constructivism has shown how norms evolve, how ideas and values shape actions, how argument and discourse condition outcomes, and how identity constitutes actors and agency (Hopf, op cit.). Correspondingly, Checkel (1998:324-325) asserts that "constructivists' critique of rationalists concerns not what these scholars do and say but ignores which are the content and sources of state interests and the social fabric of world politics".

---

<sup>39</sup>Rationalist refers to neorealism and neoliberal institutional theorists in IR Theory. See Kazenstein et al. (1999) who argued that rationalism and constructivism provide the major points of contestation shaping IR.

<sup>40</sup>Constructivism is based on three core ontological propositions about social objects and practices. For discussion on the ontological position of constructivism, see Wendt (1999) *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge)

The strengths of social constructivism are in its methods of investigation. Methodologically, it employs tools that include process tracing, genealogy, structured focus comparison, interviews, participant observations, and discourse and content analysis, to understand how and why change happens and the constitution of political behavior and effects (Wendt, 1998; Barnett and Finnemore, 1999). Constructivism does not have a single method or research design. It opens up a set of issues, and scholars choose the research tools and methods best suited to their particular question (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001:396). Social constructivists thus believe that there is no neutral position from which objective data and knowledge can be gathered. As noted by Price and Reus-Smith (1998:261), the framework rejects hegemonic, exclusive, scientific methods of generating knowledge. Moreover, from the stand point of social constructivism, there is no big-T truth; instead, explanations are necessarily contingent and partial: they are small-t truth claims (Finnemore and Sikkink op ct., 394; Price and Reus-Smit, 1998).

The current research, which is situated both in International Relations and Comparative Politics, employs social constructivism, especially its idea of agents and structures as mutually constituted, to discern the nature of the social structures that refugees, as agents, encounter; how these structures constrain and enable the action of refugees; how much freedom refugees (agents) have in doing what they do as they are both enabled and constrained by the structures. Employing the social constructivist framework helps to explain the nature of the structures of forced migration, and the agency of the refugee returnees during their forced migration experience, and the transformational experience of the refugee (agent) and the structures as a result of this encounter. Accordingly, the study seeks to offer alternative explanations of the

impact of the forced migration experience on returnees, and of refugee returnee agency, and their subsequent engagement in the process of peacebuilding in Africa. Moreover, the study seeks to include in the discussion the missing voices and actions of refugees in the emerging literature that integrates forced migration into peacebuilding (see Koser, 2009). While interested in generalizations, the study does not seek to produce a grand theory on refugees (returnees) and peacebuilding. In what follows the core features of social constructivism — agency and structures and how they are employed in the current study -- are expanded upon.

### **3.1.1. Norms as Social Structures**

Structure, a widely applied concept in Social Science and IR, has varied definitions. At the broadest level, “the term structure ‘empowers what it designates... whatever aspect of social life we designate as structure is posited as ‘structuring’ some other aspect of social existence--- whether it is class that structures politics...or a mode of production that structures social formations” (Sewell, 1992:2). In IR, Wendt has argued that rationalists define international system structures on the basis of observable attributes of nation-states such as the “distribution of material capabilities”, whereas world system theorists characterize these structures in terms of the elementary organizing principles of the capitalist world economy that underlie and constitute states (Wendt, 1987: 335). Constructivists, therefore, object to the rationalists’ deterministic definition of structures, and propose a definition that recognizes the nonmaterial elements (Wendt, 1987; Finnemore, 1996).

Rationalists emphasize that structures are material and constrain actors but social constructivists suggest that structures have multiple effects, are multifaceted and not all material.

Structures, according to constructivists, are both enabling and constraining, and exist in a constitutive relationship with agents, and not with a single entity (Thelen, 1991; Tarrow, 1996).<sup>41</sup> According to Wendt (1999:139), the structure of any social system contains three elements: material conditions, interest, and ideas that play various roles in explaining social phenomena. For Finnemore (1996:2-3), a state's (actors) "interests are not just out there waiting to be discovered, they are constructed through social interaction and are shaped by internationally shared norms and values that structure and give meaning to international political life". From this perspective, social constructivists argue that the interests and identities of actors are not, as rationalists posit, exogenously given. Social constructivists' presentation and definition of norms as social structures leaves more space for agency -- that is, for the individual actor -- to influence their environment, as well as to be influenced by it. This relationship is reflected in Alexander Wendt's famous article (1992), "Anarchy Is What States Make of It". It is not to suggest that states (agents) operating within anarchy (which is considered a norm) can, on a whim, change their circumstances and their relationships with other actors (for example, states); however, their relationship evolves with time, and the same can be said of the other actors (refugee returnees) in any social relationship.

Social constructivists note that structures are meaningless without some intersubjective set of norms and practices. From their perspective, meaningful behaviour or action is possible only with an intersubjective social context. Wendt (1995) argues that structure has no existence

---

<sup>41</sup>Most of the studies that have used this approach in empirical research have come from comparative politics: especially from the Social Movement scholarship and especially the political opportunity structure approaches. Using those approaches, they explore social movements operating within structures of constraints and opportunities that make their survival and success more likely. For an overview of this approach, see Cohen. (1985) "Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Research and Social Movements". Sociological Research No. 52, pp. 663-716.

or causal powers apart from process. Actors develop their relationships with an understanding of others obtained through the media of norms, rules and practices. In the absence of norms, exercises of action and power will be devoid of meaning. Therefore constitutive norms define an agent's identity by specifying the actions that will cause others to recognize that identity, and to respond to it appropriately (Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein, 1996). In this respect structures not only constrain behaviour; they also constitute the identities of the actors. Following this conception, actors are, therefore, not uniformly and universally rational egoists, but have distinct identities shaped by the cultural, social, political and material circumstances (structures) in which they are embedded. Structures similar to actors are thus not static, but ever evolving (Fierke (2007), as the actors interact with each other and encounter the system.

### **3.1.2. Social Actors**

Actors are an important aspect of constructivists' theorizing and empirical research because they act as part of the process of the social construction of structures. Unlike neorealists, social constructivists' focus on actors is not limited to the state, but includes Non-State Actors (NSAs). The inclusion of NSAs is a challenge to the state-centric paradigm that has dominated IR (Florini, 2000). Constructivists' research on NSAs has focused on efforts by individuals and groups to change social understandings. For example, Klotz (1995) explores how antiapartheid activists steered the United States' (US) and Commonwealth states' foreign policies in new directions, resulting in a very different normative structure for the apartheid regime in South Africa. Similarly, Barnett and Finnemore (2004) have explored the role of bureaucrats of international organizations in the formulation of rules and norms for the world. Moreover, they

conclude that with time these institutions and their respective bureaucrats have become less accountable to the states that created them.

As part of establishing the legitimacy of NSAs in IR, constructivists explored the actors' mechanisms for social construction. They identified new ways in which actors (agents) construct new social norms, or new agents, such as bureaucrats, that might be involved in the construction of the norms. By identifying the tools and mechanisms used by social actors, constructivists explore the agentic side of their mutual constitution process (Wendt 1987 and 1999). Accordingly, constructivists conceptualize people as social actors who are capable agents, and who process their own experiences and those of others while acting upon these experiences (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001), and not simply as reactionary individuals.

Constructivists' focus on NSAs is varied. They include: International Governmental Organizations (IGOs), especially the United Nations and its agencies; epistemic communities, which include people with specialized knowledge<sup>42</sup>, such as lawyers; academics (Burle and Mattli, 1993 and Ratner, 2000); and personnel of organizations (Adler, 1998; Boli and Thomas, 1998). Other scholars have emphasized individuals who are associated with organizations that make them effective engines of social construction. Ratner's (2000) study of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) High Commissioner (HC) for Minorities shows that the organization's role places the HC in a unique position to construct new international norms

---

<sup>42</sup>This is similar to "ideas" research in comparative politics and political economy. They contest the common explanation in comparative politics that new ideas are imposed by those with political, military or economic power, and stress instead processes of learning in situations characterized by complexity, failure and new formation. For discussion and research on ideas see Hall P. (1997) "The Role of Interests, Institutions and Ideas in the Comparative Political Economy of the Industrialized Nations" in Lichbach M. and Zuckerman A. ed. *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and Structure* (Cambridge University Press: New York) and Jacobsen K. (1995) "Much Ado About Ideas: The Cognitive Factor in Economic Policy" *World Politics* Vol. 47 pp 283-310.

and rules. States often appeal to the HC for policy guidance, and he uses his position creatively to mediate conflicts by constructing new rules and new understanding of existing rules or laws that are acceptable to the disputing parties. A similar approach is used by Barnett and Fennimore (2004), who note that various HCs of the UNHCR have seized on various crises and global development to campaign for a broader mandate, resulting in the UNHCR's current status as one of the premier UN agencies. They credit the HCs for the expansion in the definition of the concept of the refugee to move beyond people who had been displaced as a result of events prior to 1951 in Europe, and expanded its legal protection mandate to include humanitarian service.<sup>43</sup>

Despite these innovations in focusing on actors other than the state, especially those that are related to issues of forced migration, the current study suggests that for the existing research to privilege, as it does, the UNHCR as an IGO, and the elite, such as the HCs (See Barnett and Finnemore, 2004; Betts, Loescher and Milner, 2008) is to silence the voices of the refugees. The silencing of refugees in the existing research literature indirectly reinforces the notion that refugees are beneficiaries. Moreover, the disproportionate emphasis on the IGOs in the current research has contributed to how both forced migration and political science studies move beyond the dominant image of the state and the dichotomy between the external and internal. It is the view of this study, however, that the refugee has yet to be liberated from the passivity imposed on it by IGOs, the state and, also, the rationalist approach to the study of forced migration. This study thus suggests that the refugee, like the state and the UNHCR (or IGO), is a special,

---

<sup>43</sup>See above for a discussion of the 1951 Convention's definition of Refugee and its geographical and temporal limitations.

privileged actor with positional advantages and disadvantages at the intersection of the domestic and the external with agential capabilities. In contrast with existing research, then, the focus of this study is not the IGOs or the state; rather, it is the refugee as a capable actor and agent, and his or her active participation in each phase of the forced migration experience, including reintegration after return.

### **3.1.3. Agency of Social Actors**

Like that of structure, the definition of “agency” has proven very elusive (Doty, 1997). Constructivists, following Giddens’ structuration theory, note that social agency depends “solely upon the capability of actors to make a difference in the production of definite outcomes, regardless of whether or not they intend (are aware) that these outcomes occur” (Cohen, 1987, 284). To make a difference, Cohen continues, “is to transform some aspect of the process or event; agency is therefore equated with transformative *and (re)productive* capacity” (ibid. emphasis added).

According to Long and Long (1992), the concept of agency lies at the heart of any revitalized social actor paradigm, and forms the pivot around which discussions aimed at reconciling notions of structure and actor revolve. Furthermore, notions of agency, they note (ibid.), are constructed differently in different cultures. “Agency implies both a certain knowledgeability, whereby experiences and desires are reflexively interpreted and internalized (consciously or otherwise), and the capability to command relevant skills, access to material and non-material resources and engage in particular organising practices” (Long, 2001:49).

The individual actor's capacity to process social experiences and devise ways of coping with life, even under the most difficult forms of constraint, is referred to as the coping strategy (Skonhoft, 1998), and is the main attribute of the concept of the actor's agency. Even within restricted social spaces, social actors are capable of formulating decisions, acting upon them, and innovating or experimenting. It is also a necessary feature of action, moreover, that at any point in time an agent can and will act otherwise: either positively, in terms of attempted intervention in the process of events around him or her, or negatively, in terms of forbearance (ibid.). Accordingly, Kabeer (1999) suggests that agency should not be limited to observable actions. She notes that it also encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose which individuals bring to their activity, their sense of agency, or power within. While agency tends to be operationalized as decision-making in the social science literature, it takes a number of other forms. It takes the form of bargaining and negotiation, deception and manipulation, subversion and resistance, as well as more intangible, cognitive processes of reflection and analysis. Agency, she further notes, "can be exercised by individuals as well as collectives" (Kabeer, 1999: 438).

The various forms of definition and broad conceptualization of agency raise the question of whether all actors can be considered agents. Social Constructivists imply that in principle all human beings and their organizations -- states, society, and non-state organizations -- have agency capabilities. The specific forms of agency, however, may vary considerably, both because of the different structures they reproduce and are shaped by, and because of the actors' unequal knowledge of rules, norms and access to resources (Vogler, 1999).

The concept of agency adopted in the current study is in sharp contrast to the more established approaches where refugees are pictured as passive victims of violence and disaster, or as mere recipients of relief aid (Mazur, 1988; Gold, 1993). As noted by Harrell-Bond (1999), the image of helpless refugees, desperately in need, reinforces the view that outsiders are needed to help them. [ . . . ] The standard image of the helpless refugee also reinforces the view of their incapability, motivating people from all walks of life to offer their services (Harrell-Bond 1999: 150). The main impact of these negative images, according to Malkki (1992:33), leads to “the premise that refugees are necessarily a problem”.

Furthermore, making the agency of refugees central to the study helps to avoid undue generalizations. Refugees vary in their experiences, and differ in their responses to flight, asylum, and return and reintegration. Some do not recognize new opportunities available to them because of their trauma and loss of resources. Others seem to fare better. Individual decisions, experiences and life courses have been seen as part of the larger cultural, socio-political and environmental complex that holds opportunities as well as constraints (Essed, Freeks and Schrijvers, 2006:3). Furthermore, the concept of agency is used to test the actor-oriented analysis of the current study. From this perspective, refugees are, therefore, regarded as active subjects with the capacity to process social experiences and invent new ways of coping with life even under extreme coercion (Lund, 2005: 12). Although the research participants were not fully rooted in either asylum (Ghana and Guinea) or their home (Liberia), since returning they have continued to struggle to (re)build their lives, their community and their relations with other members of the community and the state at large. Within the limits of their socio-economic and security contexts, refugee returnees of different ages, classes, socio-cultural backgrounds, goals

and expectations join together to solve daily challenges facing them, intervene in social events around them, and benefit from the experiences of those surrounding them: notably, the host community and the international humanitarian organizations that host and support them.

While forced migration studies position refugees and returnees in distinct ways with regard to the home society and the host society in general, fleeing, living in exile and returning are actions undertaken by individual refugees who are in possession of the facts and who have experiences that are not entirely delinked from the current experience of rebuilding their lives and that of their community. Vincent and Sørensen (2001) assert that “contrary to common assumption about refugees, they are not poor, resource less persons who only think of surviving their present, difficult circumstances. Some have many skills, plan and work for a better future”. Some of the literature on Liberian refugees in Ghana and Guinea supports this position (Owusu, 2000 and Van Damme, 1999), and indicates not complete resignation, but resourcefulness at work among the refugees.

Finally, applying the notion of agency to the study of the impact of the structures of forced migration on the refugee/returnee resource, the study examines the refugees’ flight decisions, choice of asylum destination, resources taken along the flight period, livelihood strategies during asylum, and decisions about return and reintegration. This enables the study to transcend the pressured argument of Kunz (1973, 1981) that refugees act on impulse, especially during their flight, and Koser’s (1997) argument that refugee agencies are only at play when return is self-directed, and not during assisted return. Finally, the agency of refugee returnees as applied in this study enables the conclusion that returnees’ choices, decisions and deployment of

their resources towards their reintegration have links with the broader peacebuilding activities of the country of return (or origin).

#### **3.1.4. Deploying Structure's Double Impact and its Constitutive Relationship with Agents towards Resources Transformation of Refugee Returnees during the Forced Migration Experience**

As noted, social constructivists advocate a mutually constitutive approach to the structure-and-agent issue that finds its roots in Giddens' (1970 and 1984) "structuration" theory. This approach distinguishes itself from the rationalist/structural theorists' approach to structure as a set of relatively unchangeable constraints on the behaviour of states or actors. An important area of study, according to social constructivists, is "how an action does or does not reproduce both the actor and the structure" (Hopf, 1998:172). Constructivists stress the importance of intersubjectivity in the social context, meaning that the media of norms and practices help actors develop their understandings of, and relations with, others. Meaningful action can only occur within the intersubjective social context.

The study's analysis of the relationship between structure and agents as co-constituted shows that the relationship far from constitutes what has been claimed to be a false duality, counterpoising structure over action, or reproduction of one another, or both (Jessop, 1996: 124). Rather, what this relationship signifies is that the structural effects always operate selectively, not in absolute terms, and are conditional and always temporary. Equally in this mutually constitutive relationship, agents are flexible, and capable of reformulating within the limits of their agency, and are able to engage in strategic calculation about their situations (ibid.). Thus, while social structures may entrap individuals or agents, constraining them, they also enable them, as these agents (re)produce social norms (Holt-Jensen, 2003).

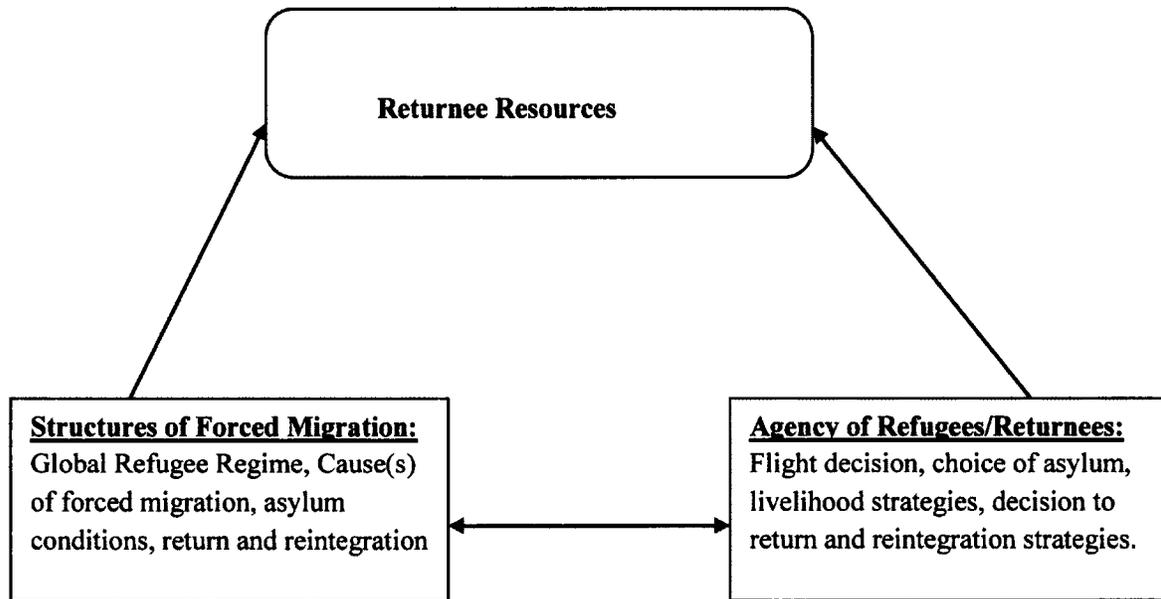
Furthermore, applying the theory of the co-constitution of structure and agents, the study stresses both the opportunities and constraints of each phase of the forced migration experience. This approach also presents refugees and returnees both as individuals and as members of a group or groups who participate in the broader socio-political conditions of every phase of their experiences, which cumulatively affects their resources and choices in various ways. Second, it identifies the choices of refugee returnees, which affect their resource pool, and their participation in the rebuilding of their lives and own country/community after return. Third, out of this relationship possibilities arise for agents to move beyond the constraints and to grab opportunities presented by structures. That is to say, a structural constraint for one agent (or set of agents) could be transcended by another agent (or set of agents), thus becoming an opportunity. Additionally, it also implies that a short-term constraint on a given agent (or set of agents) could become an opportunity over a longer time or, even, within the same time if there is a shift in strategy (Jessop, 1996:125).

Finally, with regard to the reflexive nature of actors in the co-constitutional relationship, it implies that the actors (refugees and returnees) reflect on their choices and decisions, and are able to learn from experience by acting within contexts that involve strategically selecting constraints and opportunities that can and do transform social structures they encounter. For example, the refugee as an actor is not static, and does not always act as a victim of his or her experiences. Like most social actors, the refugee is capable of formulating and reformulating strategies in the light of changing experiences, and has knowledge about the strategic contexts in which she or he pursues their goals. These include but not limited to seeking safety outside the boundaries of their own country and overcoming challenges of living in a new environment.

A major criticism of constructivism is associated with the operationalization of the mutual constitution of structure and agent (Checkel, 1998). Attempts to resolve this challenge have resulted in several and opposing analytical tools used to empirically explore agent-structure interactions'.<sup>44</sup> Wendt (1987:365) has suggested a "structural analysis to theorize the conditions of existence of agents, and use historical analysis to explain the genesis and reproduction of social structures." In his objection to this strategy, Checkel (1998:342) argues that "Wendt's theoretical stance leads to neglect of domestic agency". Archer favours a sequential dualism embodied in iterative cycles in which action conditions structure, which conditions action (Acher, 1989). The application of this strategy will seem easier in the case where agents encounter a single structure in their life cycle. As the present study reveals, however, refugees encounter various structures both within the same phase and at different phases of their migration experience. The study thus adopts Finnemore's (1996) and Barnett and Finnemore's (2004) "bracketing strategy" used in their exploration of how IGOs have become norm entrepreneurs of world politics. In this strategy, they first bracket structures, and then agents, in each of the IGOs that are examined. Adopting this approach, the agency of the refugees is examined in accordance with how they respond to the above identified structures that they encounter throughout the forced migration experience of flight, exile and return. In turn, how these structures are reproduced and/or changed, as well as the changes the agents (refugees/returnees) experience as exemplified in their resources gains and losses are examined.

---

<sup>44</sup>For a very good summary of the various debates among constructivists on the best analytical tools for empirical research on the constitutive relation between agent and structure see Adler E. (2002) "Constructivism and International Relations" in Carlsnaes *et. al. Handbook of International Relations* (Sage Publications: London).



**Figure 1.1: Figure showing the constitutive relationship between structures and agents of forced migration and their impact on refugee returnees' resources.**

As shown in Figure 1.1, the relationship between the study's identified structures of forced migration and the main actor, the refugee returnee, is neither hierarchical nor unidirectional. Rather, they are interrelated and, theoretically, interdependent; and, in the words of Wendt (1987:338), "they are mutually implicating entities". In this relationship, the actions and properties of the agent and structure are both relevant to the explanations in this study. Thus the study's attempt to include refugees and returnees as capable actors is not to impose it on the structures, nor does it present them as independent of the structures; rather, it presents them as existing in dialectic relations, as shown in the figure above.

### **3.2. CONCEPTUALIZING REFUGEE RETURNEE RESOURCE TRANSFORMATION**

There are varied perspectives, debates and discourses around the concept of "refugee resources", its contents, how it is transformed, and the type of resources available to the different categories of migrants or refugees (see King, 1984; Kulman, 1990; Sorenson 1994; Jacobsen, 2002). Karen Jacobsen, for example, notes that refugees, like every social actor, embody a significant flow of resources in the form of international humanitarian assistance (also described as indirect resources and economic assets) and human capital that directly come from the refugees. She proposes that both the direct and indirect resources "potentially represent an important state building contribution to the host state" (Jacobsen, 2002:577-78).

The concept of refugee resources sheds light on the "material, social and political resources" (Jacobsen, 2002:578) that enable the refugees not only to survive, but also to contribute to the development of their host communities. The main strengths of the concept are that it "no longer overlooks the steps taken by refugees themselves to improve their situation" (Sorenson 1994:69), and that these refugees are no longer perceived as voiceless and passive victims, but eventually looked upon as agents of change. Using this model to address the effect of refugees on their host is refreshing; it is limited, however, since it fails to address how the host community in turn affects the resources of the refugees. It focuses exclusively on the refugees deploying their resources to the ends of both their personal survival and the benefit of their host community, but does not address whether this results in an increase or a decrease in the refugees'

resources. This limitation is addressed by the authors of the Resource Base Model (RBM) for Refugee Well-being.<sup>45</sup>

Shifting research focus on how host societies impact the refugee's resources, Ryan et al. (2007 and 2008) concluded that asylum policies and practice could either constrain or facilitate the resources of refugees. Thus, in their study of forced migrants in Ireland,<sup>46</sup> they concluded that positive refugee policies and practices, such as free movement of migrants, access to housing, employment and education, enable the refugees to increase their resources and adapt better. Negative asylum practices, such as the erosion of personal control, however, through denial of asylum and its accompanying rights, constrain the refugees, leading to further resource loss. Although, the RBM does not include the political and security conditions of the host, this study suggests that they are equally important variables in analyzing the effects of a host society on the resources pool of refugee returnees. It is the opinion of this study that incorporating these variables -- political and security conditions of exile states -- into the model would enable the current study to examine and analyze the effects that such conditions have on the policies and programs of host states towards refugees and their subsequent effect(s) on the resource pool of the refugees. This is in support of one of the observation made in this study, which notes that factors relating to the host state (political and security conditions) are major factors that influence

---

<sup>45</sup>This model was proposed by Ryan Dermot, Dooley Barbara and Benson Ciaran (2008) "Theoretical Perspective on Post-Migration Adaptation and Psychological Well Being among Refugees: Towards a Resource-Based Model" *Journal of Refugee Studies*. Vol. 21 No.1, 1-18. As noted by the proponents, it has only been applied to forced migrants arriving in Western countries; it is employed in the present study to disaggregate refugee and returnee resources. The study does not intend to test the applicability of this model to forced migrants in Africa.

<sup>46</sup>Ryan et al. (2007) "Forced Migration and Psychological Stress" in Fanning B. ed. *Immigration and Social Change in the Republic of Ireland* (Manchester University Press: Manchester).

the asylum policy and practices of host states, as well as the role and activities of the UNHCR in the said state.

To analyze the changes in the resources of refugees after they arrived in the host community and settlement, Ryan et al. (2008) identified two main areas for study. First they noted that change (transformation) in the refugee's resources can be conceived of in terms of relevance to the refugee's existence: in other words, the level of available resources and of their relevance to the individual's needs, goals and demands. In this case, the actual amount of a particular resource may remain constant, but its value can increase or decrease depending upon its relevance to the satisfaction of needs, pursuit of goals or management of demands in the post-migration environment. For example, proficiency in a language may be of high value in the country of origin, but may not be marketable in the country of asylum. Second, some changes are measured as either gains or losses. Gains refer to increases in the amount of resources already in the pool, as well as the acquisition of new resources. Resource losses refer both to decreases in levels and to outright losses of specific types of resources. An understanding of "resource gains and losses among refugees requires an examination of the individual's resource pool during the pre-migration, migration, (flight) post-migration and for the purpose of this study, an analysis of *return (migration back home)* is equally essential"(Ryan et al, 2008: 13 emphasis added).

### **3.2.1. Operationalization of Refugee Returnee Resources**

In order to examine the transformational effect (constraint and opportunities) of asylum conditions on the refugee's resources, the authors of the RBM identified four main categories of

resources: personal, material, social and cultural. Below are descriptions of the categories and their application to the current study on the returnee's resource transformational experience.

**1) Personal Resources:** These can be physical or psychological<sup>47</sup> in nature. In its application, the study focuses on the physical component of personal resources, especially health status and mobility of the refugee/returnee.

**2) Material Resources:** They include money, paid employment, property and personal possessions in general. This aspect allows the study to identify and analyze the material resources of the returnees and how they are deployed both in their personal lives and for the benefit of the wider population.

**3) Social Resources:** This is defined as the beneficial aspect of personal relationships. These include emotional, informational and tangible support, as well as the sense of identity and belonging that integration into a social network brings. Applying it to the current research, social resources are disaggregated as follows: membership in community associations or volunteering activities; and relationship to members of the host community and to other refugees and stayees after returning to the country of origin. Furthermore, the refugees' family relationship and how the family network enhances their community relationship are explored.

**4) Cultural Resources:** Describes the skills, knowledge and beliefs learned within particular cultural settings, and whose adaptive value is often intimately related to their being deployed in such a setting or similar ones. These resources can be seen as tool kits provided by a particular culture. Cultural resources also include linguistic skills, literacy, education,

---

<sup>47</sup>Health, mobility, energy/strength and physical attractiveness are physical resources. Psychological resources include both skills and personal traits. Examples of skills based resources are problem solving and social skills. Trait-based resources include self-esteem, optimism, self-efficacy and hope.

computer/technological skills, and occupational skills. It also includes knowledge of the physical surroundings and climate. Cultural beliefs refer to shared religious or philosophical systems that give people a sense of meaning in their lives.<sup>48</sup>

Jacobsen's conception of refugees' resources and how they deploy them to their individual benefit and that of the asylum community or state, as well as the RBM's approach to transformation in resources of refugees, are crucial to the study, because they enable the study to desist from the characterization of the refugee or returnee as one who arrived in the host community with a clean slate or as a homogenous group of people. Moreover, the study recognizes the variations and levels of the refugee's resources during each phase of the refugee experience, particularly before flight and immediately after arriving in asylum. The individual or group of refugees, as noted in the current study, has distinctive characteristics, with variations in their potential and abilities to access structures of opportunities to increase resources or deal with structures of constraints that lead to losses in resources both in asylum and after return. These differences in returnees' resources, as suggested by this study, should be examined within the various contexts of the forced migration experience, and cannot be assumed or generalized about solely on the basis of location -- for example, developing or developed country, urban or rural settlement, and so on (Black and Ammassari, 2001; Blitz, Sales and Marzano, 2005).

---

<sup>48</sup>The proponents of this RBM admit that there is some overlap between cultural and psychological resources. For example, cognitive skills are undoubtedly shaped by culture. Cultural knowledge, the RBM argues, should be interpreted in a broad sense. It includes familiarity with various services and systems in a particular cultural environment, such as public transport and banking systems.

Both Jacobsen's work and the RBM have made invaluable contributions to the study of refugee resources; however, the focus on the asylum experience according to this study is limiting. Furthermore, the RBM's approach presents an over determinate effect of structures (asylum conditions) over the refugees, thus limiting their agency. This noted limitation in the conceptualization of refugee resources and transformation can be remedied through the use of a social constructivism framework of structure and agent. Therefore the multiple dimensions of the structures and their constitutive relationship with agents, as well as the agency of actors through the lens of returnee resources, are adopted to explore how the various phases of forced migration transform the resources of the refugee/returnee.

Furthermore, in examining the transformational effect of forced migration on the returnee's resources, therefore, the current study adopts the aforementioned four categories of the RBM: personal, material, social, and cultural. The study, therefore, defines returnee resources as: *The sum of resources (material, social, cultural and personal) unified in a refugee returnee that derive from his or her experience prior to flight, during asylum and upon return.*

### **3.2.2. Conceptualizing the Links between Returnees' Reintegration and Peacebuilding Experiences in Light of Returnees' Resources**

Having given the analytical basis for the definition of returnee resources and the examination of resource transformation of refugee returnees, the following question arises in light of objective of this dissertation: What does the deployment of a returnee's resources towards their reintegration have to do with peacebuilding? To address this question the current study will link each category of returnees' resources to the peacebuilding strategies proposed by

Ali and Mathews (2004), and echoed by UNSG 2011 policy, described above. For the purpose of analysis, the linkages between a returnee's resources and peacebuilding strategies are presented as if each strategy can stand on its own. It is important, however, to note that each of the four building blocks, as presented by Ali and Matthews (2004:421) and by the UNSG 2011 report, "are essential but none taken by itself is sufficient" for sustainable peace. They are therefore, more fluid, complementary and not mutually exclusive of each other.

**1) Cultural and Material Resources Towards Economic Recovery:** As shown by studies, a breakdown of the economic system is among the main empirical evidence of state collapse, and one of the target areas of post conflict reconstruction is establishing conditions for reviving it (Stein,1997:162). The importance of rehabilitating the economy to sustain the state peacebuilding process is twofold: citizens need basic goods for their livelihood, and the state needs the tax revenues to perform its public tasks. Returnees' material and cultural resources can be deployed towards this area as both consumers and producers of the services needed to rebuild and sustain the economy. As noted by the UNSG 2011 Report, most returnee populations arrive in places where their homes and infrastructure have been destroyed; from the moment they arrive, they must work hard to rebuild. To achieve this, the current study suggests that the returnees expend their material and cultural resources to first rebuild their individual homes, and then may extend this activity to rebuilding of their communities, such as by contributing to rebuilding of infrastructure essential for daily life.

The economic capital, furthermore, of the returnees, either through remittances<sup>49</sup> they receive from abroad or the repatriation of their savings from abroad, becomes a purchasing power for the returnee, and the economy also stands to benefit from their consumption of goods and services. While the remittances may not be taxed, and the returnees may not declare their repatriated savings at the point of entry to avoid paying taxes, “the way they are spent either through importing goods or consuming goods and services locally means that they make a disproportionate contribution to the state's tax revenue” (Zaum, 2011:295).

Finally, the skills and educational training acquired during the asylum phase of the forced migration experience are transferable, and can make returnees producers in both the private and public sectors. The productive work force of returnees, as noted by Daddieh (1999), goes beyond the cheap labour sector and the subsistence farming activities. In his study of Mozambican returnees, Juergensen (2000:26) attributed the successful and speedy reconstruction partially to the profitable use of returnees’ skills and human capital. In this study, two main services sectors (health and education), the agricultural industry and returnees’ participation as private entrepreneurs are therefore evaluated.

**2) Personal Resources towards Protection and Domestic Security Rebuilding:** In peacebuilding policy and practice, the creation of security, like the other strategies, is presented as the main responsibility of the state and its external partners in the process. As with the other strategies, however, the study contends that returnees can and do participate. One of the main

---

<sup>49</sup>A number of studies have noted the importance of remittances from refugees living abroad as part of their contribution to rebuilding the economy of post conflict states. This study, however, focuses on the remittances that returning refugees continue to receive from friends and abroad, so that the sender of the remittance does not have to be a refugee.

requirements of security is the state's ability to extend its power and administration to its periphery; however, as noted by the World Bank, "because the task of rebuilding is immense, the government and peacebuilding partners are most likely to concentrate their efforts, at least during the early phase, on and in the state capital" (World Bank 2003:21), if no incentives are given to reach out to the periphery. One incentive can be returnees' dispersed and decentralized settlement pattern (Akol, 1987:150; Allen and Turton, 1996:1 and Jacobsen, 2002:578). But how does this affect peacebuilding? According to Petrin (2002:16), "the very nature of the repatriation process increases the state's presence among formerly displaced populations." Furthermore, she notes that whereas pre-flight communities had hardly been in contact with state institutions, with repatriated communities it was the opposite. Therefore, returnees can act as catalysts for increasing the state's incentive to improve its presence in the once disregarded periphery. Furthermore, the presence of international agencies who work along with the returnees during and after return is an incentive for the state to increase its presence in these areas, and to provide them with security as well. Finally, returnees participate directly in attaining secured communities through their duplication of the neighbourhood watch programs that have become the main feature of refugee camp and settlement security practices in Africa.

**3) Social Resources towards Building and Strengthening Good Governance:** Major requirements of good governance are the existence of a legitimate and accountable government and the participation of all citizens, including internally and externally displaced persons (Lyons, 1998; Grace and Mooney, 2009). The study therefore examines the participation of returnees in this process during asylum, and continues to the period after return. Participation in the electoral process takes various forms, including running for office, developing and implementing electoral

laws, developing and implementing political platforms, monitoring and reporting on elections, and designing and implementing voter education programs (Lacy, 2004; Long, 2010). Democratic values can only be realized when participation extends beyond electoral and political participation to true civic participation. Furthermore, the study proposes that returnees may act as transmitters of ideas for both social and political development, especially in the area of holding governments accountable and responsible for the needs of their people. Another area where returnees deploy their resources to strengthen the state and society relationship is their participation in local NGOs, either as volunteers or employees or as initiators/creators of these organizations. Third, the role of media, especially private media, in establishing a responsible government, cannot be overemphasized; therefore the involvement of returnees in this sector is examined.

**4) Returnees as Agents for Justice and Reconciliation for Social Cohesion:** Justice and reconciliation are considered fundamental to peacebuilding (Bertram, 1995). The policy options available to states range from the granting of absolute amnesty to the formation of truth commissions, to criminal prosecution and, finally, the offer of compensation to victims. The study evaluates the role of returnees in the TRC option because Liberia, which is the case study, adopted the truth commission approach. To that end, the examination of returnees begins at the asylum period, and continues upon return with them by telling their stories or helping the commission identify perpetrators. Second, the state's focus on the returnees means that laws and rules have to be established to deal with such issues as disputes over property, among other things, in order to structure and govern the society. Doing so further enhances the legal system of the state. In situations where such laws do not exist, returnees' ability to negotiate with stayees,

who might have taken possession of the returnees' property while they were away, without resorting to taking the law into their own hands helps with the process of reconciliation. Finally, the perception by stayees of returnees as fellow citizens and their positive attitude towards returnees and, also, of returnees towards stayees, contribute to the reconciliation process and the renewal of the communities (Kibreab, 2002, 2006).

### **3.2.5. Hypotheses for the Study**

Through both the literature review and the discussion of the background to the study in chapter 2, and the theoretical framework presented above, the study has crafted a critique of the existing two contrasting approaches towards the question of how returning refugees connect with peacebuilding, and identified alternatives emerging from the theoretical contribution of social constructivists' position on structure and agency. The following hypotheses guided the exploration of these issues, as presented in the comparative case study in this research. They yield indications regarding structures of forced migration that enable or constrain refugee and returnee resources and the returnee's engagement in peacebuilding. The hypotheses also help us to understand the nature of the agency of the refugee returnee during flight, living in asylum, return and reintegration after return. Finally, the different hypotheses expand on the dual impact and the constitutive relationship between the agents (refugees) and structures of forced migration in the transformation of returnee resources, which, as noted, are assets for both the refugee returnee and the home country engaged in peacebuilding.

The first hypothesis of the study is as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** Since the source of flight in Liberia was war, the flight phase of the forced migration was extensively characterized by constraining structures, which resulted in resource losses. The resource losses, however, varied among the refugees as a result of factors associated with both the nature of the war and the refugees' choices and decisions during this period. Some of these factors, such as any of the following, could result in greater constraints, leading to higher resource losses among the refugees.

**H1 a:** Refugees located in proximity to the sites of violence associated with the war were more likely to experience higher constraints and lose more resources; and

**H1 b:** If flight durations are longer because of refugees' choices, such as mode of transportation, date of flight, and choice of asylum destination, as well as when entry into the asylum state is restricted, refugees are likely to experience further resource losses.

Second, it is hypothesized that asylum conditions serve as opportunities to enable the refugees that have experienced resource losses as a result of flight to recover, heal and gain resources. While these structures of opportunities are to be provided by both the nation state and the global community, the refugees, through their agency, should be able to identify and seize these opportunities in order for them to gain resources or replace those lost. The second hypothesis of the study is as follows:

**Hypothesis 2:** Less conducive asylum conditions lead to lower resource gains. The specific conditions are as follows:

**H2 a:** Asylum states experiencing insecurity, caused by either their involvement in their own conflict or being a party to the conflict that produced the refugees, and with a poor international

reputation for respecting human rights, constrains refugee and returnee resources, leading to further losses or limited opportunities for resource gains; and

**H2 b:** Refugee administrations that concentrate on security protection and are limited to provision of shelter, food and clothes for refugees, to the neglect of providing education, skills training and access to employment, are constraints on resource gains for the refugee.

**Hypothesis 3:** The third hypothesis of this study is about the repatriation phase of the forced migration experience and the transformation effect it has on the returnee's resources. It is therefore hypothesized that since repatriation policies and practices are constraining, and the process includes movement, ultimately they result in resource losses; but these are mediated by potential returnee resource levels and decisions about when and how to return. The factors that mediate these structural constraints on repatriation to reduce the resource losses experienced by the returnee are as follows:

**H3 a:** Whether through self or assisted repatriation, the potential returnee loses resources. In the refugee returnee's decision to join in either self or assisted repatriation, they thus consider and calculate which practice enables them to reduce their resources losses, and strategically act on that knowledge and information;

**H3 b:** The proximity of the asylum country to the state of origin and the transportation restrictions contribute to resource losses among returnees; and

**H3 c:** Decisions by the potential refugee returnee's decision such as date of flight, resources to take along, and pre-departure arrangements, lead to resource losses or gains, or both.

**Hypothesis 4:** Returnees' deployment of their resources towards their reintegration and participation in rebuilding activities of the country of origin are mediated by the policies and practices of peacebuilding and returnees' resource levels after return.

**H4 a:** Returnees' perception of the state as able to protect life and property is a structure of opportunity for the returnee to deploy their resources towards their integration in the society and to participate in peacebuilding activities. Since their flight was caused by insecurity, the desire to return, especially for refugees with resources, who have the option of staying in exile, is inspired by the existence of peace and, above all, the protection of lives and property after return.

**H4 b:** The establishment of institutions to promote and enhance social and economic interaction by reducing uncertainty and insecurity will act as stimuli, and not constraints, on returnees' resources pool, and will help provide options for those with fewer resources in establishing their lives; and

**H4 c:** The nature of returnees' resources is a major determinant of the returnee's engagement and, especially, of the sector of the post-conflict peacebuilding they deploy their resources towards.

The hypotheses just listed reveal three propositions for the study. First, the refugee returnee's individual reintegration and engagement with the peacebuilding process, as noted, depends on many more factors than that of the returnee. It is, for instance, first influenced by the ability of the country of origin to transform from one of producing refugees to one that welcomes returnees, and engages in its own rebuilding and reconstruction. The ability of the country of origin to "consume" the returnee's resources towards its reconstruction activities, according to this study, is determined by both its policy and practice of peacebuilding, which recognize

returnees as actors capable of participating, and not simply as citizens demanding aid and/or beneficiaries of the process.

Second is the existence of structures of opportunities, in the asylum phase of the forced migration experience, which could lead to resources gains and renewal, considering the fact that the flight phase is characterized by resource losses due to its constraining effect on the choices and decisions of the refugee returnees. The resources gained during asylum, as suggested by the study, become assets for both the individual returnee and the larger community of return.

Finally, the refugee returnee is an agent with capabilities, including making strategic decisions throughout the experience of forced migration and post-return. Thus their decisions and choices do mediate in situations of constraint, and limit the losses they accrue, and produce or reproduce the structures to provide them with opportunities.

#### **3.2.4. Study's Conceptual Framework**

Following the establishment of the study's analytical framework and the abovementioned research hypotheses, a conceptual framework for pursuing the two objectives of the study was developed. The framework reveals a three-variable relationship, between the independent, intervening and dependent variables. This form of relationship specifies the chain of causality (Neuman, 2003), and makes the linkages in the complex web of refugee and returnee experiences clearer, and easier to examine and explain. Below are summaries of the three main variables, and a figure of the framework.

***A) Dependent Variable: Returnees' Engagement with Peacebuilding:*** This study focuses on how returning refugees deploy their resources in post-conflict reconstruction activities in their

country of origin. Peacebuilding is the outcome of the study, and is thus taken to be the dependent variable. The study examines the application of the acquired resources of the returnees (the intervening variable) towards peacebuilding activities. The target sectors where the returnees deploy their resources are the four main adopted peacebuilding strategies (building of political institutions, justice, economic recovery and security). Peacebuilding, as discussed, is generally initiated and implemented by international organizations (the UN and regional bodies, such as the AU and the ECOWAS) in partnership with the state. This exclusive focus on these organisations has resulted in its general approach of top-down policies and programs that limit the role of returnees to the simple one of providing aid for their return and fulfilling a clause in a peace agreement. Although returnees are weak in resources, compared to the various organizations, it is evident that they have a lot to offer. The discourse on peacebuilding, however, especially in Africa, tends to ignore the role of returnees. The study thus suggests that the agency of refugee returnees needs to be appreciated and their resources harnessed and nurtured for peacebuilding, and they are not to be ignored or, simply, regarded as individuals in need of aid.

Moreover, the analysis of the dependent variable brings to the fore the agency of returnees to overcome challenges of (re)integration into the new societies (post-conflict societies) to which they return.

***B) Intervening Variable (IV/DV): Returnee Resources:*** The refugee returnee resources act as the intervening variable in the study's framework. This research does not assume that refugees and returnees are a homogenous group, or alike in their experiences, although similarities exist among them. Rather, the experience of flight from their home country, living in asylum and

returning to their home country after the source of their flight ceases to exist creates a sort of combination of experiences of losses and gains in resources. These changes in resources, according to the current study, are a manifestation of the constraining or stimulating structures of the global and local refugee regimes of their respective systems during the forced migration experience, and of how these variables have affected or reflected the choices made by the refugees. In relation to the independent variable, the intervening variable operates at the three identified phases of the forced migration experience, as described in the independent variable below.

The first stage includes refugees' pre-asylum resources, flight from home country and losses incurred as a result of the flight. As noted, there is a consensus among both policy-makers and scholars that the period of flight leads to losses (see Crisp, 2000; Black, 2006), but the degree of losses varies according to individual experiences, such as period of flight, proximity to the cause of flight, mode of flight, and pre-flight resources. The second category of factors is the refugee's experience of asylum, and how the variations in asylum conditions resulted in changes in the returnee resources. At the third phase of the forced migration experience the study addresses the constraints and stimuli within the country of origin and return, and how they affect the returnees' resources and their capability to effectively and efficiently engage in the peacebuilding process. It encompasses the process of return and arrival in the home country, and the conditions of the peacebuilding processes within the country of return. This phase also includes how the forced migration experience affects the refugee's identity and relationship with other members of the society of return. In this sense, the intervening variable (IV/DV) acts as a dependent variable with respect to the independent variable and also acts as an independent

variable toward the dependent variable. Furthermore, as the middle variable, it shows the mechanism of interaction between the independent and dependent variables (Neuman, 2003:150).

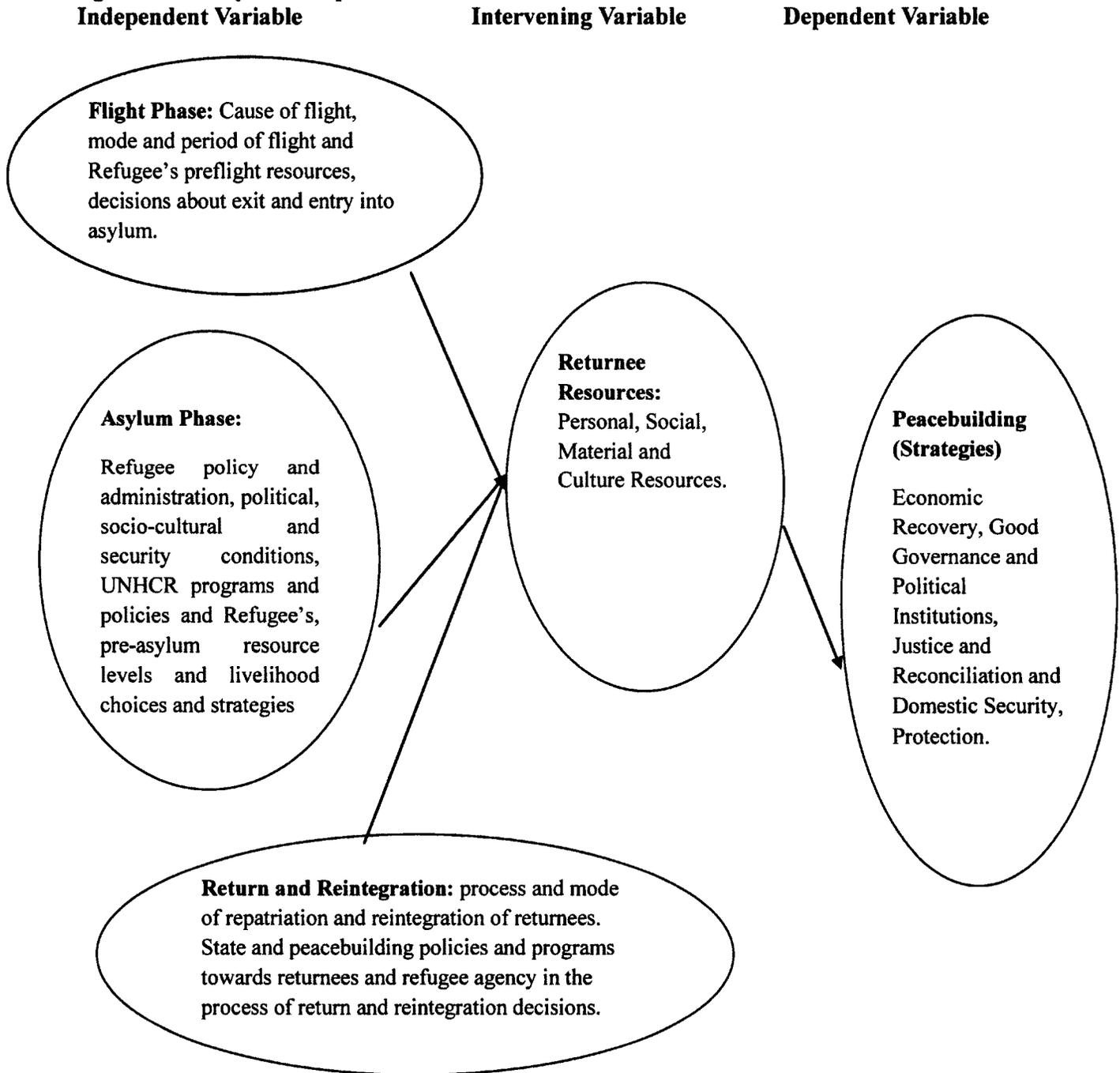
***C) Independent Variable (IV): Forced Migration Structures and Returnee Agency:*** The study identifies the structures of forced migration and the refugee returnee agency as the independent variables that operate in each of the three phases of the forced migration experience: 1) pre-flight, 2) asylum, and 3) return. To achieve the objectives of this study, using the two main groups of Liberian returnees from Ghana and Guinea, the effect of independent variables on the intervening variable and, subsequently, on the dependent variable are examined.

The first set includes the cause(s) of the refugee situation and flight into asylum. This set examines the Liberian civil war as the main cause of flight to the countries of asylum, and how the war, the period of flight and the returnee agency during this phase transformed their resources: in other words, the intervening variable. The second set, which is associated with the asylum phase of the forced migration experience, includes the political (regime type), economic, social-cultural, and security conditions, and the asylum policies and refugee administration of the two host countries studied. This set also includes international aid to the refugees and, for the purpose of this study, is limited to UNHCR funded and delivered programs within the country of asylum. These programs include shelter/settlement and provision of services, such as education, health care and livelihood opportunities.

Finally, the third category of this variable is the home condition after repatriation. This set is the third phase of the forced migration experience, where they return to their country of origin and build their lives as well their communities. In this section the study examines repatriation

and reintegration processes as constituting both constrains and stimuli on the intervening variable: returnees' resources.

**Figure 1.2. Study's Conceptual Framework**



Following the theoretical and conceptual framework presented above, the next section presents the research methods that guide the data collection and analysis undertaken in this study.

### **3.3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

As noted, this research has both scholarly and policy oriented objectives. First, it aims at producing recommendations that will guide policy makers in the challenging tasks of providing asylum in developing countries, particularly in Africa, and harnessing the benefits for successful peacebuilding. Academically it has a dual objective: 1) it hopes to provide a descriptive account of the sampled representatives, and 2) it hopes to make possible a comprehensive view of the forced migrant and peacebuilding question, from pre-flight through asylum to the post repatriation period. It contends that the experiences of the returnees are as important as the social transformations of the spaces they inhabit during each phase. To arrive at policy recommendations and theoretical implications, the methods to be used are critical analysis of existing policies, practices and theories.

#### **3.3.1. Research Method and Selection of Cases**

The current study is informed by Political Science methodologies which spans a wide range of methodological approaches and many different schools of thought on how to conduct research (Marsh and Stoker, 2002; McNabb, 2010). These are basically classified into quantitative and qualitative methods. They both have their strengths and weakness; one will appeal more to positivists, the other to humanists. The choice of one approach is not necessarily to dismiss the usefulness of the other. Indeed, choosing a research method should be a case of

picking the one most appropriate relative to the knowledge sought, and questions to be answered must guide the researcher's selection (McNabb, 2010).

The research conducted in this study, therefore, follows a qualitative approach, one that was designed within the framework of a comprehensive comparative case study. This has proven to be the most appropriate research method given the objectives of the research. Peshkin (1993 as quoted in Leedy and Ormrod, 2005) proposes that "a qualitative research study should be undertaken if one or more of the following subheadings: description, interpretation, verification and evaluation can be adequately justified". The research design, a comparative case study methodology, was compatible with the research questions and the theoretical framework, because it serves a descriptive and explanatory study. That is to say, the study reveals the structures of forced migration, the agency of the refugees during the forced migration experience, Liberia's peacebuilding setting, and the conditions under which returning refugees rebuild their lives and engage with the broader society's post conflict state rebuilding.

The study adopts a comparative approach to case study (Yin, 2009), in which the selection of the cases is based on the "most similar systems" research design by Przeworski and Teune (1970). Three major social systems – Ghana, Guinea and Liberia -- are the foci of comparison and analysis in this study. Ghana and Guinea are the systems for the comparative component of the current study, with Liberia as the system from which the research subjects (refugee returnees) originally moved and to which they have since returned, and which the location for post conflict peacebuilding is also. The most similar system design is generally based on the idea that "systems as similar as possible with respect to as many different features as possible constitute the optimal sample for comparative inquiry" (ibid. 32). The logic of this

design is that the significant differences found among these otherwise similar cases are the explanatory variable for the differences in outcome.

This study concerns the lives of Liberians who fled their country, becoming refugees, and who returned to Liberia at the resolution of the war. It is specifically about refugee returnees from the two different asylum conditions and their current engagement with the ongoing peacebuilding process in their home country. The case of Liberian returnees who lived in the West African sub region during the 14 years of civil war is quite similar to that of the numerous refugees and returnees elsewhere in Africa and in other developing countries. The Liberian civil war displaced the majority of its population, both internally and externally. Most of the refugees settled in neighbouring countries, including other West African countries. Since 2003, however, Liberia has embarked on a recovery from the atrocities of the civil war, and considerable reconciliation and reconstruction efforts have been made towards the creation of a favourable environment for returning refugees and their reintegration alongside other peacebuilding initiatives. According to the Liberian Refugee Returnee and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC), between 2004 and 2010 more than 300,000 Liberians returned through self-assistance or through the UNHCR or government assisted repatriation from the sub-regional countries.

Most Liberian refugees lived in Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Nigeria. These states differ from each other in their political, social, cultural and security dynamics and refugee policies and practices; however, they are also similar in many respects. They are West African states, have a history of colonization, are less developed, and have similar socio-cultural characteristics, with at least two linguistic groups; and they are signatories to the both the UN and OAU Conventions, and have their own national refugee policies and programs.

To arrive at the final selection of the two cases, the study further categorized the asylum states as follows: border sharing neighbours (contiguous)<sup>50</sup> and regional neighbours. Member states of the first category are Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Ivory Coast; in the second category are Nigeria and Ghana. Guinea and Ghana were selected because in each of the two major categories they are the states that had, as of 2009, repatriated the highest numbers of Liberian refugees.

Two other main factors were used in the selection of Ghana and Guinea. The case of Guinea contrasts with that of Ghana in the areas of political stability and general security conditions; they also have different asylum practices and camp management programs and policies. Guinea, while hosting Liberians, had its own share of conflicts, and became a party to the conflict that led to Liberians living in exile. In part due to Guinea's security and political conditions, its refugee policies were focused on security, because the camps were becoming training grounds for armed rebels in Liberia (Milner, 2009). Thus, the present study, consistent with the argument presented by Jacobsen (1996) and Milner (2009), opines that these conditions informed most of the UNHCR activities, and affected their ability to implement certain policies and programs, such as refugee development aid, which includes the provision of education and skills training, and to supply funds as seed money for self-employed refugees. As told to me by a UNHCR officer in Monrovia, while most of the refugees who lived in Ghana had access to aid for purposes beyond the humanitarian and including personal development, from the host states

---

<sup>50</sup> This categorization is important to the current study because this factor has been identified in both policy and scholarship as one of the main causes of prolonged fighting in the home country, producing insecurity in the host state, and a major facilitator of the regionalization of civil wars around the world. See Veney, C. (2007) *Forced Migration in Eastern Africa: Democratization, Structural Adjustment and Refugees* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York) for a brief discussion of the security challenges of hosting refugees across the borders of home countries. This view is emphasized by the OAU. Article 2 (6) of the 1969 OAU Convention states that governments should "... as much as possible settle refugees at a reasonable distance from the frontier of the country of origin".

and the international community, their fellow citizens who lived in Guinea, however, did not benefit from these, or other, programs. The current study therefore examines the effect of the presence and, conversely, the absence of these facilities on the returnees' resources, as well the strategies adopted by the forced migrants to overcome such constraints, and their harnessing of such opportunities.

The two selected cases are presented as follows: better asylum conditions (conducive) lead to gains in resources (Ghana), and less conducive asylum conditions lead to further losses in resources (Guinea) during asylum (see table 3.1).<sup>51</sup> While these cases differ in terms of outcome, they are, as noted, similar in many respects. If they are so similar, yet different in terms of their effect on the refugees' resources, the number of factors responsible for this difference, as argued by Pzeworski and Teune, "will be sufficiently small to warrant explanation in terms of those differences alone" (1970:32 ). An advantage of using the most similar systems research design is that the common characteristics of the systems are considered "controlled for", and intersystemic differences are the explanatory variables. The study's explanatory variables in the asylum systems are, therefore, as follows: security and political conditions, refugee policy and hosting practices. These variables are crucial in the structured focus analysis undertaken in this study. In addition, the study's operationalization of these variables is presented in Table 3.1.

---

<sup>51</sup>The designations of these two cases are based on Kibreab's (2006) description of conducive home state policy and Crisps (2000), Jacobsen's (2002), Milner's, (2009) and Ryan's *et al.* (2008) open (positive) and restrictive (negative) asylum conditions. Moreover, the discussion above (chapters 2 and 3) elucidated these factors and their effects on refugee and returnee resources. How these factors structured the asylum experience of returnees, the returnee's capability to retain their agency despite the restrictions in the available choices is extensively discussed in chapter 5.

**Table 3.1 Designation of study’s conception of asylum conditions**

<b>Factors Associated with Conducive Asylum Structures</b>	<b>Factors Associated with Less Conducive Asylum structures</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-restrictive entry</li> <li>- Open Asylum policy/practice</li> <li>- Political stability leading to higher international reputation</li> <li>- Secured social environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restrictive Entry</li> <li>-Restrictive Asylum policy/practice</li> <li>-Low international reputation for good governance and human rights record</li> <li>-Insecurity/engaged in internal or external conflict</li> </ul>

As previously noted, countries engaged in peacebuilding have a greater demand for resources, and Liberia is no exception. It is important to note that Liberia is not the only country engaged in the process and urging the return of its nationals living in exile. Other African countries, such as Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Angola, and more or less any country in the world that is engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding propose and engage in activities seeking the return of its citizens displaced in other countries. Thus the current study suggests that although the focus is on Liberia, the others could benefit from the return and reintegration activities of refugees. A major objective is to show that the findings in this study are not only applicable to the situation in Liberia, but are useful when analysing similar situations in other countries. Furthermore, these results can then be applied to other cases within the emerging literature which integrate forced migration into peacebuilding discourse. As succinctly noted by Peck and Dolch (2000:3), the advantage of doing a case study is that it allows the researcher to focus on “the

experiences, situations and circumstances of real people within the context of a more general social problem. Finally applying a case study approach enables the study to use qualitative interviews as an instrument to understand the experiences of refugee returnees from Ghana and Guinea and their current situation in Liberia's peacebuilding process.

### **3.3.2. Selection of Research Participants<sup>52</sup>**

In selecting the returnee participants, the study adopted a combination of the snowballing and criterion sampling methods. The criterion was that the participant ought to have lived in the asylum country for a continuous period of not less than five years, and has returned to Liberia after 2003 for a period not less than one year. Snowball sampling, was used since most of the participants are scattered throughout the two selected cities of Monrovia and Voinjama. These two cities and surrounding communities were chosen because the UNHCR-Liberia and the LRRRC say they are the main destinations for most of the returnees from Ghana and Guinea, respectively. The sample for the study included 60 returnees, 30 each from Ghana and Guinea. Twenty stayees (10 each located in the Monrovia and Voinjama areas) were also selected using both the criterion and the snowball sampling approach. The criterion for the stayee population was that they never left the geographical boundaries of Liberia during the entire period of the civil war.

---

<sup>52</sup>Prior to my Ph.D. field work in 2009, I was engaged in a different research project where I interviewed Liberian refugees in Ghana, UNHCR officials, government of Ghana officials and community leaders of Gomoa-Buduburum in 2002. These interviews were used to write an unpublished essay as part of the requirements for a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Ghana. This earlier research, and my personal involvement as a volunteer at the Tema Port when the first major influx of Liberian refugees arrived in Ghana in 1990, where I established friendships with some members of the community, helped strengthen my contacts in Liberia. Some of these friends, and Ghanaians serving with the UN Forces in Liberia, were a great help in facilitating interviews with returnees, stayees, Liberian government officials and employees of IGOs for my 2009 Ph.D. fieldwork.

The main objective during the data collection exercise was in-depth information; which, as a requirement of a qualitative study, necessitated the lower number of participants. The sample size is small for rigid quantitative research, but according to Lunenburg (2008: 179) it is enough to conduct a comparative numerical analysis of the two major cases. The format and protocols for conducting the interviews were subjected to an ethics review, and received clearance prior to the data collection (see Appendix A for a copy of the ethics clearance certificate).<sup>53</sup>

Liberian government officials interviewed included Ministers of state, directors and managers of government agencies who work closely with the returnees and others involved in the planning and implementation of the peacebuilding agenda in Liberia (see Appendix B for the list of government officials interviewed). Some officials of the UNHCR, the UNDP, the Catholic Peacebuilding Organization and the International Red Cross Society stationed in Monrovia and Voinjama were also participants in the study (see Appendix C for the list of non-governmental officials interviewed).

### **3.3.3. Instrumentation**

The main qualitative instrument used in this study for gathering data was the interview. The technique used for my interviews is referred to as the *semi-structured in-depth interview*. Mason (2002:225) refers to this technique as “conversation with a purpose”, characterized by a conversational, flexible and fluid style. He further suggests that for the researcher to achieve his or her purpose with the interview, the interviewer has to be active in encouraging the candidate

---

<sup>53</sup>This was approved by Carleton University Research Ethics Committee.

to speak about relevant issues, topics and experiences during the interview itself (ibid.). Furthermore, the use of semi-structured questions allowed the participants more freedom and creativity in their response to the questions (Sowell and Casey, 1982). Finally, because the questions were semi-structured, it provided reasonably standard data across the participants, thus facilitating my objective of comparing and contrasting the resources of the returnees, and also allowing me the flexibility to probe answers more deeply and gather more information than is found in surveys (Gall et al., 1996).

Moreover, based on the study's objective of studying returnee resources from a disaggregated perspective and providing both explanatory and descriptive accounts of the two cases, the questionnaire for the interviews was structured to enable the returnees to retrace their forced migration experience. This approach, called the retrospective or quasi-longitudinal approach (Hakim, 1987:97), does "not offer the same strengths of research on causal process; however, it is a good alternative for prospective study of cases where broad descriptive information on personal life histories is required" (ibid.). Notwithstanding the disadvantage associated with retrospective approach, it is a good fit for studying the main participants, because refugees and returnees are not easy to follow and examine using the traditional longitudinal approach. The reality of forced migration flight experience, which do not fall into the neat categories of planning, and do not always end when the individual crosses an international boundary, creates challenges for research. According to Black and Koser (1999), this is a major factor in the dearth of comparative and life studies on refugees. Thus at best researchers can only rely on the refugees' accounts of their experience, and use existing documents from agencies and institutions with which they come in contact.

As noted, interviews were conducted with 60 returnees, 20 stayees, Liberian government officials, and officials of the UNHCR and other NGOs. Four sets of interview questions were developed and deployed: one set for returnees, one for stayees, one for government officials, and one set for UNHCR and NGO officials (see Appendix D, E, F, and G for samples of the questionnaire used). All the interview questions were directly correlated with the research questions, hypotheses, returnee resources and strategies of peacebuilding already reviewed.

The second major instrument used was the collection of records and documents from multiple sources. The main sources included government and organizational documents of agencies from Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, data and documents from the UNHCR and the UNDP, and secondary resources, such as historical research and literature reviews. Finally, during the field work I conducted a number of open conversations with some community elders and representatives of the communities. Additionally, I was invited by my host, the LRRRC, to attend some community meetings in Voinjama and Monrovia, where local community and national development projects were discussed.

#### **3.3.4. Data Collection**

The theoretical framework adopted in this study favours a qualitative approach for data gathering and analysis. Whenever necessary, however, the study employs both existing quantitative data and comparative numerical information from the data gathered to complement the qualitative data. All interviews were conducted face to face and in English or Liberian

English.<sup>54</sup> Before each interview, either written or oral consent was obtained from the participants using the ethics committee's approved consent forms (see Appendix H for a sample of the consent forms). All interviews were conducted in Liberia from May to August 2009. Those who accepted voice recording were recorded; for others who refused I took hand written notes. All participants were provided with an explanation of the purpose of the study. Each participant was guaranteed anonymity, and assured that his or her feedback would be kept confidential. Participants were also assured that the option to remove themselves from the research process at any time was available and welcome.

Interviews were conducted with selected participants at their preferred locations. The time of the day determined whether they occurred at their place of work or at their home. A few of the returnees were interviewed on their farms in the Voinjama area. The initial group of returnees in Voinjama were pointed out to me by an official of the LRRRC, and subsequently these individuals assisted me by suggesting others to me. In Monrovia, however, the majority of the returnees met with me at the head office of the LRRRC, which provided me with an office space and other logistical support during my field work. Since Monrovia is larger and has bigger returnee population compared with Voinjama, I began by going through the records of the LRRRC for contact information on the returnees from Ghana. From this record a few of them were randomly contacted via cell phones to find out if they were interested in participating in the study. In all 15 participants were selected from the database of the LRRRC. Some members of

---

<sup>54</sup>This is a form of Pidgin English commonly spoken in Anglophone West African countries with some variations across the countries. While different from formal English, there are similarities. Although the author is not Liberian, her earlier acquaintance with Liberian refugees in Ghana means that her comprehension of and fluency in Liberian Pidgin English is good enough for her to be able to hold a meaningful conversation with the participants, who did not speak formal English.

this group introduced me to 10 other returnees, while the five were randomly selected during my various trips to the market center and government offices.

With regard to the government and NGO officials, once I arrived in Liberia letters requesting interviews, including cover letters explaining the study, were delivered to the Ministries of Defence and Security, Labour and Manpower Development, Finance, Justice, Economic and Development, and Interior. Others were the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the UNHCR, the UNDP-Liberia, and the Christian Child Fund. This was followed by calls to ascertain receipt of letters and to arrange meetings. Interviews were conducted in their offices. These government and non-governmental organizations were selected based on their institutional involvement in peacebuilding and the return process, as well as on their support for the integration of the returnees.

### **3.3.5. Archival Research<sup>55</sup>**

The experiences of the participants interviewed are supported by secondary and archival sources. For instance, in order to comprehensively examine the conditions of flight, asylum and return, archival sources were consulted for the following: (i) that describe the nature and cause of Liberian refugee flight, and (ii) examined asylum policies and programs for the refugees in the two countries selected for this study, as well as (iii) analyse the peacebuilding process and returnees' involvement in it. These sources and responses from interviewed returnees have been

---

<sup>55</sup> It is a form of research whose major base of reference and knowledge is secondary sources, such as census data, newspaper clippings, records, literature, government and non-government source documents and survey results. Another name for archival research is secondary research. The characteristic distinguishing it from primary research is that those being studied are unaware they are part of a research project.

central in examining the impact of flight and asylum conditions on the resources of returnees and in the discussion of the policy role and participation of the returnees in Liberia's post-conflict peacebuilding.

The research participants' testimonies have, moreover, been integrated with carefully gathered quantitative data and secondary sources from a range of archival sources. For example, a number of government officials who were unavailable for interview gave me official documents and records they thought could help in my study. Other documents, such as records of returnees and government and UNHCR funded programs and programs relating to the repatriation exercise and integration programs for returnees were collected mainly from the LRRRC and the UNHCR. Finally, documents on the countries of asylum were collected from existing literature, official government documents and Internet sources relating to local and international agencies that operated and worked with the refugees during the asylum phase. This method of data collection is central to this research, because quantitative data on refugees in general and returnees in particular, and official government statistics/data in Africa are often missing or do not exist due to the absence of efficient data management practices (see Crisp 1999; UNHCR annual statistical year books). I believe that comparing and contrasting primary and secondary data in this context has helped me alleviate many of the problems I have had conducting a retrospective study.

### **3.3.6. Data Analysis**

The qualitative method for the analysis was based on context analysis of the responses produced from the interviews conducted. Descriptive interpretations of the various texts from

both interviews and the archival research have formed a major part of the discussion in this dissertation, since perception and most social phenomena are difficult to quantify. This approach allowed the researcher to explain and examine returnees' experiences, the conditions of asylum and the society of origin as representing opportunities or challenges to the refugee's resources and contribution to peacebuilding. Comparison of the differences and similarities between individuals and groups of refugee returnees, as well as in the asylum conditions, are explained. Moreover, where possible numerical and percentage tables are used to analyse and present the data on the resources of the two main groups of returnees.

Finally, it must be noted that although the field research ended in 2009, the process of peacebuilding and refugee return is still unfolding thus the data analyses on the research participants are restricted to the period of 2009. However, the study has attempted to present current policies and programs of Liberia's peacebuilding and other data on returnees through a review of secondary resources which have formed a major part of the discussion in this study.

### **3.3.7. Limitations of the Study**

All good studies aim to be valid and reliable; however, like all social science research, this study has certain limitations. Throughout the process, the researcher attempted to reduce the various limitations associated with the chosen research method and design. Although both measures of reliability and validity were substantively dealt with, the strategies used are by no means exhaustively. According to Adler and Clark (1999), the reliability of a measurement strategy is in its capacity to produce consistent results when applied repeatedly, and validity refers to how well a measurement strategy taps into what it should be measuring. They assert that

the validity touches on people's subjective experiences, and are quick to note that perfect validity is not even theoretically attainable (ibid.). For the purpose of this study, suffice it to say, validity and reliability are about the trustworthiness and intensity of the data collected, the methods employed in arriving at them and the appropriateness of the theories applied.

To maximize the reliability and validity of the study, I took several measures suggested by Babbie and Benaquisto (2002) and Neuman (2004). First the adopted measures in this study are established which enhanced the clarity of the concepts to be measured. In addition, the current research is influenced by work performed by other researchers noted in the literature and theoretical considerations of the study above. Furthermore, in developing the questions for the interviews, the researcher conducted a number of pilot tests with colleagues on University campus. Upon arriving in Monrovia, a pre-test of the interviews was conducted to ascertain the clarity of the questions, and verified whether the questions being asked had similar meanings for the respondents. Furthermore, all the interviews were conducted by the researcher which enabled her to probe further and to clear up misunderstandings resulting from miscommunication, and ensure that the information had been accurately recorded. Follow up questions were asked to eliminate possible confusion. Finally, as mentioned, to keep accurate records the researcher took extensive notes and used voice recorders with the majority of the participants.

The issue of the researcher's position as regards the respondents is also relevant here. Accordingly, LeCompte and Goetz (1984: 46) have noted that "what observers see and report is a function of the position they occupy within participant groups, the status accorded them, and the role behaviour expected of them". Conducting fieldwork among people (Liberians) of a different culture, coupled with the fact that I have never experienced forced migration, could

have made me an outsider in many ways. As mentioned, the researcher tried to prevent this by assuring the respondents of the importance of their "knowledge" -- that is, their narratives -- for the whole research exercise. It was suggested to them that they were very much the "experts" and the researcher was their keen audience trying to piece their stories together for a wider audience. Also, the researcher's status as a student helped to convince them of the transparency of the study's objective. These factors could, however, have reduced the accuracy of the information gathered.

Furthermore, the researcher is acutely aware of the limitations of the similar systems design used in the selection of the cases. The most critical limitation of multiple case studies as a research design based on the "most similar systems" is its inability to generalize about the findings beyond systems similar to those being studied. The reason is that the process of sampling is purposive. As observed by Przeworski and Teune (1970:37), "no research based on a design other than multistep sample of all social systems will allow universal generalizations". This noted limitation is, however, less significant for the current study, because it compares systems with similar characteristics. Additionally, as stated, the objective of the study is not to develop broad generalizations about, or to construct a grand theory on, the politics of forced migrants and peacebuilding. Rather, the aim is to extend and verify an alternative theoretical approach in order to broaden our understanding of how forced migration links up with post-conflict peacebuilding.

Second, in conducting interviews that use instruments based on the recollection of incidences after the fact, a number of pitfalls arise. Most obviously, a sample frame is lacking, and the time lapsed since the experience becomes a challenge, since returnees have to recollect

memories that may be suppressed or forgotten. The problem with the framework and time could have been dealt with by conducting the interviews with respondents during each phase of their experience, but since this has not been the case with regard to the current study, this challenge, although not entirely eliminated, has been limited by the adoption of a combination of the criterion and snowball sample procedures in the selection of participants, and by comparing the responses of the participants with existing archival sources.

This limitation notwithstanding, the study makes an important contribution to the emerging scholarship on the relationship between forced migration studies and international relations theories through the links of peacebuilding. As aptly noted by Betts and Loescher (2011, 3-4), IR theories have long marginalized refugees, while writers in the field of forced migration disregarded the state and global structures in the understanding of both national and international responses to the refugee question. Thus, the study's adoption of a cross-disciplinary approach emphasizes the fact that the study of refugees can find a place in the IR discipline, which is otherwise dominated by structures and top-down analysis. Through social constructivism theorization, the study recovers the otherwise muted voices of refugees in Political Science, particularly in IR, and presents them as agents existing in a complex relationship with the structures of state and global politics. Furthermore, it is hoped that this study's adaptation of social constructivism to forced migration studies will contribute to theory building in a discipline that is otherwise overly "descriptive and often adopts an out of the wider social, economic and political context analysis approach" (Collinson, 2011). All in all, studying the phenomenon of forced migrations, how the refugee returnee is affected, and their effect on local and international communities and the politics of return and peacebuilding needs a

comprehensive analysis that can benefit from the cross-disciplinary approach, such as the one adopted in this current study.

### **3.4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

To reiterate, the study's choice of social constructivism's analytical framework for the current study has two main dimensions. First, it allows for revisiting rules, norms and principles (structures) guiding the refugee situation in Africa, and how they are implemented as rights and duty regulations of the refugee situation in the world in general, but Africa in particular. The presentation of these structures as constraining and independent of the refugee is ill-suited to accommodate the dynamic and actor-focused image of refugees presented by the current study. That is to say, the current study questions the way policy makers and practitioners of both home and host countries react to state-imposed restrictions on the extent and nature of refugee and returnee support. Do they acknowledge the refugee returnee as a capable actor, or are they operating on the basis of stereotyped images and top-down procedures, which lead to passivity and dependence, or further depletion of the resources of the refugee or returnee?

Second, the study wants to draw attention to the fact that during the process of forced migration experience of flight, living in asylum and returning, returnees and the structures they encountered are transformed. Therefore it is important to understand that the various conditions (structures) of the refugee experience present both opportunities and constraining effects, which exist in a strategic relationship with the choices of the refugees, resulting in gains or further depletion of their resources. That is, flight, living in asylum and return, apart from causing losses and traumas, can also have some gains. The current study highlights the circumstances under

which refugees and returnees develop more awareness of their social situation, and grow assertive in negotiating social spaces and conditions that can further deplete or increase their resources. The current study posits that these resources become permanent assets of the refugee, and are available for harnessing by the home country upon return. The complex and interrelated variables (structures and agents) that are relevant in understanding the life situations of the refugees do not, moreover, lend themselves well to representation in this simplified framework. Some will be fully developed within the narrative text. Recognizing refugees as knowledgeable and capable social actors requires that their voices be heard, and their actions examined, on issues concerning them, and how they in turn affect the structures of forced migration.

Furthermore, to examine the returnees' engagement in the process of post-conflict peacebuilding, the concept of returnee's resources (material, social, personal and cultural) was introduced as a lens through which to identify the transformation that returnees undergo as a result of their forced migration experience, and how they deploy it in their reintegration activities, thus making them agents of their situation. Having identified economic recovery, good governance, creation of social cohesion through seeking justice and reconciliation activities and the establishment of institutions of protection and security as the four key strategies of peacebuilding, it was shown how returnees, through the deployment of resources towards their reintegration and community activities can participate in these strategies. Returnees are thus not necessarily returning to wait for handouts, but to (re)build their lives as members of a society that is undergoing renewal and reconstruction.

Finally, the outlined methods of research have been influenced by Political Science research methods that prioritize the perspectives of those who are usually excluded or

marginalized in the institutional bias and state centralized approaches to building communities and states. From this standpoint, the study hopes to give a voice to the lesser known agents (refugee returnees) who as argued have a stake, and are partners in rebuilding their lives and helping to transform their communities. The next chapter discusses the Liberian war as the main cause of flight for the refugees, and the transformation of their resources as a result of the refugee's encounter with the structures of war and flight.

## Chapter 4. Leaving Liberia: War, Flight and Resource Losses

### 4.0. INTRODUCTION

The numerous inter-state wars and violent conflicts in Africa have caused the displacement of millions of people. The West African state of Liberia's violent conflict of 14 years, from which it is now recovering, was characterized by egregious violations of human rights that led to many deaths and the displacement of its entire population, including beyond its borders.<sup>56</sup> The Liberian civil war, which began in 1989 when armed forces led by Charles Taylor tried to seize power from then President General Samuel Doe, had deep roots in the country's history of state building.<sup>57</sup> This chapter therefore discusses the dynamics of the violence through a brief reconstruction of the history of state-led abuse for over a century and half that resulted in the armed conflict, and presents the returnees' flight experiences as tied into the constraining structures of the war in Liberia.

The chapter reveals that although Liberians have experienced violence in the past, the destruction in the 14 years' war involved exceptionally high levels of brutality, which led the research participants to lose resources with varied impacts. Those variations, the chapter notes, are due to the mediating effect of each refugee returnee's decisions and their pre-asylum resource levels. For example, such decisions as the ones to flee overnight to avoid rebel groups, and to

---

<sup>56</sup>The study's use of displacement of all Liberians is in accordance with Lubkemann's (2008) argument that displacement is not simply related to physical relocation, as in the case of refugees crossing international borders, or IDPs moving to other parts of the country; rather, it includes people who are displaced in place, and are unable to engage in their daily activities as a result of the war.

<sup>57</sup>See Howard, R.E., (1995) "Civil Conflict in sub-Saharan Africa: Internally Generated Causes" *International Journal* Vol.1 No.1, pp. 27-53 and Kieh, K.G., (1994) "The Obstacles to Peaceful Resolution of the Liberian Civil War" *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol.17 pp.97-108 for a discussion of historical analyses of the root cause of Liberia's civil war.

travel south to the capital, Monrovia, were arrived at through thoughtfully calculating potential further losses. This evidence is in sharp contrast with Kunz (1973, 1981) and Van Hear's (1992, 1998) notion of loss of agency as an inevitable by-product of war situation migration. The chapter thus argues that the constraining structural context of the Liberian war, the interaction between the people involved, and the transformations in their resources all, in combination, resulted in their flight into asylum and subsequent living in exile and return experience.

Before we explore the more direct personal and proximate causes of forced migration from Liberia, it is important to consider the underlying structural factors that predisposed the people to flee. The chapter therefore begins with a brief discussion of the creation and collapse of the political state and its excesses as a major cause of the Liberian civil war, with their ensuing costs; this included the total displacement of Liberians and complete collapse of the state. Several structural shifts can be identified that help explain the crescendo of displacement from Liberia during the 14 years of war. According to the narratives of the research participants, the proliferation of fighting groups, with scattered locations, produced violence so widespread as to touch almost every resident of Liberia. As revealed in the secondary sources, previous violence in Liberia was usually confined to one county or city, and certain individuals. The participants noted that the level of violence against civilians by both government soldiers and rebels resulted in losses on an unprecedented scale. To appreciate the structural context of the war and the participants' flight experience, we thus have to place them in the context of Liberia's history, which is briefly described in the first section of this chapter. The second section begins with the introduction of the research participants, and a look at the resource levels prior to the war. This is followed by a presentation of the flight processes, and of the transformational effect

of both the war and the flight on the refugees' resources. The discussion focuses on the war and the conditions to which the refugees responded and on the basis of which they made flight decisions, including asylum destination choices. The main objective in this section is to explore and examine the agency of the returnees during the flight phase of their forced migration experience.

**4.1. THE LIBERIAN STATE and VIOLENT CONFLICTS**

**Map 4.1. Liberia: Counties, County Capitals and other Major Towns**



Source: Map of the World <http://www.mapsofworld.com/liberia/>

The modern state of Liberia (see Map 4.1) was partly shaped by the slave trade between the continents of Africa, Europe and America. In the early 1800s a group of prominent white

Americans developed a plan to return freed black slaves to Africa. Beginning in 1822, free black Americans, freed slaves of African descent, and Africans freed from captured slave ships were settled by the American Colonization Society (ASC) on lands that later became Liberia. This group of a few thousand settlers, never more than five percent of the Liberian population, became known as Americo-Liberians (Sawyer 1992; Final Report of the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2009: 3).

As Liberia began to establish itself as a nation, a small number of Americo-Liberian families and their patronage networks dominated all aspects of the government, the economy, the security sector, commerce and social advancement. They acquired land, and extended their influence and authority deep into the hinterland from the coast by the force of the settler government. In 1847 the Americo-Liberians declared Liberia an independent commonwealth, with the domains of government vested in the Republican Party (RP), which ruled until 1869 when it was defeated by the newly formed True Whig Party (TWP), which systematically suppressed all forms of opposition (Kieh, 2008).

It was not until the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the state solidified into its current form, encompassing an area of about 37,743 square miles. This geographical expansion resulted in a population increase from 190,000 in 1869 to about a million by 1930 (LTRC 2009:86-7). This state control and expansion engendered a number of conflicts between the natives and the state dominated by the Americo-Liberians as well as among the various native groups.<sup>58</sup> Thus to

---

<sup>58</sup>For a compilation of the list of these conflicts and the groups involved see Levitt J., (2005) *The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia: from paternalism to state collapse* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press), Sawyer A., (1992) *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia: Tragedy and Challenge* (California: Institute for Contemporary Studies Press) and Moran, M. (2008) *Liberia the Violence of Democracy* (University of Pennsylvania)

enforce the state's control over the people and its borders, in 1908 Liberia, for the first time, created a national army, the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF), later changed to the Armed Forces of Liberia (ARL) (LTRC, 2009:5 and 87). This development was a legitimate part of the process of state-making; however, it engendered tremendous political conflicts of its own. The army became a tool for enforcement of the will of the governing elites (Americo-Liberians) in the interior areas of Liberia, which were mostly inhabited by indigenes. The army became a tool for collecting the hut tax, and its cruelty in performing its role, such as publicly humiliating native chiefs and elders, has survived in Liberia's oral history.<sup>59</sup>

Socially and culturally, Liberians were sub-divided into the two main categories of Americo-Liberians and indigenes, the latter consisting of about 16 socio-cultural groups.<sup>60</sup> It is important to note that this categorization of native groups was mostly an administrative exercise, and part of the state building activities of the ruling class, rather than an objective assessment of the people. Most of these groups are known to be made up of smaller groups whose dialects belong to the same language, and who happened to live within the imposed administrative boundary. Similarities among them are very few. Even among the various groups who are noted as sharing a language, the dialect varies. For example, according to Schroder and Seibel (1974), two major variants of dialects, the eastern and the western, are identified among the Krahns, and a speaker of one does not understand the other.<sup>61</sup> Thus, as argued by Bøas (2005), the Krahn and other ethnic groups in Liberia prior to the state's birth were flexible and inclusionary; these

---

<sup>59</sup>These were submitted in evidence by some of the victims who appeared before that Liberian TRC, and are documented by it in its final report, published in July 2009.

<sup>60</sup>These are the Bassa, Belle, Dey, Gbandi, Gio, Gola, Grebo, Kissi, Kpelle, Krahn, Kru, Loma, Mandingo, Mano, Mende and Vai.

<sup>61</sup>As quoted in Bøas, M. (2005) "The Liberian Civil War: new war/old war?" *Global Society*, Vol.19 No. 1 pp. 73-88.

cleavages as they exist now, however, are sharpened by administrative boundaries imposed by Americo-Liberian rule.

The nature and character of the new republic, and the realization that they had to coexist with the natives, meant that a policy of assimilation was adopted by the settler state in the following, and other, forms, which characterized their interaction and relations with the natives, according to whether they were a superior or an inferior culture (Sawyer, 1992). One method was the apprenticeship system: a process of socializing the indigenes into settler culture by bringing them under the guardianship of settler families. Others were through education, with the objective of civilizing the indigenes with the Christian ethos, an approach that sought to produce a core of native intelligentsia, and included changing native names to Christian and American ones. Finally the creation of the settlement policy, which implemented the creation of repatriated communities within native lands, who subsequently served as administrators of the indirect system of ruling the natives (LTRC, 2009).

There were few educational or other opportunities for Liberians of non-Americo-Liberian origin; on the other hand, impunity for corruption and systematic human rights abuses were attributes of the government and a few families that controlled the wealth of the nation. The settlers' domination of Liberia parallels the myth of the inferiority of the Americo-Liberians to the southern Americans that was current at the time of their departure from America to settle in Liberia.<sup>62</sup> Howe (1996) succinctly notes that Americo-Liberians soon displayed some of the

---

<sup>62</sup>It is argued that one of the reasons for the deportation or resettling of freed African slaves in Africa was that they were inferior to Western civilization and, therefore, incapable of adjusting, so that it would have been to their advantage if they were returned to their natural habitat (Africa). For this line of argument see, Howard L.C., (1988) *American Involvement in South of the Sahara: 1800-1860* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc.).

worst traits of the antebellum of the U.S. south: the victims of American slavery became the victimizers of the natives.

The authoritarian and dominant role of the settlers and the imposition of their rule have been at the core of contention and conflict between the two groups of peoples in Liberia, which has remained unresolved for centuries, and germinated into even greater conflicts over everything from land to skin colour, to cultural differences and social, political and economic inequalities (Moran, 2008; Bøas, 2009). The formation of the Liberian state was messy, with very little humanitarian concern, and punctuated by many violent conflicts. As documented by Levitt (2005), about 90 deadly conflicts ensued, from 1821 to 1944, between the newcomers and the indigenous populations.

#### **4.1.1 Military Tyranny**

As a wave of coups d'états swept across Africa in the immediate post-colonial era, Liberia appeared immune (Omoden, 1992). That changed after the bloody, successful coup d'état of April 12, 1980. Liberia, under the People's Redemption Council (PRC), had its first native led government, with Master Sgt. Samuel K. Doe as the Head of State. Upon assumption of office Doe and his party enjoyed popular support, and released all political prisoners; many of them were given positions in the new government (LTRC, 2009:113).

The Doe administration was bogged down by controversy over electoral malpractices, with charges of vote rigging and corruption. In fact, Doe's regime was essentially no different from those of his predecessors. This was surprising, considering the fact that Doe himself, an indigene, had proclaimed that the reason for his overthrow of the constitution was to correct the

vices that had been perpetrated against the locals for over century. His rule was so bad that the majority of the indigenes preferred oppression by the minority to oppression by one of their own people. According to Cohen (2000:126), “within five years, the Doe regime went from the embodiment of indigenous majority rule to an oppressive government” that was dominated by one indigenous group.

Similar to those of the Americo-Liberians, Doe’s government was mostly concerned with their personal wealth, and the state kitty became their main source of wealth creation. Instead of allocating resources to the bridging of the poverty gap, and helping the vast majority, government officials spent on non-productive purposes.<sup>63</sup> According to the Liberian TRC report, by the end of his rule “Doe and his cronies had stolen a reported \$300 million of public funds.” The levels of corruption and misuse of public offices by Doe and his cronies for personal gain were indistinguishable from those of the erstwhile TWP government they overthrew (Kieh, 2008; LTRC, *op. cit.*:115).

Furthermore, Doe’s government was guilty of the abuse of the political and civil liberties of Liberians.<sup>64</sup> According to Marc Weller (1994), Doe ruled Liberia under martial law

---

<sup>63</sup>The looting and corrupt practices of the Liberian governments prior to the war are documented in the final report of the LTRC. For example, in 1871 the Republican Party began what was termed the “buffet service” where loans in the name of development were contracted from Britain and the USA, but were shared among members of the ruling class, and the paltry sum left could not finance any meaningful development. Moreover, during the True Whip Party, the report notes the members of the ruling class used the state in various illicit ways to accumulate wealth privately. Members of the subaltern classes, who occupied various positions in the state bureaucracy, the military, the police, other security organizations and civil service, also usurped development funds, and resorted to bribery, extortion and keeping collected revenues. The effect was the diversion of state funds to personal use through various corrupt means (LTRC, 2009:112-113).

<sup>64</sup>The arbitrary arrest of and miscarriage of justice against individuals, particularly during the tyrannical rule of the military government, are recorded in 2009 TRC of Liberia. In its annual reports from 1980-1989, Freedom House Organization, which compiles the human rights index for countries around the world, indicates that during this period Liberia abused the political and civil liberties of its citizens, thus meriting a status of partially free or not free for each year in the period under review.

from 1980 until 1986, when a new constitution was to be inaugurated. Doe left the constitution unimplemented and, instead, viciously suppressed political opposition, relying on the loyalty of members of his soci-cultural group, the Krahn, to maintain his rule (ibid.). His ban on the multi-party system and his crushing of individuals resulted in the flight into exile of members of opposition parties. Famous among them were Dr Amos Sawyer and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The political persecution did not exclude members of Doe's own government, leading to distrust between him and his erstwhile political allies (Moran, 2008).

In November, 1985 the political crises in the country culminated in an attempted coup by Doe's former second-in-command, General Thomas Quiwonkpa.<sup>65</sup> Its failure led to the killing of Quiwonkpa, as well as a government reprisal against the natives of the Gio and Mano socio-cultural groups, located mostly in the Nimba County. Doe's response included the purging of state institutions (police, security forces and other public services) of Liberians from that county. Gross violations of human rights became the order of the day. Assassination of opponents and witch hunts for those who disagreed with his rule was his preferred methods of engagement. As noted by the LTRC (2009: 117), "in Doe's Liberia, there were no Americo-Liberians or indigenous Liberians as such; you were either (or seen as) pro or anti Doe. There would be nothing in between in this invidious divide; only deaths, violence and sycophantic leadership".

Insecurity in government and the state, coupled with the overwhelming corrupt practices of the ruling class, high unemployment rates, mismanagement of state economic resources and

---

<sup>65</sup>He was one of the leaders of the military coup that brought Samuel Doe to power. In 1982 his relationship with Doe became strained, and Doe demoted him from his position as commanding General of the Armed Forces of Liberia and the number four official in the ruling People's Redemption Council (PRC) to the ceremonial position of Secretary-General of the Council (the number six position in the restricted military council).

the inequalities of wealth among the two main categories of the society, a low literacy rate and poor health care services were all essential ingredients in the 14-year Liberian civil war.

#### **4.1.2. 1989-2003 Civil War**

The state crises, as noted, provided the pretext for the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), under the leadership of Charles Taylor,<sup>66</sup> to initiate the civil war in Liberia. Using the legitimate grievances of the majority of Liberians of the non-ruling class, the NPFL and other militias used violence to initiate a process of dislodging Doe, and forever changed Liberia.

On the eve of Christmas 1989, about one hundred Special Forces members of the NPFL crushed several Liberian government targets in the town of Butuo, in Nimba County, thus declaring war on the Liberian state. The NPFL membership mainly comprised young men from the Gio and Mano ethnic groups of Nimba County. Taylor's choice of Nimba County as a launch pad was strategic, as the ranks swelled overnight with willing and adventurous recruits seeking revenge. Despite their socio-cultural differences, the Manos and Gios seized the opportunity, joining for a common cause: eliminate Doe and his Krahn and Mandingo supporters for stealing their 1986 election victory, and for persecuting them after the failed coup by General Quiwonkpa in 1985. Furthermore, Taylor, born to an Americo-Liberian father and a Gio mother, appealed to Americo-Liberians by declaring that "his intention was to avenge the 1980 executions" (LTRC, 2009: 117-119).

---

<sup>66</sup>He claimed he was a victim of Doe's excessive abuse of power. Charles Taylor served as deputy minister of Commerce, Industry and Transportation in the Doe regime; however, in 1983 he fled Liberia amid charges of embezzlement.

It soon became clear to Liberians and the world, however, that the antigovernment forces too were only interested in accumulating personal wealth. The war was prosecuted through the capturing of resource rich areas, such as those in Lofa, Bong and Bomi Counties; and the fragmenting of the militia groups supports the argument that greed is the motivation for civil wars.<sup>67</sup> In summary, Davis et al. (1997:2) notes that “neither political philosophy nor long-running historical tribal clashes were at the root of the Liberian civil war: instead, it was motivated by greed.”

From the initial few hundred, the NPFL rapidly grew into a vast, irregular army, occupying and controlling about 90 percent of the country by April 1990, thereby forcing the US-backed Doe government to collapse, with the President holed up in the Executive mansion. The NPFL had, however, experienced its first splinter group, in the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), led by Prince Johnson. Five other organized rebel groups emerged, becoming seven by 1994 (Reno, 1996; Ellis, 1999).<sup>68</sup> The increase in the number of rebel groups, according to Kieh (2008), was primarily based on the desire of would-be warlords to acquire wealth, although they argued it was to protect their respective socio-cultural groups. The multiplication of the warlords and rebel groups and their scattered locations aided (see table 4.1) in the spread of the war to almost every part of the country, which led to the total

---

<sup>67</sup>For a thorough discussion of how most of Africa’s civil wars, and particularly those of Liberia and Sierra Leone, have been prosecuted for the economic gain of the rebels and actors, see, Berdal M., and Malone D., (ed.) (2000) *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Ottawa IDRC) and Collier P., and Hoeffler, A., (2004) “Greed and Grievance in Civil War,” *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56, pp. 563-595.

<sup>68</sup>See Table 4.1 for a list of the rebel groups involved in the war and their major county of location in Liberia.

displacement of Liberians and the flight of thousands of Liberians into neighbouring countries, across the sub-region and the world. As related by one returnee, the rebels, including the soldiers, had no “regard for non-combat Liberians”. The rebels plundered, tortured, killed, raped women and destroyed various public and private facilities. For example, on July 2, 1990 the NPFL cut off the electricity and water to Monrovia, and started pounding the city with artillery and rockets (Adebajo, 2002:59).

**Table 4.1 Fighting Groups and Main Counties of Operation in Liberia**

<b>Fighting Groups</b>	<b>External Support</b>	<b>County Location</b>
NPFL	Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Libya	Nimba, Bong, Grand Bassa, Lofa and Montserrado
INPFL		Margibi and Montserrado
MODEL	Ivory Coast	Grand Gedeh, Sinoe
LURD	Guinea	Lofa, and now the county of Gbarpolu and Bomi
Lofa Defence Forces (LDF)		Lofa
ULIMO-K	Sierra Leone/Guinea	Lofa and Bomi
ULIMO-J	Sierra Leone/Guinea	Grand Kru, Sinoe
AFL and LPC		Maryland, Margibi, Nimba, Bong, Grand Kru, Montserrado, Lofa, Grand Gedeh and River Gee, which until 2000 was part of Grand Gedeh.

**Source: Compiled by author from secondary sources<sup>69</sup> and narratives of research participants.**

<sup>69</sup>See Reno, W. (1996) "The Business of War in Liberia." *Current History*, pp. 211-215. Ellis, S. (1999) *The Mask of Anarchy*; Ellis, S. (1998) "Liberia's Warlord Insurgency." in *African Guerrillas*, Clapham C. (ed.), (James Currey: Oxford) Utas M. (2005) "Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering: Tactic Agency in a Young Woman's Social Navigation of the Liberian War Zone" *Anthropological Quarterly* 78 (2) pp. 403-430 and LTRC 2009 Final Report.

### 4.1.3 Ending the Violence and the Cost of the War

Ellis (1999:21) notes that “the Liberian civil war, which topped and surpassed all other wars in form and character, in intensity, in depravity, in savageness, in barbarism and in horror”, went through 16 brokered and broken peace agreements. From Banjul to Bamako, to Switzerland, to Abuja and others from 1990 to 2003, peace agreements were no sooner signed than broken on political disagreements, as more factions emerged to get a piece of the spoils. As noted by Adebajo (2002), in most of the negotiations, which were organized and led by the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), the military and ceasefire issues were normally resolved on the first day; but the issue of who got what became intractable, and a source of great conflict, prolonging peace conferences for weeks and, sometimes, months. Accordingly, the LTRC has noted that all 16 peace agreements were lacking in accountability mechanisms, which left one warring faction after another to continue committing mass murders and gross violations of human rights with impunity. For example, the Cotonou Agreement of July 25, 1993 sought to grant general amnesty to all combatants (Vogt, 1992). Finally the Accra CPA of August 18, 2003, the 17<sup>th</sup> peace agreement, which saw Taylor stepping down as president and going into exile, ended the 14 years of brutal conflict in Liberia.<sup>70</sup>

Like every civil war, the Liberian one exacted multiple costs. In terms of the human loss, there are various estimates on the total number of civilians killed: from 150,000 to 200,000

---

<sup>70</sup>For an in-depth discussion of the both the regional and international efforts to end the Liberian Civil, war see, Adebajo A., (2002) *Liberia’s Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG and Regional Security in West Africa*. (Lynne Rienner, London) and Vogts M, (ed). *Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Peacekeeping*. (Gabumo, Lagos).

during the first civil war.<sup>71</sup> The government of Liberia (The Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy LPRS, 2008:17), moreover, notes that the total human loss of the two wars was estimated at 270,000. As noted, the various warlords and their militia groups were all guilty of killing civilians. Thousands of civilians were wounded and maimed, but, as in most violent conflicts around the world, no data is available. During the course of the war the entire population were displaced, both internally and externally. According to the UNHCR not less than one million Liberians fled the country in search of safety, including beyond neighbouring countries. One of the major dimensions of the human tragedy of the war was the “culture of vitriolic human right abuses” (Human Rights Watch, 1996:1). These abuses took the form of rape, robberies, beatings, tortures, forced labour, killing and use of child soldiers, leading former Gambian president, Sir Dauda Jawara, to aptly describe Liberia as “a butcher house”( as quoted in LTRC, 2009:122).

Before the war, the Liberian economy had collapsed, which helped propel the crisis; but the 14 further years decimated it. The decline was felt everywhere. Commercial and productive activities ceased, as various warlords looted and vandalized the country. For example, the Charles Taylor-led NPFL, the largest and most powerful militia, illegally produced rubber at the Firestone Plantations Company, undertook the illicit mining of minerals, diamonds and gold, and engaged in logging activities (Keih, 2008:159). Furthermore, agricultural production dropped, as people fled their farms, and the supporting infrastructure collapsed. The production of rice, the main staple of Liberians, fell 76 percent between 1987 and 2005 (LPRS 2008:15). During this period the only increase in the production sector was in the wood and charcoal industry used to

---

<sup>71</sup>Estimates are from the Crimes of War Project, <http://www.crimesofwar.org/onnews/news-sierra3.html>. The figure of 200,000 is frequently cited without attribution in media coverage of the Liberia conflict.

meet the basic energy needs of the people (ibid.). The total collapse of the economy was reflected in the GDP, which fell to 90 percent between 1987 and 1995: one of the largest economic collapses ever recorded in the world (ibid.). The government defaulted on its debts servicing in the mid-1980s, and by 2006 external debt had soared to US\$4.5 billion, equivalent to 800 percent of GDP and 3,000 percent of exports (LPRS, 2008:16-17).

The already underdeveloped infrastructure was also further destroyed. For example, the national hydro plant and water purification systems were destroyed, and electric poles were stripped of copper wire and, in some cases, destroyed, resulting in no electricity or piped water in the country for 15 years. Bridges and roads were blown up, and the majority of Liberia's roads are now impassable, limiting access to various parts of the country, further depriving the people of access to health and education facilities, and constraining economic recovery.

Similarly, health, educational, other public and private buildings were blown up and looted, which aggravated the health care crisis in the country by substantially decreasing access.

Consequently, hundreds of people died, in some cases from curable diseases. Unemployment soared, and poverty increased sharply, with nearly 64 percent of Liberians now living below the poverty line. The war sent capital and professionals into flight. By 2008 there were only 51 Liberian physicians to cover the nation's public health needs: approximately one for every 70,000 Liberians. About 70 percent of school buildings were partially or wholly destroyed, and over half of Liberian children and youth are estimated to be out of school (LPRS, 2008:16).

## **4.2. PRE-FLIGHT AND RESOURCE PROFILE OF RETURNEES**

This section presents the data on the transformations in returnees' resources, beginning from the pre-flight and continuing through to the asylum phases of the refugee experience. The empirical evidence reveals that the flight phase of forced migration generally leads to resource losses. The losses, however, are mediated by factors such as refugee decisions relating to asylum destination, means of transportation, and their proximity to the cause of their forced migration experience. The section begins with an introduction of the study's research participants prior to the war and their resource levels. This is followed by a presentation of their experiences of their flight to Ghana and Guinea, and their resource transformational experiences as result of the structures of the war and of their experiences of flight as they sought protection in the two asylum countries (Ghana and Guinea).

### **4.2.1. Pre-War and Returnees' Resources**

The 14-year Liberian civil war, just discussed, was the main cause of the refugees' decision to flee into asylum for security and protection. Under such conditions their action was marked by major resource losses. In order to assess the losses incurred by the research participants as a result of the war, the section first presents the resource profile of the research participants prior to the war, followed by a presentation and discussion of their losses as a consequence of it.

***A) Pre-War Personal Resources:*** It includes the age and gender profile, and physical health conditions, such as the mobility capabilities, of the research participants.

**Table 4.2. Pre-War Age Profile of the Returnees**

Age Group	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Below 18	12	8
18-25	10	8
26-32	4	8
33-40	4	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

As can be seen in Table 4.2, the majority of the research participants can be described as young. The study purposefully selected research participants within this age category because studies (Kunz, 1981; Hobfoll, 2001) have shown that they have greater ease to adapt to their new environment compared to those older migrants.<sup>72</sup> A younger age, according to Hobfoll (ibid.), is associated with better physical health, higher energy levels and greater capacity to learn new skills, such as the acquisition of a new language. Furthermore, since they enjoy good physical and, sometimes, better mental health, they are in a better position to access a range of other resources, such as social relationships, education and employment skills (Ryan et al. 2008: 14). It was therefore not surprising that all 60 research participants noted that they were in good physical health, and had no mobility limitations before the war and their flight into asylum.

However, selecting research participants within this age category has its disadvantage. That is to say, younger age is also associated with lower resource levels such as material, cultural

---

<sup>72</sup>It is important to note that Kunz, (1981:51) include refugees with higher education in this category; however, he concludes that "in the long run, the highly educated may remain more impervious to assimilationist pressures than the less educated compatriots".

and social resources. These limitations notwithstanding, the study contends that the higher level of adaptation among this age category makes them less vulnerable to further resource losses; and, given conducive asylum conditions, they have greater opportunities for resource gains and possibilities of replacing those lost as a result of flight. In terms of the gender profile, although gender relations are not discussed in this study, attempts were made to balance the representation from the two groups. Each asylum group is thus represented by 17 males and 13 females.

***B) Pre-War Material Resources:*** These include both moveable and non-moveable assets, such as houses, businesses, farmlands, means of transportation, employment status, money and savings in the bank, and personal possessions. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 below indicate returnee's pre-war material resources. The pre-war material resources of the two groups are low and this is related to the youthfulness and the fact that most of them were dependants of their parents or other extended family members. Further as can be seen in Table 4.3, 18 returnees from Guinea described themselves as self-employed as compared with 12 returnees from Ghana. Among the returnees from Guinea, most of them noted agricultural activities as their main source of income and cultivated land that they described as their own. However, the returnees from Ghana related that their pre-war economic activities (self-employed) included trading activities such as buying goods from cities and returning to sell them in rural towns where they lived or only visited their trading activities. Finally, it is important to note that most of the returnees from Guinea engaged in farming noted that they sold most of their produce at the weekly market in Voinjama, where buyers came from cities in Liberia and the nearby towns of Guinea.

**Table 4.3. Pre-War Employment Status of Returnees**

Employment Profile	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Student	10	6
Public Service	2	1
Unemployed	6	5
Self-employed	12	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

**Table 4.4. Pre-War Assets of Returnees**

Moveable/Non moveable Assets	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Business/House/Savings/Land	1	0
Business/Savings/House	2	0
Business/Savings/House/Car	1	1
Car/House/Savings	2	0
House/Land	0	6
House/Savings	2	4
Renting	1	1
Renting House/Business/Savings	8	2
Renting House/Savings	2	3
Renting House/ Savings/Car	2	0
Renting House/Farmland	0	4
Savings	2	0
N/A	7	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

**C) Returnees' Pre-War Social Resources:** Social resources refer to the research participants' personal and social relationships and their beneficial aspects. The latter include emotional, informational and tangible support, as well as the sense of identity and belonging that integration in social networks brings. Since these benefits are not quantifiable, the data in tables 4.5 and 4.6 indicates the various social networks of the returnees, such as their marital status and their responsibilities to family and society: for example, through their volunteer activities.

**Table 4.5. Pre-War Marital Status of Returnees**

Marital Status	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Married	8	18
Single	21	12
Divorced	1	0
Widow/Widower	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

As Table 4.5 indicates there were high number of research participants in the single category of marital status and this is consistent with the study's choice of younger persons. This consistency is also apparent in the high numbers of participants who did not have children, and were not responsible for other family members (see Table 4.6). Although most of the research participants were both unmarried and childless before the war, they gave a high value to the relationship they had with not just members of their nuclear family but, also, extended family

members, including grandparents, uncles, aunts and general members of the communities in which they lived.

**Table 4.6. Pre-War Family Responsibilities of Returnees**

Number of Family Members Under Your Care	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
1	6	2
2	1	3
3	2	6
4	1	8
5 and/or more	0	0
None	20	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

**Table 4.7. Pre-War Volunteering Activities of Returnees**

Type of Volunteer Activity	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
NGO/Community Association	0	1
Political	0	0
Religious	10	7
Trade/Profession	1	2
None	19	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

The volunteering activities are those that the research participants indicated they participated in once a week at their own expense and for which they received no remuneration. Most of these activities are not regulated, and very loosely organized. As can be seen in Table 4.7 above, the main associational activities of the research participants prior to the war were mostly related to religion. The three participants linked with a professional activity noted that these were in relation to their farming activities. According to them, as individual farmers and, sometimes, members of extended families, they took turns helping with each other's farming activities, as well as sharing ideas on farming techniques.

***D) Pre-War Cultural Resources of Returnees:*** This refers to the linguistic skills, literacy, education, occupational skills and computer knowledge of the refugees prior to the war and fleeing into asylum. Tables 4.8 to 4.10 below present these resource categories as related to the research participants prior to the war. The data reveals that prior to the war, the research participants generally had a low level of cultural resources, which is explained by the fact that most of them were young, and still in their formative years.

**Table 4.8. Pre-War Language Profile of Returnees**

Number of Languages Spoken	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
1	10	8
2	20	20
3 or more	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

**Table 4.9. Pre-War Occupational Skills of Returnees**

Type of Skills	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Accounting	1	0
Agriculture	2	21
Computer/Technology	0	0
Customer Service	8	0
Educator	3	1
Entrepreneur	6	4
Policy Analyst/Planner	1	0
None	9	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia:

**Table 4.10. Pre-War Formal Education Status of Returnees**

Level of Formal Education <sup>73</sup>	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Completed University	0	0
Enrolled in University	0	0
Completed College/Polytechnic/ Post-Sec.	1	1
Enrolled in College/Polytechnic/ Post-Sec	0	0
Completed High School	9	6
Enrolled in High School	3	3
Completed Middle school	7	9
Enrolled in Middle School	2	2
Completed Primary	2	4
Enrolled in Primary	6	0
None	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

#### 4.2.2 Pre-Flight Resources Losses

This section examines the losses incurred by the refugees due to the war and before their flight into asylum. Table 4.11 presents the nature of the resource and the number of returnees who noted them as losses incurred during this period.

<sup>73</sup> Note, the following are the categorization of the education levels and respective grades associated with each level. Primary (grade 1-6); Middle School (grade 7-9) and High school (grade 10-13). This categorization is based on the returnees' description of their educational levels.

**Table 4.11. Returnees Resources Losses before flight**

Type of Resource	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Business/farms	2	9
Car	3	2
Family Member(s)	20	15
Friends	3	12
House	18	10
Savings	9	4
Other Assets (Personal Belongings, Documents etc)	30	30

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

The war conditions in Liberia that led to the returnees' decision to flee into asylum were marked by major resource losses, including of personal, material and social resources. With regard to personal resources, most of the returnees recounted traumatic experiences of torture and witnessing the death of a family member, friend or member of the community. These experiences challenged not just their existence but also their hope, optimism and trust in their fellow human beings. Some of these effects were captured in a returnee's narrative when he noted: "After all these years I continue to experience nightmares, which generally involve the sight of mutilated bodies lying on the streets of Monrovia, and it is very difficult for me to get out of my house at night, and I have become very suspicious of people" (Author's interview, Monrovia, 2009).

The main physical injury that came to light during the interview involved incidences of malnutrition and dehydration as a result of the long periods of starvation they endured due to food shortages and unavailability of fruits and vegetables. Most of the returnees from Guinea, for

example, noted that it was not safe for them to go their farms to harvest crops; thus, during the long periods of hiding in their homes, they experienced shortages of food, and went for days without food and water. Some returnees from Ghana shared similar experience, because there had been no supplies from the farming areas to the city; thus, even when they took the risk and made it to the market, there was no produce to buy. They added that the war also resulted in disruption in the water supply and, finally, the shutting down of the tap water system in Liberia after the pipelines and water stations were blown up by the various factions.

Furthermore, as described, the war was destructive not just to lives, but to assets. The indiscriminate bomb throwing strategy adopted by all factions destroyed residential, public and business buildings, farmlands, and forest zones, as well as private and public assets, such as cars, among other things. It was therefore not surprising that most of my research participants incurred losses of material resources, such as houses, businesses, bank savings, cars, and other assets, such as personal belongings and documentation. Social resource losses incurred by the returnees during the pre-flight phase were through the death, disappearance or flight of family, friends and members of their communities.

As can be seen in Table 4.11, all of the returnees experienced losses, with varying degrees among the two categories studied, as well within each group. Ultimately, the losses incurred by the research participants, with very little hope for recovery opportunities because of the war, were a major factor in their decision to flee and in their choice of destination.

### **4.3. FLIGHT AND RETURNEE RESOURCE TRANSFORMATION**

The flight phase of the forced migration experience was also characterized by major resource losses. This section therefore presents the data on and a discussion of the resource levels of the returnees at the beginning of their flight and at the point of arrival in the asylum country, and examines the losses they incurred during this phase of their refugee experience. Again, these resources are examined in terms of personal, material and social resources. The losses incurred during this period were the result of the structural constraint of fleeing: but, most important, the chapter also reveals the choices made by the refugees as they fled their communities and countries.

#### **4.3.1. Flight Testimonies of Returnees from Guinea**

For the study's informants, who prior to their flight were located mostly in Lofa, Bong and Gborpolu counties, the decision to flee to Guinea meant less travelling time than seeking safety in the capital, Monrovia which was further south (see Map.4.1). Travelling through the forest, however, was very dangerous, because the forest zones had become hiding places and bases for the rebel groups. Furthermore, although it was a shorter trip than travelling to the southern part of Liberia, it still lasted about five times longer than what they considered the normal travelling time. Travelling by car or walking along the road, according to the returnees, was highly risky, because one was bound to encounter rebel groups, who had mounted strategic roadblocks. Their trip into Guinea was associated with many nights of sleeping in bushes, and exposure to all the predators of the forest, as well as harsh weather, such as rain. The longest

flight period recorded among the refugee returnees who fled into Guinea was 10 days, and the shortest was six hours.

To limit the security risk of flight, furthermore, the returnees had, they noted, to travel in smaller groups; families were thus split up to form smaller groups, and made to travel in different directions. During their trip others had to make some life changing decisions, such as leaving very sick family members and friends behind, either in their homes or during the journey in the forest. Others noted that the duration of the ordeal and the discreet manner in which they had to travel through the bushes limited the goods they could carry; and even the few they had sometimes became a burden, so that they had to shed some of their personal belongings along the way. In what follows I will let two of my informants narrate their experience of the war and their flight into Guinea.

John P.<sup>74</sup> left Liberia in 1992, shortly after the rebel group entered the Voinjama area. This is his recollection:

The day of the massacre in Voinjama [that was] led by the NPFL,<sup>75</sup> we remained at the farm. Our farm was further away from the city centre, and closer to the Guinean border, so as people came rushing through telling us about the rebel activities in the city, we decided we could stay in the forest for a couple of days, and return home after the rebels left. Indeed, that was not the first time the city had been attacked, so we thought, based on previous attacks,

---

<sup>74</sup>To protect the identity of the research participants the study uses pseudo names.

<sup>75</sup>This massacre is reported to have occurred as a response to the ULIMO's earlier gains in areas held by Taylor's NPFL, notably around the diamond mining areas of Lofa and Bomi Counties. For further discussion of ULIMO, NPFL and LDF encounters during the first Liberian civil war that ended with the 1997 election, see Ellis S. (2001), *The Mask of Anarchy*; Adebajo, A., (2002) *Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau* Damrosch, L.R. (1993) *Enforcing Restraint: Collective Intervention in Internal Conflicts*.

they would loot and leave, which would allow us to get back to our homes. From the distance we could hear the gun shots, the honking of the cars, and also see the smoke from the buildings that were burning. It was terrifying, and this time, it seemed, the rebels meant to stay longer; so after a week, we decided to cross the border into Guinea. However, prior to that decision of seeking safety in Guinea, I tried to go back to verify what was happening in the village, and to check if I could rescue any of our belongings; but as I drew nearer to my town, the smoke grew thicker, and the silence from the town was very unusual, so I turned around, and returned to my family in the bush, and said it was time to move out of the forest, and seek help in Guinea.

So after hiding in the bush with my wife and younger brother for six days, we started to walk towards the Guinean border from 8pm, and arrived at about 4am. I decided that we were better off walking into Guinea for safety and, also, to be reunited with my parents.

Rose fled to Guinea at the age of 14 with her mother after an attack on a nearby village.

She recollected her trip as follows:

I remember I was playing with my friend next door when I saw my mother running back into the house screaming and calling out my name; and at the same time, I could hear the sounds of crying and screaming around me. My friend and I became confused, because we saw people rushing out of rooms, and others crying and rolling on the ground. Once I got close to my mum, she told me we had to go into hiding in the bush because she just received news

that the rebels were on their way, and had killed almost all the people in the two towns from ours, and there was a rumour that they were planning on attacking our village that night. I quickly joined my mum, picking up every food produce in the house, and my mum threw into a handbag some lapels<sup>76</sup> and any of her jewellery she could lay her hands on. I remember telling my mum to leave it behind because we would return after the rebels had left. I was scared, and wanted us to leave as soon as possible, as I saw others running away. Eventually I just picked my school bag, and followed my mother, as we joined other members of our community trekking into the forest zone. We left in 1993 with my family and some other members of the community after staying in the forest for about four nights. It was in the bush that my mother informed me that she had received news from a man who came by the day before that my sister and her husband had been killed two days earlier as they were fleeing. I think when we finally decided to walk to Guinea there were more than a 100 people in our group, and I knew just a handful of them. Because we did not want to draw attention to ourselves in the bush, for most of the journey we crawled on our hands. I recall some people in our group died on the way due to gunshot wounds, and lack of treatment for them, during the attack on their village.

---

<sup>76</sup>This is a piece of patterned cotton cloth used by women and girls for a variety of purposes, such as tying it up around the body as a skirt, using it to carry babies behind the back, or as a cover cloth at night.

In total, I think we walked for more than a week, because we travelled only at night, so it took longer periods for us to move.

#### **4.3.2 Flight Testimonies of Returnees from Ghana**

Most of the returnees who eventually sought asylum in Ghana indicated that their initial decision was to move out of their homes or communities, and to find secure places within Liberia. In search of safety, some travelled dangerously through villages and forest from, Bomi, Grand Bassa, Marigibi, Grand Gedeh and River Cress Counties, of the middle and eastern sections of the country towards the capital, Monrovia. On the average, the returnees noted that they trekked for about six weeks, because, similar to their colleagues who sought asylum in Guinea, most of the trip was on foot, through the bush, and avoided the road networks. A few of them who began the trip driving their cars abandoned them due either to a shortage of gasoline or the realization that it was safer travelling through the bushes to avoid encountering the rebels.

They noted that during the trip they also found material resources, such as food and personal possessions, in houses abandoned by their owners. During the day time some of them slept in abandoned houses, and travelled at night, because, although it is a dangerous time to travel through the forest, the darkness also protected them from the rebels. When they arrived in Monrovia, some lived with families or friends, and others slept in public buildings. However, soon after they arrived in Monrovia, the war reached the south, thus removing the cover of security they had enjoyed. Joined by others from the Monrovia area, they sought security in the Monrovia sea port, which was controlled by the ECOMOG troops. From the Monrovia sea port, 25 of the research participants were thus transported to safety in Ghana via the Ghanaian

Naval ships and Air Force helicopters. The days spent at the sea port, according to some of my informants, resulted in further resource losses, such as deaths related to ill health, starvation and dehydration caused by the limits of the food and water supply.

The study's other five informants arrived in Ghana after spending an average of three months in Ivory Coast. According to them, their initial decision to seek safety in Ivory Coast had two main reasons. The first was the shorter travel distance, and the closeness of the Ivorian border to their communities, which compared unfavourably to their perception of the risk associated with fleeing to Monrovia. Second, they noted their awareness that the rebels were interested in unseating the government, so the capital was not safe. In their response to the question of why they left Ivory Coast for Ghana, three noted that family reunion was their main reason. The other two returnees noted that overcrowding in the refugee settlement and the language barrier were their main reasons for their decision to seek asylum in Ghana. Below are two narratives of the flight experience from Liberia to Ghana by the research informants.

Palele was 15 years when his father, who was an army officer, was killed in the line of duty as they battled with the rebel incursion into the state. He narrated his flight experience as follows:

We were living in Kakata, and I remember that for a while we did not know the whereabouts of my father, and my mother told us that he was working in Monrovia, and that he was not going to return for a while. I was used to my dad going away often for work, so I considered it normal. One day, when I came back from school, my mother informed me and my younger sister that someone from the army came to inform her that my father had been captured

by the rebels, and that they believed he had been killed, but they could not confirm it. About a week after this incident, my mother said we had to move to Monrovia for our safety, and that, because our father was a military officer, it was very likely that the rebel group that captured him might want to kill his family as well. According to my mother, in Monrovia we were likely to receive help from the other military officers and government. One evening she packed our stuff and drove us to Monrovia, which was about an hour away. We lived with our father's friend, who was also in the army. We could not go out of the building, and there were always military officers guarding the house. At night I could hear loud sounds, people screaming and crying, and during the day, when I looked outside, I could see houses burnt, and people patrolling the streets with guns and firing in the air. One day my mother and the family we were living with told us we had to leave, because it was no longer safe to stay in the house, since the rebels were in the city. So I packed a few of my things, and my mother carried my sister on her back, because she was very sick, and we could not go to the hospital for fear of being captured or shot. During the trip to the sea port we could neither drive in a car nor walk along the street, because, according to my mother, we did not want the rebels and soldiers to see us running away. We arrived at the Monrovia sea port and, to my surprise; there were so many people there. This was because I had thought it was just my father and his friends who were in trouble; thus, my mother's decision that we

should go into hiding. As it turned out, however, more people were affected than I had initially imagined.

I believe we stayed at the port for about two weeks before we boarded the ship to Ghana. Unfortunately, my sister, who was sick, had only received first aid at the Monrovia port, and was admitted to a hospital in Ghana, but died two days later. I still do not know what happened to my father, and we are sure he was killed, but we do not know the whereabouts of his remains.

Christiana lived in Nimba County, and was a trader who frequently went to Monrovia to buy products, and sold them in her village. When the NPFL launched the attack in her home county, Nimba, she was in her shop, and hoping to cash in on people purchasing goods for the Christmas holidays. Christiana relates her flight experience as follows:

I heard loud sounds, and people in the market place started running around, with others singing and dancing, because a rebel group had taken over the government border post and the county offices. I was reluctant to join in the jubilation, because I knew that Doe's government was going to respond, and the military had shown before that they didn't distinguish between rebels or coup plotters and, on the other hand, supporters and citizens. I quickly closed the shop, and went home. Two days later I heard the government was sending in soldiers to deal with the rebels.<sup>77</sup> I decided I had to leave the town, got my

---

<sup>77</sup>In response to this insurgency President Doe is reported to have launched an unrelenting wave of violence against the inhabitants of Nimba County. The Global Security Organization estimated that at least 200 persons were killed by troops of the Government of Liberia during the counterinsurgency campaign. See <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/liberia-1989.htm>

two year old son, packed my bag with all the money I had at home, food produce, and some clothes, and went to the bus stop, and bought a ticket to Ivory Coast. During the trip, we met the rebel members, who were then occupying the Liberian post; they demanded money from us. At the border post we saw dead bodies lined up at the road side, which I think might have included the corpses of the military and border officials, who were reported to have been killed by the rebels. Throughout the journey there were numerous road blocks by the rebels, and each time we had to get down to be thoroughly body searched, and also had to pay to be allowed to go through. The driver also adopted a strategy of honking as we neared the road blocks, to show his support. I do not know if he truly supported them, or if he devised that to enable him to get access. After four hours we arrived at the Ivorian post, where we were asked to show our documents or pay. Since I had used most of the money to pay the rebels at the rebel check points, I had less than they requested, but they took that anyway, and after our bodily checks we were allowed entry.

#### **4.3.3. Flight and Returnee Resource Transformation**

As the evidence from the narratives by the returnees indicates, the conflict in Liberia, which resulted in losses, was the reason for their decision to flee into asylum. It further indicates

---

the enormous pressure under which the refugees made their choices, such as about where to go, when to leave, and what to take with them. These decisions were arrived at within very short periods, and under intense pressure: something that distinguishes refugees from other migrants, who have less pressure and more time for decisions and preparation, as well as more options, especially in their choice of destination. Furthermore, even among the returnees the duration of decision making varied, which was reflected in their choice of when to begin the trip, where they sought asylum, and what to take with them. For example, a returnee from Guinea recalled: “On the day that I began my flight, I had gone to the farm to harvest some produce, when a group of people I recognized as coming from the community informed me that they had heard news that the rebels had taken over the next town, and were heading towards ours; thus, they were going to Guinea. For my safety I started running towards the Guinean border, with just the machete I was working with and the clothes that I wore” (Author’s interview, Voinjama area, 2009).

The hurried manner in which decisions were arrived at and acted upon, and the constraint of lack of transportation, resulted in the research participants taking fewer material resources with them. The flight period, as explained, also resulted in further resource losses, as a result of the travel duration. Once again, the agency of the refugees during this period is reflected in their negotiations with family and friends, and with the rebels and fighters they encountered. Sometimes they employed strategies, such as manipulation, to limit the losses that they would have otherwise incurred. For example, according to the informants, as they trekked looking for secured places, they dropped off clothing, food, professional tools and cars along the way because they did not want to attract the attention of the rebels, which could result in loss of personal and social resources. Thus, some of them decided to abandon material resources

because, as one returnee observed, “Those losses can be recovered, but not the death of a loved one” (Author’s interview, Voinjama area, 2009).

The impact of the longer travel duration, and the greater risk associated with travelling in a war torn country, resulted in loss of social and personal resources as well. Some lost their family and friends to ill health and gunshot wounds. Another form of social losses incurred by the refugees during flight was either through abduction of people by rebel groups, or, sometimes, as a result of the family offering the life of one of their own to save the others. One returnee from Guinea told me: “I recall that at one point we met a group of people with arms who demanded that we give them food, ornaments, young girls and boys, or they were going to kill all of us. They took away the bottles of palm oil and other fruits and vegetables we had picked from abandoned farms. We were forced to stay with the group for two days. During that time we were made to cook them meals, which we were not allowed to eat, and had to carry their weapons along with them. On the third day my mother, the other woman we were travelling with and I were allowed to go, but my brother and two girls from the other family did not come along with us. I still do not know where my brother was taken, and when I asked my mother, she rebuked me, and said the topic could not be discussed. I think my mother feels guilty for allowing them to take my brother, although her action saved our lives” (Author’s interview, Voinjama area, 2009).

**Table 4.12. Returnees Resources at the Beginning of Flight and Arrival in Asylum**

Type of Resources	Country of Asylum			
	Ghana		Guinea	
	Beginning of Flight	Resources upon arrival in asylum	Beginning of flight	Resources upon arrival in asylum
Animal/plants/seeds/seedlings/food	0	0	1	0
Bicycle	0	0	1	0
Car	1	0	1	0
Clothes worn	0	0	5	5
Clothes worn/family	7	7	3	3
Educational materials	2	0	1	0
Family and friends	3	2	0	0
Family/friends/bag of personal effects	3	4	18	10
Family/Bag of personal effects	3	5	5	2
Identity documents	2	0	1	0
Money/clothes worn	1	1	2	0
Money/family/friends/bag of personal effects	11	7	4	2
Money/clothes worn/family/friends	1	1	0	0
Tools for profession/trade	0	0	0	0

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

**Table 4.13. Returnee Resource Losses during the Flight Phase**

Resources	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Animals/Plants/Seeds/Seedlings/Food	0	2
Bicycle	0	1
Car	1	2
Educational materials	2	1
Family member(s)	8	5
Friends	3	2
Identity Documents	2	1
Money	3	8
Money/Family	0	3
Money/Friend	0	1
Personal effects	8	1
Not Applicable	10	9

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

**A) Personal Resources Losses during Flight:** Other returnee personal resource losses are associated with the health impact of travelling for longer periods, sometimes without water or food, for longer periods of long distance travel on foot. These unhealthy travel conditions seem to have worn most of the refugee returnees out, and caused them to report sickness upon arrival in the host community. The majority of the returnees from both Ghana and Guinea thus noted that they arrived in their country of asylum dehydrated, and some were so sick that they needed immediate medical attention.

**B) Material Resource Losses during Flight:** Apart from the material resource losses sustained as a result of the war, the returnees related that they had incurred further material losses because

of their unpreparedness and the time constraint on their flight decisions. As noted, some made that quick decision to flee into asylum from their workplace, so they could not return home to collect their possessions, such as money, professional tools among others.

**C) Social Resource Losses during Flight:** Some social losses incurred by the returnees as a result of fleeing their home country for an unknown community can be neither measured nor quantified. For example, some returnees noted the feeling of loss when they had to leave their homes and communities behind. This form of loss is generally referred to as a loss of rootedness and belonging, as well as of the personal attachment to their physical surroundings. Other social resource losses incurred by the returnees as they fled into asylum included the loss of family and friends, and of the benefits of such relations.

Finally, although the majority of the study's informants incurred resource losses prior to fleeing and during the flight process, some of the returnees noted that the flight period also resulted in recovery of social resources, especially through reunion of family and friends. One returnee recounted: "After the government soldiers attacked us in the church at Sinkor<sup>78</sup> I decided that as a Gio, it was not safe for me to continue living in Monrovia. I arrived at the Monrovia sea port, and saw thousands of people, so I began hoping that I would see other members of my family; then, with all the energy in me, I started yelling out the names of my

---

<sup>78</sup>Part of Doe's response to the NPFL gains, and his attempt to punish the Gio's for supporting Taylor, was to arm the Krahs. The enlisted civilians became known as "1990 soldiers". A 1990 soldier the President had personally picked, Tailey Yonbu, led the massacre of IDPs, mostly Gio civilians, on the night of July 29/30, 1990 at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Sinkor, Monrovia. According to Ellis, (2001) in *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 48, some 600 were killed. My informant claimed to have sought refuge in the church building, but preferred not to talk about the period of hiding or how she survived the massacre.

mother, brother and sister. So an ECOMOG officer approached me and, after he had heard my story, he suggested I use a microphone to call them out. After a minute or so I saw my brother running towards us, with my mum behind him... That was one of the best days of my life” (Author’s interview, Monrovia, 2009). This notwithstanding the losses incurred by both groups of research participants during the pre-flight and flight phases are more significant compared to any gains during the flight period.

#### **4.4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The 14 years of civil war were shaped by various warlords, and their brutality exacted an enormous cost from Liberia in variety of ways. In productive terms, the economy was brought to grinding halt. Similarly, the infrastructure was decimated, and social services were destroyed. Thousands of Liberians were forced into exile as refugees, while scores of others were internally displaced. In sum, the war conditions and flight experiences of the returnees, as discussed, were constraining, and with limited opportunities; hence the material, social, personal and cultural resource losses among the refugees. Thus, both sets of hypothesis 1 (see Chapter 3) were confirmed. Moreover, despite the high restrictions in the available choices, the returnees as demonstrated in their narratives retained their individual agency. This contrasts with the generalized view on flight of forced migrants as mere structural reaction movements.

First, many research participants’ resources (personal, social, culture and material) were subject to change in ways that prompted their decision to flee. The participants’ accounts testify to the fact that deaths, and incapacities of various kinds, disrupted the livelihood capabilities of the families affected, with a huge emotional, economic and security impact on

those left behind. For some the death or disappearance of family members was a proximate cause for their flight; for others, it hurried their flight decisions. At the same time, their capabilities and resourcefulness were demonstrated in the ways many people tried to cope, and in the ways that they decided to leave, and negotiated their flight from Liberia.

Second, the discussions in this chapter points to several intervening factors that constrained or enabled their journey once the decision had been made. Moreover, the returnees' description of their flight from Liberia affirms both subset of Hypothesis 1. As stated in H1a, levels of violence and the potential refugees' proximity to the violence were the key in their decision to flee and experienced higher constraints as well as higher resource losses. People in communities hit by bouts of severe violence embarked on a journey as soon as they made the decision to leave; some ran, but most paused to grab family members, some spare clothes, food, and jewellery, among other things. Others decided to leave based on information received from those already fleeing violence. Moreover, the structure of the violence also impeded departure, as areas were locked down by the rebels or by the fear of being hit by stray bullets and bombs. Furthermore, public transport in the country dried up, and those who owned private vehicles chose not to use them because of the high probability of encountering rebels if one travelled over the country's road networks. The flight outside Liberia, as demonstrated, was shaped by the shifting geography of the sites of conflict, and by information about the rebel activities and transport availability.

Third, as noted in the first hypothesis of this study, the transformation of returnees' resources -- especially social resources, such as family members and the probability of losing them -- was an intervening factor in the flight decisions. As noted, the majority of the

participants travelled in family groups, often with neighbours, in order to reduce their losses and risks. Similarly, they had to be strategic about the numbers of each group travelling, especially, among the refugees who sought asylum in Guinea. This resulted in the splitting up of families and communities to form smaller units of groups. The refugees' general resourcefulness, particularly in terms of awareness of risk, such as the decision to flee towards the capital or beyond the boundaries of Liberia, travelling at night to avoid the rebels, abandoning personal and material resources, and identification of opportunities, such as for moving from Ivory Coast to Ghana, helped people negotiate their journeys and dangers on the road.

Fourth, in exploring the structural context of war and how the potential refugee interacts with friends, families, and the composition of the individual's resources towards their forced migration choices, the study avoids both designating forced migrants as a homogenous mass influx and Kunz's notion of refugees as pressured individuals lacking agency. Rather, it illuminates the variability and agency of the refugees in their responses as the war structures constrained their livelihoods, security and mobility. The individual's ability to move out and cross international borders to become a refugee under structures of war, the by-product of which is immobility (Lubkemann, 2008), according to this study, is a demonstration of the individual's agency. What is important in the returnees' flight patterns, moreover, as revealed in this chapter, is that in each situation the refugee's agency was manifested through their decision to flee for safety, and through their choice of where and how to do so, and what to take with them. Indeed, as the data presented in this chapter demonstrates, variations exist in the levels of options and the time for deliberation; but that cannot be used to deny the refugee's role in the process that led to his or her flight to a more secure environment.

Finally, the discussion just presented also points to how refugees' decision to seek safety outside Liberia helped bring international attention to the war. This study therefore concludes the refugees' presence implicitly played a role in the subsequent ECOWAS-led intervention to try to end the carnage and destructive structures of the war. This assertion is line with both forced migration and conflict literature which have noted that such instances where displacement processes have a clear role in the dynamics of violence (see for instance Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1989; Weiner 1992, 1996a; Tanner and Stedman 2003; Lischer 2005; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). Indeed, the returnees decision not to stay put and face the consequences of the war but to flee and seek protection from external sources, according to the current study, indicates the agency of the research participants and of refugees in general. The fallout of this decision included the attention that their flight and their arrival at the entrances to host states brought to the war situation. It also included consequences for their lives and the stability of the sub-region, prompting international responses; for the first time, the sub-regional body ECOWAS initiated sub-regional military intervention to end a war in one of its member states. While these results were not intended by the refugees, by their actions they had become "emissaries" (Malkki, 1996) whose appearance and narrations gave the world evidence of and an insight into the brutalities of war, and of the consequent constraints, particularly on human lives and livelihoods. The returnees' action of flight thus did not produce the structures of war; rather, their experiences became rallying points for the intervention that contributed to the transformation of Liberia's long history of violence into one of peace and development.

The next chapter examines asylum state's structures of constraint and opportunities, the refugees' agency during the asylum phase of the forced migration experience, and the changes in returnees' resources.

## **Chapter 5. Providing Asylum for Liberians in Ghana and Guinea: Structures of Constraint and Opportunities, Refugee Agency and Resource Transformation**

### **5.0. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter has two main sections. The first discusses the provision of asylum within each country (Ghana and Guinea), including refugee policies and programs, and support from the international community and the host communities. The discussion of each asylum country places the refugee's asylum experience within the perspective of the effects of internal political, security and socio-economic conditions on policy responses and provision of asylum. Of particular interest to the current study is the provision of such services as education, health care, housing and economic livelihoods, which, according to the RBM, are major factors for refugees inasmuch as their availability during asylum is a pre-condition for gaining resources. In doing this, the study hopes to explore and analyze the various ways in which these conditions of asylum, through their interventions, have served to either empower or constrain the refugees as they strive to manage their situation. Further, it focuses on refugees' agency: especially the coping strategies they adopted as they navigated the various structures of constraint and opportunities within their host country. The final section of this chapter is an examination of the transformation of the resource pool during the asylum phase.

The chapter argues that transformations in returnee resources are largely, but not exclusively, explained by the variations in asylum conditions, such as the asylum policies and practices, and in the political and security conditions. The refugees' agency and their pre-flight and arrival in asylum resource levels were, however, were consequential factors in their strategic

choices and ability to harness opportunities and overcome constraints, all of which, over time, resulted in returnee resource gains or losses.

The findings in this chapter reveal that, similar to the returnees' resources, asylum conditions in neither Ghana nor Guinea were static, and that they evolved during their hosting of refugees. The chapter chronicles both Ghana's and Guinea's responses to the Liberian refugees, and how the presence of the refugees combined with other factors to change those countries' approach to the refugee presence, as well as to their initial open policy and practices towards restrictive asylum practices. The chapter contends that the historical and political context of Guinea explains its initial adoption of an open door policy towards Liberian refugees; however, the scale of the refugee flow and the changing dynamics of the Liberian conflict -- particularly its capacity to spread across borders -- account for the later restrictive asylum practice adopted there.<sup>79</sup> Those conditions and later restrictive asylum practices, the current study notes, created an atmosphere less conducive to an increase in, or restoration or renewal of, returnees' resources. With respect to Ghana, this chapter notes that its open door to Liberian refugees formed part of the broader agenda of the government's attempt to reclaim its post-independence glory, of leading the continent, and showing the world its transition towards more liberal and democratic governance, with unreserved commitment to humanitarianism. Internal economic situations, the numbers of the refugees and their longer stay however, account for Ghana's later somewhat restrictive approach, shown in its commitment to repatriation as the solution for its Liberian refugee problem. Finally, this chapter notes that while both asylum states have offered refugees

---

<sup>79</sup>It is important to note that this argument has been made by other authors. See Milner 2009 op. cit.

access to services, such as education, housing and health care, as a major component of their policy responses, the evidence indicates a gap between words and actions. This gap notwithstanding, the chapter concludes that Ghana's political stability, with its high international reputation and the internal security it enjoyed during the asylum period, increased the external actors' provision of opportunities for resource gains among the refugee returnees. With respect to the transformation of resources, the chapter reveals that Liberian returnees from Ghana generally experienced more gains in resources than their counterparts who were exiled in Guinea.

### **5.1. GHANA AND PROVISION OF ASYLUM**

Ghana and Liberia are similar, but have noteworthy differences, including socio-cultural. None of the numerous local Ghanaian languages, for example, is anything like those of Liberians. One major similarity between them is their adoption and use of English as the official language of communication and business. Liberians generally claim to have a more open lifestyle, which contrasts with the closed social and cultural values of Ghanaians (Dick, 2002b). Notwithstanding these distinctions, it is important to note that both Liberians and Ghanaians have a very high level of spiritual life in their respective religious activities. Most Ghanaians, like most Liberians, are Christians; some are Muslims, and some have traditional beliefs.

Historically there has been limited population movement to and from these two countries, although Ghanaians have a long history of emigration to other West African states, such as Nigeria and Ivory Coast, for employment, education and training (Anarfi, et al., 2003), and to its francophone neighbours and countries of the global north for political asylum. It is important to mention, though, that the only known main group of Ghanaians to have immigrated to Liberia

consisted mostly of fishermen from the coastal areas: particularly, from the Fante socio-cultural groups (Overå, 2001 and Adepoju, 2008). Liberian labour migrants are noted to have begun arriving in Ghana in 1910, continuing to the 1960s, and to have worked, mainly, in the mining sector. According to Anarfi *et al.* (2003: 14), with the establishment of the rubber plantations and the Fire Stone Rubber Company, the majority of Liberian migrant workers, most of whom had a Kru socio-cultural background, returned to Liberia. From this period until the arrival of Liberian refugees in the 1990s, Ghana received very few labour migrants from Liberia. Although no records exist on the numbers of Liberian migrants, Anarfi (*ibid.*) notes that fewer Fantes (Ghanaians) immigrated to Liberia than Krus (Liberians) to Ghana.

In terms of forced migration, both countries, at various periods post-independence, have produced refugees, but they have no history of providing asylum to each other's nationals. For example, after Independence in 1957, Ghana's Pan-Africanist posture made it a haven for African freedom fighters and pan-Africanists. Thus, in the 1960 census, non-Ghanaians accounted for 12 percent of the enumerated population, out of which 98 percent were migrants from other African populations (Awusabo-Asare *et al.*, 2000). Although the census does not indicate the nationality of the migrants, most were noted to have fled from Southern African countries. Furthermore, after the 1966 coup d'état that overthrew Nkrumah's government, and the 1979 and 1981 coups d'état under the leadership of Rawlings, a number of Ghanaians, including Nkrumah, fled into asylum, mainly to neighbouring countries such as Togo, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea, with most of them resettling in North America and Europe. In the case of Liberia, during the period of authoritarian rule under the Americo-Liberian leaders and Doe, most Liberians fled to Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone, where some of them were

resettled in the West, especially in the US. The large scale of, and mode of displacement in, the Liberian civil war of the 1990s, however, changed the historical pattern of asylum and settlement of Liberians to include countries such as Ghana and Nigeria as major destinations for asylum.

### **5.1.1. Liberian Refugees in Ghana: Arrival, Settlement and Movement**

Ghana started receiving Liberian refugees in May 1990. After they arrived, these individuals and families settled on their own by renting accommodations, mostly in the capital, Accra. They did not register as either refugees or asylum seekers. They were mostly allowed in as ECOWAS nationals who enjoyed free entry and movement for periods of 30 to 90 days.<sup>80</sup> Indeed, most of them were under the impression that hostilities would soon end, and that they would return before the ECOWAS mandated period was concluded. The war lasted for more than a decade; however, prolonging their stay, thus most members of this group according to Essuman-Johnson (1992) registered as refugees.

The first major influxes of Liberian refugees occurred between August and November 1990, mostly by way of evacuation ships and flights sent into Liberia to help stranded Ghanaians and non-Liberians. In the event, these periodically arriving naval ships and helicopters brought back, mostly, stranded Liberians from the two main ports of Monrovia. Most of them were in poor health, destitute (Dick 2000b) and without friends or family in Ghana to support them. The pattern of arrival and the conditions of the refugees compelled the government of Ghana to

---

<sup>80</sup>This regulation is part of the ECOWAS PROTOCOL A/P.1/5/79 Relating to Free Movement of Persons Residence and Establishment. Available online <http://www.comm.ecowas.int/sec/index.php?id=ap010579&lang=en>

establish its first refugee reception centre<sup>81</sup> at Afreyan, which in October 1990 was moved to Gomoa-Buduburum Refugee Camp. After opening the Buduburum Refugee Camp, all non-Ghanaians evacuated from Liberia were sent there.

Apart from the government of Ghana's evacuation trips, Liberian refugees arrived in the country on their own by land or sea. A method that resulted in a major influx was through the passenger vessels or boats arriving at the shores of the country. One major influx of Liberian refugees by this means was recorded in mid-May of 1996 on board a passenger ship, the "Bulk Challenge Lagos", after a renewal of fighting in Monrovia during the so-called Easter Terror.<sup>82</sup> The ship and its refugees made international headlines when a number of neighbouring countries, initially including Ghana, refused to let it dock. It was claimed that half of the ship's approximately four thousand passengers were trained Liberian rebels. The report of the poor health of the majority of them, and of the inhumane conditions on the ship, aroused the sympathy of the government of Ghana, which allowed the ship to dock, but prevented the passengers disembarking. After nine days of confinement on the freighter, 3000 refugees were allowed to disembark, and were granted asylum (AI, 1997: 18). This necessitated the creation of a second refugee camp, at Zanzule-Krisan in the western region of Ghana, since the ship was not allowed to dock at the Tema port because of that port's proximity to Accra, and because of the allegation

---

<sup>81</sup>The first reception centre in the country was established in the 1980s for expelled Ghanaian returnees from Nigeria. See Arhin K. (1994) "The Recommendation of Ghanaian Returnees from Nigeria in 1983 and 1985" in Allen T. and Morsink H., (ed.) *When Refugees Go Home* (Africa World Press: New Jersey).

<sup>82</sup>In April, 1996 fighting erupted in Monrovia between government forces; the AFL and LPC and ULIMO-J fighters loosely allied under Johnson and based at Barclay Training Centre. It lasted for seven weeks, and media reports indicated that 1,500 people were killed. See <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/liberia-1989.htm>

that there were rebels on board.<sup>83</sup> Most of the refugees, however, after regaining their health and acquiring funds -- mainly from friends and family or from the sale of their food rations -- moved to the Buduburum refugee camp. When wars broke out in their countries the Krisan camp became home to, mostly, Ivoirians and Sierra Leoneans. Intermittent fighting in the following years saw some minor inflow of more refugees from Liberia.

According to the UNHCR-Ghana (2000), by March 1991, seven months after opening the Buduburum refugee centre,<sup>84</sup> its population was 6,800, most of them children.<sup>85</sup> At the beginning of January, 1992, the population increased to ten thousand as a result of the intense fighting in Liberia and, also, the movement of Liberian refugees from Francophone West African countries, such as Ivory Coast, to settle in Ghana. According to the government of Ghana, in 1993 the number of Liberian refugees receiving food rations was 7,506 males and 6,417 females. It gave the total estimate of Liberian refugees, including urban ones, living in Ghana at about 17,000. In April 2002 the government conducted a census of Liberian refugees in the camp and living in the surrounding communities of the Gomoa-Buduburum refugee camp, and revealed that there were about 25,000 in the camp and 14,000 living among the local people.<sup>86</sup> According to Essuman-

---

<sup>83</sup>It is important to note that other government sources maintain that the docking of the ship in the western region was mainly because of the shortage of fuel and that the Takoradi port was closer. It was allowed to dock at that port, rather than refuelling and going on to the country's main port, which had initially been the main point of entry for most Liberian refugees in the earlier influxes.

<sup>84</sup>The government of Ghana and the UNHCR-Ghana prefers to call the place a centre, rather than a camp. In this study, however, "centre" and "camp" are used interchangeably to refer to the settlement offered to Liberians in Ghana by the government.

<sup>85</sup>It is important to note that there are different estimates of the numbers for this period. For example, Essuman-Johnson (1994:31), citing government of Ghana sources, notes that the figure was 8,000 by February 1991, and increased to 13,000 by February 1992.

<sup>86</sup>As quoted in Owusu, M. "Reluctant Refugees: Liberians in Ghana" *The Journal of the International Institute* Vol. 7, No. 3.

Johnson (1994:2011), Liberian refugees who sought asylum in Ghana were of diverse socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. Many were from urban areas, a high proportion were highly educated, and a significant number were professionals, academics, journalists, government officials, members of parliament, engineers, lawyers, entrepreneurs, and businessmen and women, among other things.

Assisting Liberian refugees in Ghana initially posed policy, legal, technical and practical challenges, mainly because of the country's inexperience with hosting large numbers of refugees and with camp settlement practices. Furthermore, when the first major influx of refugees arrived in Ghana, the country had neither a refugee law nor policy guidelines for handling asylum seekers on such a scale, especially in terms of meeting their physical needs. The fact that most of them arrived in bad health compounded the host state's challenges. The unexpectedness of their arrival, especially the first major influx of Liberian refugees in Ghana, created bureaucratic and legal challenges, not least in determining their status. Ghana, therefore, relied on the global refugee regime, particularly the 1969 OAU Convention, to grant them status and provide a legal rationale for assisting them. Finally, the government, in rallying support from Ghanaians to come out to help the refugees, and to legitimize its role, argued that the civil war raging in their home country meant that Ghana's naval ships and aircraft, used in the evacuation, could be described as on a rescue mission (Essuman-Johnson, 1992).

Another bureaucratic challenge at that point was the fact there was no state agency competent to handle refugee issues. It was unclear to both local and international non-governmental organizations and agencies (NGOs/A) how the situation should be handled, given

the peculiar circumstances of the arrival of the refugees. The responsibility of caring for and assisting the refugees fell largely on the government, civil society organizations, and the generosity of ordinary Ghanaian families and individuals. For example, the Christian Council of Ghana, traditional rulers and the citizens of the communities where refugees first entered, and where refugee centres were established, who were obliged by custom to help strangers in their midst, came together to give aid and support to the refugees, which helped to fill the time between calls for international assistance for the refugee situation and responses to them.

The government established a Task Force Committee to oversee policy and government organizations responsible for the refugee situation. Some guidelines were created by task force members who had representation from the ministries of the interior, finance and defence. The creation of an ad hoc committee spoke to the government's thinking about the temporariness of the Liberian refugee situation. As the situation in Liberia unfolded, however, the Ghanaian government quickly came to the realization that it was not ending soon, especially in view of both ECOMOG's inability to end the war through military victory or a peace deal, and limited international interest in ending it.

Furthermore, the country's transformation from authoritarian rule to the creation of democratic institutions meant the government could not continue to address the refugee situation with ad hoc policies without contravening the constitution. Thus, in 1992 a bill was submitted to Parliament that established a Refugee Board as the main government agency responsible for refugee situations and related issues. The law, which came into force in 1993, relies extensively on the global refugee regime – particularly, the regulations of the OAU Convention -- and spells out the rights and responsibilities of refugees and the government's obligations to them. It

formally accorded Liberian refugees status, but only recognized them as de facto refugees in accordance with the OAU Convention of refugees.

### **5.1.2. Asylum Law and Policies**

Ghana's asylum policy from independence in 1957 to the late 1980s largely reflected, and was influenced by, the pan-Africanist policy adopted by Nkrumah (Dick, 2002a). Ghana took in mostly southern African refugees, and President Nkrumah took a personal interest in their welfare. Succeeding governments after Nkrumah, however, showed less interest. Under the system of Pan Africanism and, later, as a signing party to the UN Convention and Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention, all without reservation Ghana granted asylum mostly to southern Africans fleeing racist regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). The refugees of this era were accorded social and economic rights similar to those of Ghanaians. For example, the state provided housing facilities with monthly stipends and attended secondary schools, vocational and technical colleges around the country and the University of Ghana in Accra. Later Nkrumah established the Winneba Ideological Institute, initially for refugees, and later still opened it up to Ghanaians. Famous among these asylum seekers were Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Hastings Banda of Malawi and Mariam Makeba of South Africa, as well as other ANC officials (Ghana Ministry of Information, 1966). Very little, however, is known about the number of refugees who were in the country during Nkrumah's era and after his overthrow. Furthermore, under Nkrumah most of the refugee funding and activities were coordinated from the seat of government, directly from the presidency (ibid.). Refugees enjoyed equal employment rights, although most did not stay in Ghana for long after graduation. Nkrumah's main objective

was to equip these refugees with the resources to return to their countries and join the fight for liberation from racist regimes or colonial rule (Ghana Ministry of Information, 1966:3-4).

After Nkrumah's removal from office Ghana became less friendly towards refugees and asylum seekers. Subsequent governments from 1966 to early 1979 discontinued Nkrumah's aggressive and (as some commentators put it) "idealistic approach in favour of Pan-Africanism" (Gebe, 2008: 175-177). Furthermore, although the new government neither publicly indicated that asylum seekers were no longer welcome, nor embarked on forced repatriation of refugees, the government reduced and, in some situations, cancelled existing official and presidential support for the liberation fighters. The government also "shut down the Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute in Winneba, which was used as center of learning to attract liberation fighters to Ghana" (Ghana, Ministry of Information op cit.).

The most significant indicator of Ghana's reorientation towards restrictive asylum after Nkrumah's era was the passing of the Alien's Compliance Order of 1969,<sup>87</sup> which resulted in the expulsion of "illegal aliens" from the country, "purportedly as part of a larger economic policy of indigenization" (Gebe op. cit.). This action and the government's lack of interest in providing for refugees, together with the fact that Ghana subsequently became a refugee producing country, substantially reduced the numbers of refugees in the country. Data on the numbers is nonexistent, however, and the only available information indicates that by June 1985 there were 175 officially recognized refugees in Ghana, of whom 72 were students (Dick, 2000b). Furthermore, although

---

<sup>87</sup>Under this law approximately 250,000 foreign nationals, mostly from countries in the West African sub-region, but with the majority of the casualties from Nigeria, having failed to heed the order, were expelled (Brydon, 1985; 564). It was considered an unfriendly act by a sister country, resulting in deteriorating relations and, eventually, retaliation by other countries in the sub-region; for instance, Nigeria forcibly repatriated about a million Ghanaians in 1983, and another hundred thousand in 1985.

governments from 1972 did not enforce the 1969 Compliance Law, their response towards asylum seekers who arrived in the country fits Jacobsen's (1996: 658) characterisation of "policy of do nothing". Under this policy condition asylum seekers were left at the mercy of immigration officers and policies on immigration that did not cater to the special needs of refugees (see Essuman-Johnson, 1992, 1996; Dick 2002). It is therefore not surprising that newly arrived asylum seekers lacked status recognition, and became easy targets for deportation. The few who were fortunate enough to be allowed to enter and to live in the country relied extensively on support from communities and individuals, and the majority had to beg to survive (Essuman-Johnson, 1996).

Ghana had never experienced so many refugees in such poor health as it did with the first influx of Liberian refugees. The closest was when over one million Ghanaians were expelled from Nigeria in 1981 and 1983. However, that cannot be equated with the Liberian refugees, because they were returnees, and the government's support for them was quite minimal because most returned to their families.<sup>88</sup> Thus, the first evacuation and subsequent influxes of refugees, and the realization that the Liberian situation was not ending soon, necessitated a shift from the historical ad hoc approaches adopted by the government to dealing with refugees and asylum seekers in the country. Since they were already in the country, the government could not restrict their arrival; and, due to their numbers and bad health, it could not just dump them in the country and expect them to survive by begging for alms without the international community

---

<sup>88</sup>See Arhin K. (1994) op. cit., for a discussion of government support for the returnees during the return process in Nigeria and after their return to Ghana.

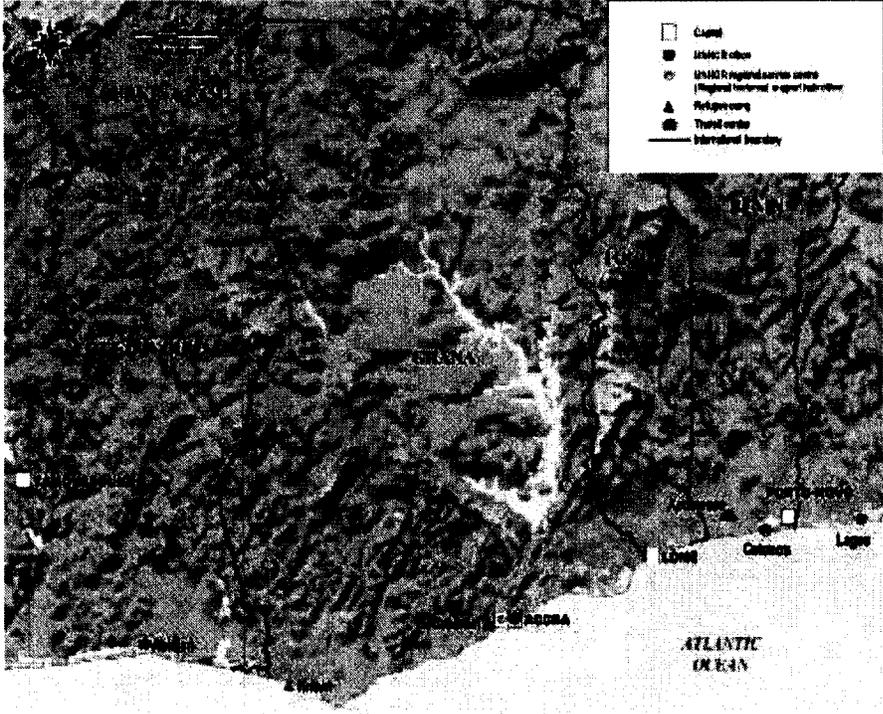
decrying its actions as non- humanitarian. Ghana initially established a task force to handle the situation and, later, passed legislation to guide its dealings with refugees, Law 305, which came into effect on August 27, 1993. The Refugee Law granted refugees rights under all three instruments, and prohibited their *refoulement*. It recognized refugees under both the 1951 UN and the 1969 OAU Conventions' definitions, and any group the government determines to be refugees. Part II of the law established the Ghana Refugee Board (GRB) as the official government counterpart of the UNHCR in Ghana, with the responsibility to oversee government policy on refugee issues, including refugee status determination.

With regard to provision of settlement and services, the law only requires the Interior Ministry to establish an area for refugee settlement; it does not require refugees to live in the designated settlement area. Most of the refugees lived in the Central, Western, and Volta regions. In 2008, Ghana had two camps: Krisan, which mostly hosted Ivoirians, some Sudanese and Sierra Leoneans, with a very small population of Liberians (population 1,400); and Buduburam (population 26,000), which was home to most Liberian refugees (USCRI, 2009). See Map 5.1 for a map of Ghana indicating the location of the Buduburam refugee camp and its close proximity to the capital Accra. It is important to note that Ghana's decision to locate the refugee camp close to its capital city is different from Guinea's approach, as well as most Africa states whose preference for the location of refugee camps are the rural areas (see, Chambers, 1988; Bascom, 2001).

In addition to the refugee law of 1993, refugees and asylum seekers in Ghana enjoy rights and responsibilities under the 1992 Constitution and the ECOWAS Protocol on the free movement of citizens of member states within the sub-region. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana

extends to "every person in Ghana" its fundamental individual rights, including life, dignity, and protection from torture and slavery, freedom of movement, and the right to work. It does, however, allow the government to pass laws restricting the rights to own property and free movement for foreigners, and allows limitation of the right to work for national security reasons. The government does not hinder the movement of most refugees except under special circumstances, usually relating to security concerns.

**Map 5.1. Refugee Camp locations in Ghana (2003)**



Source: UNHCR 2003 Global Report-Ghana

### **5.1.3. Ghana Refugee Board (GRB)**

The 1993 Refugee Law established the Ghana Refugee Board (GRB), whose composition includes the UNHCR with an Observer status. The government allows other non-governmental organizations to sit on it as observers. The GRB, which operates as a subsidiary of the Ministry of the Interior, is responsible for the management of activities relating to refugees. The first board was constituted in 1995. It is a 12-member body whose chairperson is appointed by the President, and has members from ministries in different sectors, making it an inter-ministerial body. As the official government agency and partner to the UNHCR, its responsibilities include overseeing government policy on refugee issues, including determining and granting status to refugees and asylum seekers in the country, assistance to refugees seeking employment, and seeing to their welfare. In the administration of refugee camps, the Board appoints a Settlement Manager at the centres, who represents and reports directly to the Board. The National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) and the National Mobilization Program (NMP), which are both government organizations responsible for disaster relief in Ghana, have administrative oversight responsibilities for refugee camps and settlements. They coordinate with the Board to provide human resource and other logistical support, as does the Settlement manager, who is an employee of NADMO.

### **5.1.4. UNHCR- Ghana**

Between 1976 and 1990 the UNHCR office in Accra offered counselling services to the government for the relatively small number of refugees. Unable to singlehandedly manage the influx in 1990, however, the Government called on the UNHCR to actively help with material

assistance and other issues, thus dramatically increasing its operations in Ghana (Dick, 2002). From a Counselling Service provider it became a Chargé de Missions, and has, since 2002, been upgraded to a Regional hub (ibid.). It offers assistance to the refugees in collaboration with four local implementing partners: The Christian Council of Ghana, the Ghana Red Cross Society, the National Catholic Secretariat and Assemblies of God Development and Relief Services, and other UN agencies, such as UNICEF, the UNDP, the WFP and the Ghana Government.

Prior to 2002 the UNHCR offered general material assistance to Liberian refugees. From 1997 all forms of assistance were phased out gradually, and ceased finally in 2000, when it withdrew its operations from the camp. In July, 2002, after almost two years of absence, it resumed material assistance programs in response to both the new influx of Liberian refugees and that of others from the sub-region. Upon resumption of duties the UNHCR shifted its focus away from individual assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, and towards a community based approach. It claimed the shift was to channel resources towards encouraging greater self-reliance for refugees (UNHCR-Ghana, 2003). To achieve this, several projects and programs were initiated in the camp, beginning with registration of the refugee population and the issuing of Identity (ID) cards. As part of the effort it initiated a review of camp situations that identified several areas in which the settlement had suffered: a reduction in the rate of school attendance due to the lack of educational subsidies and facilities; water and sanitation facilities had broken down; there was no steady supply of potable water; many toilet facilities were in a state of disrepair; trash lined the alleys between houses; only a quarter of the camp had electricity; and so on. The report further noted that much had been achieved since its return, achievements that might have been attained long ago had it not been absent, and it also admitted that there

remained much work to be done in order to bring Buduburam up to appropriate living standards (ibid.).

### **5.1.5 Refugee Status Determination and Issuance of Documents**

The 1993 Refugee Law requires asylum seekers to report to Immigration Services, the police, or the UNHCR within 14 days of arrival in the country, although the Board could allow extensions. The Board has to consider applications within 30 days, and personally interview applicants from outside the West African sub-region and those suspected of being former combatants. Denied applicants have 30 days to appeal to the Minister of the Interior, and are permitted to remain in the country with their families or friends pending the outcome. Should they not appeal the initial discussion, or lose the appeal, they have three months to seek entry elsewhere. The Refugee Law requires the Board to issue applicants with written notifications of its decisions, but does not require it to provide any reasons for those decisions. Asylum seekers have the right to counsel at their own expense.

The Refugee Law prohibits the detention or punishment of asylum seekers for illegal entry or presence, but authorities can detain refugees without documentation. The law stipulates that refugees should receive identity documents and residence permits, but its implementation has been a major challenge for the Board. During the period of the returnees' stay in Ghana, authorities and ordinary citizens alike generally accepted and respected the UNHCR-issued identification cards for refugees (Author's interview with returnees, Monrovia, 2009). The refugee card does not confer any benefits on the holder, but can serve as protection in case of police arrest. It also enables the refugee to access certain advantages peculiar to the camp, and

makes it easier for refugees to seek resettlement in a third country. Refugees working in the formal sector received such documents with work permits stamped in them. Furthermore, the Refugee Law provides for the issuance of international travel documents to refugees. The Ghana Passport Office issues them to refugees who can prove that they have either the means to travel or an offer of employment or admission into an educational institution requiring travel abroad.

Ghana's process of determining refugee status is consistent with the UNHCR policy requirements and practice for parties of the global refugee regime and the OAU Convention.

People who apply for refugee status need to establish individually that their fear of persecution is well founded. However, during mass exodus ... it may not be possible to carry out individual screening. In such circumstances, particularly when civilians are fleeing for similar reasons, it may be appropriate to declare 'group' determination of refugee status, whereby each civilian is considered as a refugee, *prima facie* – in other words, in the absence of evidence to the contrary (UNHCR note on Individual Status Determination, 2003).

In its application to Liberian refugees, Ghana relied extensively on the OAU Conventions for status recognition. The arrival and the nature of the inflow of the first mass of Liberian refugees in Ghana in the 1990s were such that they were granted either *prima facie* or group refugee status, which equally entitles them to assistance through the UNHCR; but, as noted by Hyndman (2000), in practical terms this status makes them second-rate refugees. The Ghana Refugee Board notes that their numbers and the conditions under which they arrived dictated that they fall under the OAU Convention, and have *de facto* recognition. The challenge

with this status is that it denies them the opportunity of accessing resettlement outside of Africa until their case has been individually considered, and status granted thereafter. In effect, the government left it to the individual refugees to convince the authorities of the country of resettlement of the genuineness of their case whenever the opportunity presented itself in order to qualify for this privilege.

Furthermore, as noted by Dick (2002a:14), “in practice, it was the UNHCR, not the government, that registered and, to a large extent, determined the status of Liberian refugees.” Since the government did not provide the refugees with identity Cards as stipulated in the Refugee Law, the UNHCR food rationing cards became the standard identity cards for most of the refugees. A consequence of this practice, as was revealed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, was the confusion over the legal status of refugees after the UNHCR withdrew the food ration program and collected the ration cards from the refugees: in effect, taking away the only legal document of their status. After the first failed voluntary repatriation exercise in 1997, however, the government began the process of individual status determination for both new arrivals and existing residual caseloads of Liberian refugees. Lack of funding, however, meant that it was not successful at granting photo identity cards to all the qualified refugees (Coffie, 2003).

#### **5.1.6 Economic Conditions and Refugees' Livelihood**

Despite the Refugee Law's provision for refugees' right to work, it is very difficult for them to do so legally. They need a sponsoring employer, and to apply for the permit through the GRB, which then asks the Immigration Service for the work permit through the Ministry of the Interior. This process usually takes three to six weeks, sometimes ten; and most employers are

not willing to wait that long, mainly because they can easily get the service of Ghanaians without the inconvenience. The law also allows companies to acquire work permits on behalf of refugees, at a fee determined by the Ghana Immigration services. Unless refugees have Ghanaian partners, the law and the policy treat them as foreigners. Due to this conflicting categorization of refugees as foreigners, employers hire fewer numbers of refugees to stay within the quota restrictions associated with hiring foreigners (Author's interview with returnee, Monrovia, 2009).

Furthermore, the reality is that although work permits are relatively easy to get, jobs are not. Many refugees, like Ghanaians, thus work in the informal economy, without labour protection or social security.

Upon the arrival of the refugees at the camp, the traditional ruler and his council allocated about 300 hectares of land for crop and livestock production. Initially very few refugees showed interest or participated in farming activities because, as already explained, most of them were unaccustomed to the lifestyle, and had not farmed before leaving Liberia. Some of the returnees, however, engaged in gardening to supplement their earnings and food rations, and planted (mainly) vegetables, because the soil quality was unsuitable for rice, their staple food (Author's interview with returnee, Monrovia, 2009). The refugees, rather, used a large proportion of the land for constructing houses, which were in high demand because of the increase in population and the fact that the UNHCR shelters were temporary and inappropriate for the chronic harsh weather, such as periodic torrential rains. Later, as the UNHCR withdrew its food assistance program, the numbers of refugees who took to farming increased. Others engaged in economic activities, such as cracking stones and sand mining for the then-booming construction sector that had emerged in the town and surrounding communities. The increase in the population, however,

and the realization on the part of the local people that they could lease land for money meant that a large portion of the allocated land was seized from the refugees for construction of houses that were, later, leased out to them (Potter et al., 2008).

According to Dick (2002a), Buduburam camp had a good mix of occupations and professions, from traders to teachers, medical personnel, journalists, surveyors, public administrators, and politicians who had a strong desire to work and earn a living; however, they were limited to volunteering in the refugee camp. Others who tried to work outside of the camp, especially in health professions, could not do so because they did not have an approved document of their profession: the majority had not taken them with them in their hasty flight, or had lost it in transit. They were, therefore, not allowed to write the professional examination, which is the major requirement for obtaining a licence of authorization to practice in Ghana (ibid.). The high rate of unemployment, particularly among professionals, especially made the refugees' quest to adjust to life in Ghana difficult, and Ghana, as noted by Jacobsen (2002), missed the opportunity to harness one important aspect of the indirect resources of hosting refugees. The composition of the refugees could be likened to that of many other communities in Ghana: it is a class society, with the rich, the middle class and the poor (Potter *et al.*, op cit.).

In 2004 the Ghana Statistics Service economic survey revealed that a market centre established by both the local people and the refugees had become the biggest in the Gomoa District. It was therefore not surprising that the majority of the returnees interviewed were engaged in small-scale commercial activities within the camp. Some noted that they had purchased products, such as household supplies from Accra, and retailed them in the camp by moving from house to house, while others sold in the main market centre. Others retailed fruits

and farm produce from the local farmers, and water bagged in plastic. A few also indicated that they engaged in cloth production for sale both within and outside the camp. Some of the female research participants were engaged in the beauty and cosmetics industry, and their clients were mostly Ghanaians. A small proportion of them were involved in animal farming, such as chicken and rabbit rearing, and in the construction industry, where they engaged in sand mining along the shore of the beach and building concrete block production for sale. Others operated business centres that provided telephone and Internet services, entertainment centres and restaurants. Fewer worked as journalists, health care attendants and teachers. Each one of these professionals noted they had acquired the skills for their profession in Ghana, either as volunteers, especially among the health care attendants, or through education. See Table 5.3 below for a list of the economic activities of the returnees while in exile.

#### **5.1.7. Provision of Services: Refugees' Access to Education and Health Care**

The 1993 Refugee Law, having fully incorporated the 1951 Convention, is an indication of the state's support for refugees' right to education. The rules and regulations on how refugees can access this right are not indicated, although it proposes the establishment of a Refugees Fund to help them acquire education. After almost two decades the fund is yet to be established. The expectation was that the main contributors would be NGOs, but most of these organizations prefer working directly with individuals, and not through government initiated programs. The current study therefore suggests that the government review this proposal to see if it reflects the realities of refugee situations and the operational practicalities of the organizations engaged in refugee activities.

At a very early stage of their settlement the UNHCR and its other aid agencies recognized that there was a high demand for education among the refugees, especially in view of the high numbers of children and teenagers in the camp. Recognizing that need, and upon the initiative by the refugees, the first primary school was established at the camp in October 1990 with very limited resources (Dick, 2002a:15). The UNHCR provided free primary school education for almost all refugees, and some continued to middle and high school; but most of the camp schools were substandard. The Ghana Christian Council, a local NGO, was the UNHCR implementing partner responsible for supporting education at the camp. It oversaw the building of new classrooms, provided stipends for teachers and periodically distributed school materials. In 1991 and 1996, respectively, a junior high school and a senior secondary school were established. These were not, however, enough to meet the demands for primary and secondary education among the refugees. With the withdrawal of the UNHCR from the camp, its implementing agent for education could not continue its assistance to the schools. Liberians managing the schools consequently began charging fees to enable the school to continue providing services to the refugees: unfortunately, this led to a withdrawal of some of the students who could not afford it (Author's interview with returnee, Monrovia, 2009).

Some individual refugees, furthermore, engaged in the business of establishing private refugee camp schools, and these were never inspected by the Ghana Education service for standard requirements. Religious bodies also used their worship centres as schools with volunteer teachers and a few paid teaching and aid staff. Students and pupils sometimes had to carry their chairs and desks to and from school. With the exception of the UNHCR established schools, students had to provide all of their own school supplies. In 2002 the UNHCR (Ghana

Branch) noted that the camp had a total of 26 schools, comprising six Junior Secondary Schools, three Senior Secondary School and seventeen primary and nursery schools. The camp schools followed the curriculum of the Ghana Education Service.

Although the law does not prohibit refugees attending publicly funded schools, it is silent on funding, and does not indicate the various charges associated with refugee education from primary to tertiary level. At the primary, middle and high school levels, therefore, the principals were noted to charge refugees similar amounts as Ghanaians, and enjoyed text book benefits (Author's interview with returnee, Monrovia, 2009). According to the returnees, cost was not the main challenge for the limited numbers of Liberians who attended publicly funded primary and elementary schools within the community; rather, it was the limited available spaces at the public schools in the community. Moreover, most of them indicated their preference for schools created by Liberians in the camp, which received support from aid agencies and NGOs. The second notable challenge to Liberians' access to public schools was unavailability of space to accommodate the increased demand for primary and secondary education. For example, more than a decade (2004) after the arrival of refugees in Gomoa-Buduburam, the community had one primary and two junior secondary schools (Ghana Statistical Service, 2004). Some of the returnees thus had to travel to Accra for high school education, and preferred staying with friends and returning to the camp on the weekend to keep costs down. Others who had been awarded scholarships and support by NGOs or individuals, and remittances from families and friends, attended boarding schools,<sup>89</sup> of which some returnees indicated they had fond memories because

---

<sup>89</sup>Boarding school education at the secondary level is a common phenomenon in Ghana, and is highly subsidized by the government.

they never felt like foreigners there, and did not have to worry about meals or having a place to sleep during the school year (Author's interview, Monrovia, 2009).

The UNHCR also established night schools to provide adult literacy programs for the refugees. These schools were run by local NGOs with funding from UNHCR; they were discontinued after the agency withdrew its funding support in 2000. The Agency for Holistic Evangelism and Development (AHEAD),<sup>90</sup> in collaboration with Winneba College of Education, opened and operated a post-secondary college. It specialized in the training of teachers, journalism and community health workers. In 1993 the International Rescue Committee (IRC) began operating the first vocational skills training centre in the Camp. Refugees were taught construction, carpentry, sewing and community health. They also learned soap making, with the UNHCR purchasing their products for distribution among the refugees (Dick 2000b:15). By 2004 five vocational training centres had been established that provided additional skills training for refugees in areas such as computer software and hardware education, mechanics, tie-and-dye, and catering. The UNHCR, in collaboration with local and international NGOs, also embarked on peace education seminars for the refugees on a monthly basis. A UNHCR Peace education syllabus was included in the content of courses run in all educational institutions in the camps.

The German-funded Albert Einstein Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) was the main funding agency for university education for Liberians in Ghana. The DAFI scholarship program is limited to first degree applicants, and is operated by the UNHCR and the German Embassy in Accra. Scholarship packages were awarded annually to selected candidates who had gained

---

<sup>90</sup>It is an NGO set up by a Liberian refugee who received funding from local and international developmental NGOs.

admission into universities in Ghana; they were given funds for tuition, accommodation, food, clothing, medical care and other costs related to their studies. According to a 2007 UNHCR/DAFI report, Ghana was among the four major African countries with the most DAFI sponsored scholars, and Liberia ranked among the four major refugee originating countries with the highest numbers of DAFI scholars in Africa. The report further notes that from 1993 to 2006, 657 refugees were sponsored to study in various Ghanaian universities. Two returnees noted that they were beneficiaries of the DAFI funded program. Moreover, just as in the area of primary and high school education, NGOs -- mostly religiously based groups -- supported Liberian refugees attending post-secondary education in Ghana. Universities from North America and Europe, in collaboration with universities and post-secondary institutions in Ghana, established long distance training, especially for health workers and teachers, for refugees in the camp. Since these programs were not coordinated by UNHCR, however, there are no records of the numbers of participants, the participating universities, or the amounts involved. As one returnee remarked, "It was an environment where opportunities existed, but there were fewer openings for the large number of qualified refugees, and due to their mode of implementation the refugee was always at the mercy of the organizers, who could pull the plug at any time without consulting them" (Author's interview, Monrovia, 2009).

In Ghana, the law requires that refugees be given equal access to health institutions. Like citizens, however, they had to pay for it. From the 1990s until 2007, when Ghana began its national health insurance program under the SAP, health care was delivered through a "cash and carry" approach. Refugees without aid from UNHCR or any aid agency had to pay for their medical needs, as did most Ghanaians during that period. In 2006 Ghana launched a national

health insurance program for Ghanaians to replace the cash system; but since the policy does not cover refugees and foreign nationals, they are expected to pay for health services.

Under the administrative direction of UNHCR, the Ghana Red Cross set up the first clinic at the camp to meet the health needs of the many refugees who arrived ill. Subsequently the Assemblies of God Development and Relief Agency (AGDRA) built a clinic and, with funding from the UNHCR, provided free medical care to those who could not afford it, and charged a minimal fee for those who could. In 1994 the UNHCR withdrew its financial support of the clinic, and in 2000 the AGDRA closed the clinic down, citing lack of funds. Attempts were made by qualified Liberians with experience from Liberia who worked in the clinic, to continue operating the facility through a request to the government of Ghana. They were denied authorization, however, because government policy requires Ghanaians to be in charge of all medical institutions, and the government does not recognize medical credentials from Liberia (Dick 2002b: 18). In 2003 the Catholic Diocese gained permission from the government, and reopened the clinic, employing the services of refugees as nurses and health care attendants trained in Ghana. The UNHCR continued to help vulnerable refugees with their medical expenses. Indeed, the two returnees employed as health care attendants noted that they worked in this clinic. Other options for medical assistance to the refugees at the camp included a private clinic run by the Lutheran Church, whose cost of service was somewhat higher because it did not receive UNHCR financial aid. Furthermore, Liberian trained doctors and nurses were observed to treat patients in unregistered clinics, and made house calls to earn a living; but in the view of some of the returnees, these illegal activities increased their access to health care (Author's interview, Monrovia, 2009).

### **5.1.8 Security Conditions and Refugee Protection**

The provision of security for the refugees, as stipulated in the GRL, is the responsibility of the state, and is handled by the GRB. The Ghana Police Service, which is under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior, is the government agency responsible for providing security for refugees and Ghanaians. In the Buduburam refugee camp, the Ghana Police service activities were complemented by the Neighbourhood Watch Team, a volunteer-based refugee security outfit. The camp had one police station building, which served as the office of the fire department as well. Indeed, the police station in the camp also served the Ghanaian populations, but was not patronized by the locals because they preferred to settle their differences with the traditional council, and only resorted to the police when the incident involved a refugee (Author's interview with returnees, Monrovia, 2009).

Ghana generally enjoyed a very stable and peaceful environment prior to and during the period of hosting the Liberian refugees. According to the returnees, the two main security concerns were related to theft in the camp and conflicts over the ownership of land and leasing agreements. They noted that the high rate of robbery was facilitated by the darkness that ensued from the lack of electricity throughout the community. Furthermore, the absence of a fence around the camp, and the fact that the camp area had expanded beyond the borders of the plot allocated to the refugees upon their arrival, generated territorial conflicts among the refugees and between the locals. Periodic conflicts are noted to arise between locals and Liberians who attempt to build just outside the boundary of the camp without paying for the land (Dick 2002b:13). In some cases the locals pulled the houses down, resulting in scuffles; but these were

usually resolved with the traditional chief and his council, and not the police. The refugees and the local people generally co-existed peacefully in the camp district (ibid.).

After more than a decade of hosting refugees, the government noted that their prolonged stay, the infiltration of the camp by armed elements, and the refusal of refugees to either integrate or repatriate presented grave security concerns to both citizens and the refugees themselves. To address these security threats, the government embarked on two major security exercises (2003 and 2008). After each of them the government issued stern warnings, and threatened to deport any refugee caught or suspected.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, the threat to deport some refugees was acted upon in 2008, after the second security sweep of the camp. In 2003, Ghanaian security agencies alleged that the camp had become a home to ex-rebel groups. According to the government, during the Ivorian crises there were strong indications that both factions in the civil unrest, President Laurent Gbagbo and the rebels had recruited fighters from the Buduburam camp. Furthermore, some refugees also reported to various police officers and to the media that they had noticed some Liberian rebels moving about and living in the camp (as quoted in Dick, 2002b). Thus, on February 23, 2003 a combined team of security personnel from the military and police conducted a security exercise at the camp with the objective of flushing out undesirable characters alleged to have infiltrated to achieve rebel base objectives and to retrieve armed weapons. No arrest was made, but a couple of locally manufactured guns were retrieved from the camp, which the owners claimed were for hunting purposes. With no evidence or arrest,

---

<sup>91</sup>For example, Ghana's President, John Kufuor, in a speech to the nation after the February 23, 2003 security exercise at the refugee camp, made it clear that despite the country's readiness to host refugees from war-torn countries in the sub-region, it will guard against any undesirable elements who would pose a threat to the country's security.

the government issued a sharp warning to the refugees that it would continue to monitor the camps to flush out elements they deemed a threat to the security of Ghanaians and the refugees.

In 2008 some refugees who had refused to repatriate, arguing that the UNHCR and the government were mounting pressure on them to return home, embarked on a street protest for about a month (IRIN, 2008).<sup>92</sup> The response of the authorities included the arrest of about 600 protestors on March 17, and 70 more the next day. Of the latter group, 16 were deported on March 23 on the grounds that they were illegally present in the country and posed a national security threat, despite the fact that UNHCR afterwards confirmed that 13 of the 16 were registered refugees. The government argued that the deportees were a security threat because they were "ex-combatants" from the war in Liberia. The government provided no evidence for its allegation, and justified their action with the argument that asylum had been provided to Liberians based on the fact there was war in their country and, since the war had ended, they could go home. On April 1, 2008 the Ghanaian Minister of the Interior, Kwamena Bartels, made a speech in which he repeatedly criticized the actions of refugees in Ghana, and announced the government's intention to invoke the cessation clause regarding refugees, which states that those refugees who could avail themselves of the protection of their state but continue not to do so could have their refugee status removed.<sup>93</sup>

The use of excessive force by the security personnel and the comments by and justifications from the government were condemned by the UNHCR and other NGOs and some

---

<sup>92</sup>UN-OCHA IRIN March 20, 2008 "Ghana-Liberia: Cessation clause invoked over refugee demos" accessed: 20 June, 2010, from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2008/03/mil-080320-irin08.htm>

<sup>93</sup>Dogbevi E, (2008) "Liberian refugees a threat to Ghana's security – Bartels" accessed June 20, 2010, from, <http://news.myjoyonline.com/news/200804/14930.asp>

individual Ghanaian citizens (IRIN, 2008). On the basis of the refugee regime and the procedure adopted by the government in granting refugee status to Liberians as described above, the government action of status removal was legally justified.<sup>94</sup> Its action of arresting and subsequent deportation or *refoulement* of refugees without trial, however, was clearly against the rules and its obligations under the refugee regime, and an abuse of the political and civil rights of the refugees under both international law and the 1992 constitution of Ghana.

#### **5.1.8 Official Views on a Durable Solution and Options for Liberian Refugees**

According to the Refugee Law and Board, Ghana fully supports all three solutions proposed by the refugee regime. The preference, however, has been a return to the country of origin. Ghana's preference for return of refugees is not new. Indeed, during the era of a pan-African approach to asylum and refugees in Ghana, the expectation was that refugees would acquire the necessary skills to return to their home country, and join the struggle for independence. The difference now is that refugees are expected to return as a solution to the burden allegedly imposed on Ghana by their presence. Consistent with this, and based on the assumption that Liberia, the original home of the refugees, was safe for their return, the government, in collaboration with the home country, and the UNHCR and other UN agencies during the period of the Liberian refugee crises, organized two main voluntary repatriation exercises for the refugees.<sup>95</sup> It is important to mention, however, that the refugee law forbids

---

<sup>94</sup>It is important to note that some of the returnees interviewed mentioned this incident, and used it as proof of the lack of security in Ghana, although they personally were not deported.

<sup>95</sup>Chapter Six of this study discusses the two main repatriation processes and the pattern of return of Liberian refugees from Ghana and Guinea.

*refoulement*, but grants the government the right of deportation of foreigners and refugees on the grounds of national security.

A number of options are available to refugees willing to integrate in Ghana. These are: naturalization through the Ghana Immigration Service; acquisition of a resident permit as a foreigner; extension of stay as an ECOWAS member; and gaining Ghanaian citizenship through marriage to a Ghanaian National. Legally, these are viable aids to integration; translating them into practice, though, reveals some challenges. For instance, one major requirement for naturalization is the ability to speak at least one local Ghanaian language. This requirement is difficult to achieve, mainly because of the seclusion of the refugees in the camp; and, second, because the majority of the refugees have never needed to learn a local language when they could effectively communicate with Ghanaians in English (Author's interview with LRRRC official, Monrovia, 2009).

While integration is viewed as the second best option by the international community, it appears that the government of Ghana is not keen on its implementation as a long-term solution. The government is concerned with the added "burden" it could impose on an already over-stretched economy. The government of Ghana has over the years raised concerns over the lack of adequate job opportunities for its citizens; in 2003 it began complaining about the security threat of the Liberian refugees in Buduburam refugee camp, and the Defence Minister proposed relocating the camp further away from Accra.<sup>96</sup> As of June 2004, when the second official

---

<sup>96</sup> Apparently, Dr. K. Addo-Kuffour, the former Defence Minister, had advocated a relocation of the camp further away from Accra for security reasons. This, he claimed, would ensure total control of some 4,000 suspected combatants in the camp by the national security apparatus, as reported in a Ghanaian Daily Newspaper, "The Crusading Guide", on Tuesday, April 29, 2003.

repatriation program for Liberian refugees was set to begin, the GRB had no detailed official view on reintegration of refugees. These concerns obviously provided the grounds for the government of Ghana's subsequent denial of the option of integration en masse for Liberian refugees.

Although the government offers resettlement as part of its solution to refugee situations, opportunities and decisions about access are usually between the individual refugee and the country offering resettlement. The role of the government is to provide the necessary documents, such as a refugee identity card, indicating their status, and other necessary travel documents. As provided for in the Refugee Law, the Board is mandated to do that unless there are criminal charges or security concerns with the asylum seeker.

According to the UNHCR-Ghana, the major resettlement destinations for most Liberians in Ghana have been the USA, Australia and Norway, in that order. Figures for Liberian refugees in Ghana resettled since 1990 are not, however, easily obtained, since most nations have their own resettlement programs through different agencies. According to the UNHCR data, however, by the end of 2010 7,233 Liberian refugees from Ghana had benefited from resettlement opportunities.<sup>97</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup>It is important to note that these numbers represent refugees resettled in third countries through the UNHCR resettlement office. The figure is based on data provided by UNHCR 2001-2010. See UNHCR <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a02afce6.html>

## 5.2. GUINEA AND PROVISION OF ASYLUM

Unlike Ghanaians, Guineans have socio-cultural links and a history of shared migration patterns with Liberians. For example, the Kissi, Kpelle and Loma speaking peoples, located mostly in the forest region of Guinea (which forms the Macenta administrative region), are also found in Liberia. Additionally, the Maninka (Malinke, Mandingo) speaking people, who are traditionally traders, suffered under Touré's tyrannical regime, so they fled into asylum, and can be found mostly in Lofa county of Liberia (Riviere, 1977:24). Furthermore, Guinea is contiguous to Liberia, while Ghana is a regional neighbour.

With regard to forced migration patterns, Guinea, like Ghana and some other African states, has been both a refugee-producing and an asylum state at various times in its independent existence. The attempt at nation-building under Touré's regime, for example, as noted by Adamolekun (1976:6-7), "was a very coercive experiment that inhibited the citizenry and led to various human rights abuses", and drove many Guineans into asylum. Furthermore, after a couple of unsuccessful attempts at toppling his government, Touré institutionalized paranoia about the "permanent plot" (Le Vine, 2004:222) in order to maintain his authoritarian regime and justify the harassment, arrest and murder of groups of people based on their social and cultural groups, their professions and their links with Western countries. The abuse of citizens' rights and the quest for revolutionary transformation of the social, economic and political realities by universal mobilization, without due consideration of the negative consequences for the people, resulted in about a million Guineans seeking refuge in neighbouring countries, including Liberia (Le Vine, 2004: 223).

The death of Touré in 1984 saw the end of his regime and his party; however, the country continued to be plagued by coups d'état, corruption, sham elections, mismanagement and personality cult regimes. A group of soldiers seized power, and ushered the country into another autocratic rule, that of Lansana Conté. Conté ruled from 1984 until his death in 2008, when the military, led by Camara, seized power and, once again, denied Guineans the right to elect their government. After 52 years of authoritarian rule, with occasional elections deemed by most to be pure theatre to keep the military ruler in power (IRIN Africa, 2010), Guineans went to the polls on June 27, 2010 to select a leader from over 24 candidates. The military declared that the June elections had had no clear winner; a run off was held in November, and Alpha Conde was declared the winner, and sworn into office on December 21, 2010.

### **5.2.1. Guinea's Response to the Liberian Refugee Crises: Refugee Arrival and Settlement**

At the beginning of the civil war in Liberia, Guinea generously opened its borders, allowing unrestricted entry and settlement for Liberians. The numbers and composition of refugees in Guinea changed over the years in proportion to the turmoil and instability among its neighbours. As the war in Liberia spread to Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast, refugees from these countries joined Liberians in Guinea. For example, 2003 saw both influxes of new refugees and repatriation of older ones, with the majority alternating between Liberians and Sierra Leoneans, depending on the intensity of the conflict in the originating countries. Below is a table (Table

5.1) of the numbers of Liberian refugees in Guinea compared with those who settled in Ghana from 1996 to 2004.<sup>98</sup>

**Table 5.1. Population of Liberian Refugees in Ghana and Guinea (1996-2004)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Ghana</b>	15,178	17,145	12,569	10,373	9,454	8,865	28,298	42,466	40,853
<b>Guinea</b>	415,003	243,036	183,031	129,096	117,069	82,792	119,293	149,639	127,256
<b>Total</b>	430,181	260,181	195,600	139,469	126,523	91,657	147,586	192,105	168,109

Source: Compiled from UNHCR 1996 to 2004 Statistical Yearbooks

In his study of the influx of refugees into Guinea in the 1990s, Van Damme (1999: 37) notes that the earlier arrivals, in 1990 and 1991, occurred in four major waves. The first three major waves were Liberians; the fourth was predominantly Sierra Leoneans. The first wave was mostly rural refugees from Nimba County, and they began arriving from January to March 1990. They settled right across the border between Liberia and Guinea in Mano villages, staying among relatives and friends. Others lived in public buildings, such as schools. Most arrived in good health, and not destitute, and brought some material resources. These resources, according to Van Damme (1999), helped them quickly and easily begin to build their own huts and farm on

---

<sup>98</sup>This year was selected because that is the period when the UNHCR officially launched the formal repatriation of Liberian refugees at the end of the war in 2003.

lands allocated to them by the host community. During this period, the United Nations estimates, a total of 97,000 Liberian refugees sought asylum in Guinea (as quoted by van Damme, 1999: 39).

The second wave was mostly people who fled the advance of the NPFL into major cities in Liberia. They were mainly from urban areas and, mostly, members of the Mandingo socio-cultural group with Guinean ancestry. Their connection with Guinea initially posed a major status designation (refugees or returnees) challenge, and raised doubts about their need for assistance. The UNHCR proposed to classify them as returnees: the Guinean government opposed that classification and the agency's distinction between urban and rural refugees, arguing that it was based on ethnic distinction and not on the needs of the refugees (*ibid.*). The refugees of the second wave moved into towns with large Mandingo communities, such as N'Zerekore, and mainly engaged in trade activities. The numbers of this group were difficult to establish, because most received no assistance from the UNHCR, and lived outside the Forest Region, the area to which the Guinean government had confined the refugees. The confinement of refugees to only one region of the country, according to Van Damme (1999), was one of the few decisions the Guinean central government ever made as a response to the influx of refugees during the first four major waves. The third wave of refugees, Van Damme notes, occurred between June and August 1990. Most of the refugees of this wave were from the Lofa and Bong Counties and from the Kpelle, Loma and Kissi socio-cultural groupings, and they settled mostly in Macenta and to the east of Gueckedou in the Forest region.

Unlike Ghana, Guinea's initial response did not include the establishment of refugee camps. Instead, refugees were allowed to settle among the local population. This mode of

response was made possible due to the long standing social, economic and linguistic links between the refugees and the local population (Milner, 2009). Furthermore, the refugees of this era, as noted by Van Damme (1999), were quite homogeneous;<sup>99</sup> many had characteristics in common, such as their socio-cultural background, including geographical origins (in Liberia) and degree of destitution. Although members of the fourth wave shared some traits, a few distinguishing characteristics were more outstanding: fewer members of this group shared linguistic or any other socio-cultural relations with Guineans and most had a very limited, or no, previous relationship with them. Finally, compared with the earlier three waves, most of the refugees arrived in bad health because of the longer flight, which included periods of living in the bush. Distance notwithstanding, some of the returnees recounted that they could not travel during the day or use the road, since they risked being noticed and forcibly recruited by any of the groups involved in the war (Author's interview, Voinjama Area, 2009). These distinctions among the Liberian refugees of the fourth wave meant that the existing settlement approach had to be changed to reflect the needs of this new group of asylum seekers. The government thus set up its first refugee camp in Kouloumba, which served as a settlement for about 26,000 refugees from both Liberia and Sierra Leone (Van Damme, 1999: 42).

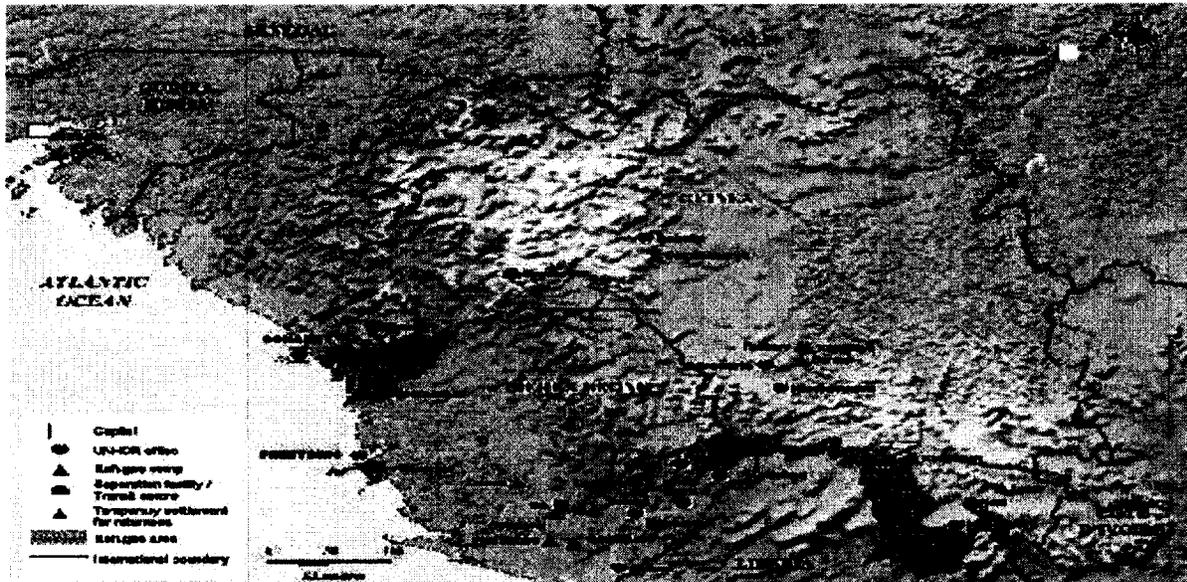
The period from mid-1991 to the third quarter of 1994 saw relative stability in Liberia; there are thus no records of major influxes of refugees into Guinea. That changed after the

---

<sup>99</sup>It is important to note that Van Damme equally admits that there were important differences between the waves, and among the groups of refugees who formed each wave. These differences and similarities, Van Damme argues, had important consequences in terms of the needs and the coping mechanisms of the refugees, and should have been recognized in the provision of assistance to refugees.

September-December 1994 assaults by the ULIMO rebel group on the NPFL's main hideout. As a result of these attacks, large numbers of Liberians -- mostly from Gbanga, which is closer to the capital, Monrovia -- fled into Guinea. Most of the refugees of this wave, according to Van Damme (1999), arrived in Guinea very malnourished because of the great distance between their towns of departure and their asylum destination. Like the members of the fourth wave just described, most of these newcomers did not already have socio-economic connections with Guineans; refugee camps were therefore established to accommodate and assist them. As the war continued, and more refugees arrived in Guinea, the newly created camps became the most common means of sheltering them, including old and new refugees from Liberia and other West African countries. By the end of 2003 Guinea had seven major refugee camps: three near Kissidougou, and four near N'Zerekore town (FIND, 2003:7). Below is a map (Map 5.2) of Guinea showing the locations of the refugee camps. As can be seen, the locations were further away from the capital, Conakry, in contrast with the Buduburam camp, which was so near the capital of Ghana, Accra.

## Map 5.2. Refugee Camp locations in Guinea



Source: UNHCR 2003 Global Report-Guinea

The cordial reception and relationship between the host community and the refugees did not, however, last the entire period of their stay. The beginning of 2000 and subsequent years saw a dramatic change in Guinea's approach to the issue. Dwindling donor support and militarization of refugees<sup>100</sup> were noted by Guinea as reasons for changes in the hosting refugees (Milner, 2009:145). The duration of asylum and the scale of the refugee population were also major sources of concern for the local population, and some returnees noted that they were cited as the cause of, among other things, environmental degradation and social vices in the community (Author's interview, Voinjama Area, 2009). In a 2001 report on Guinea, *Human Rights Watch* noted that during that period refugees were harassed and extorted, criminalized,

<sup>100</sup>These issues are briefly discussed below; however, for detailed and critical discussion see Milner J. (2009) op cit.

denied entry at Guinean border posts, required to carry documents they were never given, and limited in their movement to refugee camps. The UNHCR responded to these changes by relocating refugees to other camps further away from the border post, thereby facilitating return and resettlement in a third asylum country (ibid.). As succinctly put by Milner, (2009:147) “at this point Guinea’s asylum practice could best be described as closed”.

### **5.2.2. Asylum Law and Policies**

Very little is known about Guinea’s asylum laws and policy between the time of independence and the end of the Touré era (Milner, 2009). The literature suggests that Touré’s refugee policy had similarities with that of Ghana under Nkrumah (Chazan, 1999). It was guided by Pan Africanism, and the President took a personal interest in refugees who arrived in Guinea. As mentioned, Guinea has a history as an asylum destination, especially for individual Africans and members of liberation groups from the sub-region; and Touré provided personal and state assistance to them (Le Vine 2004). Like Ghana, however, at the beginning of the influx of refugees from Liberia Guinea had no national legislation, policy or a government agency with a specialized role for refugees and issues relating to asylum seekers.

Guinea’s main legal instruments for the provision of asylum for the refugees were, therefore, based on stipulations by the global refugee regime and its own national constitution.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, the pattern of arrival and the long social, economic and linguistic links between

---

<sup>101</sup>In 1965 the Republic of Guinea acceded to the “1951 Convention” without reservation and to the “1967 Protocol” in 1968. Furthermore, Guinea is a signatory to the 1969 OAU Convention governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. Guinea’s 1992 Constitution guarantees asylum to foreign nationals mistreated because of political, philosophical, or religious opinion, race, ethnicity, or intellectual, scientific, or cultural activities.

Guineans and Liberians allowed them to settle in Guinea with limited support from government. Furthermore, the refugees of the four waves, as described by Van Damme (1999), arrived with some material resources, such as clothing, seeds, and animals, among other things; and, in terms of their personal resources, they were in better physical health than the later arrivals and most of the refugees who settled in Ghana. These groups of refugees thus needed very little to no emergency aid upon arrival, in contrast with the first influx of Liberians in Ghana, who arrived on the naval ships. This system for settling the refugees worked well for the various institutions, the Guinean officials and both international and local aid agencies as well as the refugees for a short while. But both internal and external security threats and subsequent militarization of the refugee question in Guinea brought about very stringent changes in the refugee situation, which raised concerns about the country's commitment to the global refugee regime and open policy on asylum.

After the cross border incursion<sup>102</sup> by pro Taylor groups in 2000, President Conté established the National Bureau for Refugee Coordination (BCNR), with responsibility for developing and implementing policies and guidelines for refugee screening procedures at the border crossing. In October 2002 this body admitted to Human Rights Watch that despite its authority to implement policies directed at separating combatants from refugees, none of these policies had been implemented. Technically the BCNR supported the adoption of screening procedures that allow legitimate refugees entry into the country, while restricting entry of armed elements; but it was unable to get the Guinean military to implement them (HRW, 2002:21).

---

<sup>102</sup>See below for a brief discussion of this incident and security concerns raised by Guinea during this period.

Furthermore, on August 10, 2002, Guinea adopted Law L/2000/012AN on the Status of Refugees. This law incorporates both the UN and OAU/AU Conventions' definitions of a refugee, and articles that recognize the mandate of UNHCR, and prohibits expelling or extraditing refugees or asylum seekers, including during the period of appeals. While this new law was a welcome policy on the refugee question, the UNHCR has argued that it is not comprehensive, and inadequate for addressing issues of interest to refugees and concerning the provision of asylum. For example, the UNHCR notes that there are gaps, especially, with regard to durable solutions options for the refugees (UNHCR, 2009). To fill these gaps, the UNHCR proposed the elaboration of a comprehensive Refugee Law, and submitted a draft of amendments to the government of Guinea that have yet to produce progress because of the country's socio-political instability, especially since the death of President Lansana Conté (ibid.).

### **5.2.3. The Bureau National de Coordination des Refugies (BNCR)**

The BNCR and its regional counterparts, the Bureaux de Coordination des Refugies (BCR), are the Guinean government's agencies responsible for refugees, and serve as the UNHCR's formal national partners. The BCR also represent the host communities, and advocate for the interests of the host at the various sub-regional offices of the UNHCR and other humanitarian and NGO agencies that assist and work with refugees. The agency is also responsible for security and security personnel at the camps.

The agency's Preparatory Committee conducts preliminary interviews with applicants, and makes recommendations to the Eligibility Committee, which hears and decides cases. Applicants can have counsel, and the UNHCR monitors proceedings. Rejected applicants can

appeal to a committee of high-ranking magistrates, but, as noted by the USCR (2009), “it meets too infrequently to function effectively”. In August 2007 the National Bureau for Refugee Coordination was replaced by the National Commission for the Integration and Monitoring of Refugees (*ibid.*).

#### **5.2.4. Status Determination and Issuance of Documents**

Guinea’s 1994 Entry and Stay Law says that authorities must issue refugees and stateless persons with special identity cards. The 2000 Memorandum of Understanding between Guinea and the UNHCR stipulates that the Government issues such cards within a month of the refugee’s arrival in the country. Neither the government nor the UNHCR, however, fulfilled this requirement during the returnees’ stay in Guinea.

In an attempt to resolve the problem, in 1997 the UNHCR printed cards with their organization’s logos and Guinean flags for distribution; but the lack of agreement between the UNHCR and the government on modalities of issuing the documents halted the process. The cards were never formally distributed, but according to a returnee, they were in circulation through illegal sale of a blank card for about 7,000 GNF or 3.7 USD<sup>103</sup> (Author’s interview, Voinjama, 2009). In 2001 the UNHCR proposed to rectify the situation after the relocation of refugees exercise; but, again, it did not receive the government’s approval. Other means of acquiring documentation were through the sale and issuance of laissez-passer documents to refugees by local authorities (HRW 2001:18). While complacency and logistical constraints

---

<sup>103</sup> The USD value is based on the 2000 conversion rate of 1 USD = 1,910 GNF as quoted in International Monetary Fund (2012) “Guinea: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper—Progress Report”. IMF Country Report No. 12/296 (IMF: Washington)

figured in the absence of a standardized system of identity documentation for refugees, it is important to note that the scale and arrival patterns -- particularly during the first influxes of refugees -- presented a major challenge in implementing the policy of issuing identity documents to refugees.

An unforeseen disaster attributable to this practice of not issuing identity documents to refugees occurred when refugees were required to be in possession of documents during the 2000-2001 exercise of flushing out rebels; most did not have them. Some were harassed, and unlawfully detained. Finally, the lack of an effective system of documentation for refugees, according to some of the research participants, made it difficult for them to move within Guinea freely and without harassment.

#### **5.2.5. Economic Conditions and Exile Livelihood Strategies**

Refugees' right to economic livelihood and labour protection are provided for in two legislative instruments: the 1994 Entry and Stay Law, and the newly established 2002 Refugee Law. First, Guinea's 1994 Entry and Stay Law requires all non-nationals to have temporary residence cards and forbids employers to hire foreigners without prior authorization from the National Office of Employment and Labour and the immigration authorities. A 1986 presidential ordinance requires employers to ensure that their foreign workers have work permits, for which employers pay US \$300 annually. The 1994 Entry and Stay Law, moreover, gives refugees the right to engage freely in business, own property, open bank accounts, and repatriate assets when

they return,<sup>104</sup> subject to customs fees. Furthermore, the 2002 Refugee Law treats refugees on a par with nationals from countries with which Guinea has the most favourable treaties concerning the right to work. Residents of the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), including refugees from Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone, legally have the right to work without permits or licences.

The returnees interviewed had high praise for the generosity of their host communities in their reception of the refugees. For example, similar to their colleagues in Ghana, Guinean traditional leaders and some individuals allocated to the refugees plots of land for both housing and economic activities. Various communities, especially near the Guinea and Liberia border, opened up their homes, public facilities, including schools, and health facilities, to the refugees who needed them. Some of the returnees, however, noted that they had to pay compensation for their use of the land for farming, which was generally arranged between the individual refugee and the Guinean. Compensations ranged from a bag of rice after harvesting their farm produce to working some days per week on the landlord's farm, as well as paying with their food ration received from the WFP. Since most of the returnees had experience with farming, and the land in Guinea was fertile for rice production, the returnees noted that with aid from the UNHCR and the WFP, which supplied seeds, they began producing for their families. According to most of them, since the plots were usually not big, their main objective was to produce to feed themselves, and not to sell.

---

<sup>104</sup>Most of the returnees who self repatriated to Liberia noted, however, that border officials would not allow them to carry their assets out of Guinea, arguing that they came into their country with no assets, and thus had to return the same way. Chapter 6 discusses this issue further.

With their farming activities the refugees were described as self-sufficient (see Kasier, and Black and Sessay, 1996); after the security crackdown, however, and the forced encampment of the refugees, most of them lost access to lands originally allocated to them by the host communities. They thus took to working as labourers on the farms and in the homes of Guineans in exchange for food or money. Others risked their lives by moving and living on the streets of the cities, looking for menial jobs, which were very difficult to come by, because they had to share the limited opportunities with Guineans.

It is important to mention that the refugees' ability to attain higher levels of self-sufficiency, as observed among the members of the earlier waves, was greatly assisted by the personal and material resources they arrived with, as well as the scale of the refugees in the host community. Later arrivals, however, were settled in refugee camps away from the border; but, as noted by Van Damme (1999), they quickly became ghost camps, because most of the refugees, especially the young and able, went to the cities looking for employment, returning to the camp during the days when food distribution took place. Furthermore, the increase in the numbers of refugees meant that the host community could no longer afford to give them plots of land for farming, as they had done for the members of the earlier wave.

Both personal and structural constraints inhibited the research participants' access to employment in the formal sectors. The main structural constraint noted by the returnees was that Guinean employers did not recognize their credentials. Since the refugees were considered foreigners, the employers were mandated by law to pay a fee for hiring them, which most of them did not want to do when they could readily get the service of Guineans. Lack of documentation and of a work permit was noted by the returnees as a major challenge in their

access to jobs, whether as employees or to engage in their own businesses. A few that were active in small business complained that authorities extorted false business taxes. For example, refugees were required to have a licence for felling trees to burn for charcoal. A returnee noted that they were denied the licence after paying, and after a while were told that their payment had expired, and then were made to pay again before receiving their licence. Others were forced to pay bribes to enable them to cart their wood or finished product into the market, although they were in possession of licences, and had paid their required taxes (Author's interview, Voinjama area, 2009). The main personal constraints among the returnees were in relation to the language barrier: they could neither speak nor write French and their low levels of formal education prior to flight and during the period in asylum limited their opportunities of accessing professional jobs.

#### **5.2.6. Provision of Services: Refugees' Access to Health and Education**

The government does not restrict humanitarian access to refugees. Refugees have access to social and health services on a par with nationals. The 2002 Refugee Law provides that refugees should enjoy access to public relief and primary education on a par with nationals. The economic conditions of the country, however, meant that the refugees had to pay for services should they visit health posts outside of the camps. The UNHCR provided health care facilities for the refugees within the camps and settlements. Three Médecins sans Frontières (MSFs) personnel, from France, Belgium and Switzerland, offered health services in all the refugee camps. Other NGOs, such as the Lutheran World Foundation, worked in some of the camps and settlement areas.

As was the case in Ghana, the UNHCR was the main agent for the provision of education for refugees, and the implementing agent in Guinea was the International Rescue Committee (IRC). The IRC provided education in all the camps, including the peace education component at each level. The UNHCR/IRC offered infrastructure, recruited volunteer teachers, and provided teaching aids and school supplies for the pupils. In accordance with the UNHCR mandate, it offered education up to middle school level. Night schools also taught adult literacy, and eight of the returnees noted this as their major form of formal education acquired in exile.

Two main challenges constrained the research participants' access to Guinean public educational institutes. First were the language barrier and the cost of education. As was the case in Ghana, although the law does not prohibit refugees from attending Guinean government funded educational institutes, its silence, and the lack of policy, on the cost refugees were to be charged meant that they were mostly made to pay costs applicable either to foreign nationals or to local citizens. Cost was not an issue at the primary and secondary levels, however, because once again the school authorities, just like their colleagues in Ghana, charged refugees fees similar to those for nationals (Author's interview, Voinjama Area, 2009). The low enrolment of refugees at local primary and secondary schools was thus mainly caused by the language barrier, whether French or Arabic. Some returnees indicated that the Guinean schools had too much Islamic content, and they stopped children attending because they (the returnees) are Christians (Author's interview, Voinjama Area, 2009).

DAFI funded university education for refugees, but the language limitation meant that most Liberian refugees could not gain admission to universities, which prevented them from applying for scholarships. Although Guinea was among the 10 African countries with the most

refugees through the 1990s and the early 2000s, it was not among the four leading countries of study for DAFI scholars. For example, from 1993 to 2003, only 132 refugees received DAFI support to pursue university education in Guinea (DAFI Report, 2007:30). The security situation in Guinea at that time, furthermore, limited the enrolment of refugees in Guinean educational institutions. For example, the government security exercise in the 2000s meant that refugees were advised to restrict their movement to the camp, since the UNHCR could not guarantee their security beyond its boundaries. The relocation of refugees to various camps also meant the displacement of volunteer teachers, and resulted in the majority of the refugees dropping out of school. As said to me by a returnee: “How could one go to school when you had no stability in terms of your location, and did not know the next time you were going to be moved?”(Author’s interview, Voinjama area, 2009). Accordingly, the DAFI Report (2007) notes that “the fluid security situations in several countries of study [including Guinea] which often results in the closure of universities is the one major reason of limited DAFI scholars in certain noted high refugee populations in Africa” (DAFI, op cit.).

Finally, the limited numbers of health personnel and teachers among the refugee population meant the UNHCR could not rely on the volunteering services of refugees, as was the case in Ghana. Indeed, most camp school teachers had no teaching diplomas or certificates. Some of the returnees noted that most of their teachers were high school graduates. In addition, the language barrier meant that Guinean professionals, unlike Ghanaians, could not volunteer or be employed in the camp schools, because English was the medium of communication. These challenges, coupled with the high levels of insecurity and limited sources of funding from the

international community, hindered returnees' access to these essential services, further constraining and limiting their opportunities to increase and replace lost resources.

### **5.2.7. Security Conditions, Militarization of Refugee Camps and Refugee Protection**

Since Guinea gained independence in 1958, successive governments have battled insecurity in the midst of unstable neighbours (Kamara, 2001: 1). Under Touré's leadership, Guinea dealt with numerous destabilization plots orchestrated by countries within the sub-region and the West, such as France and Portugal, the latter of which was the mastermind of the 1975 abortive invasion (ibid.). Very little has changed since Touré's death in 1984; Guinea is still confronted with the spectre of insecurity originating from political instability both within its own borders and from its neighbours. Further, Guinea's role in regional politics<sup>105</sup> and its ethnic composition, linking it to Liberia and Sierra Leone, along with its past political alliances,<sup>106</sup> made it a target for rebel movements: particularly the NPFL of Liberia and the RUF of Sierra Leone (Kamara, 2001). Most analysts, including the United Nations Experts (2000), warned that Guinea would be the next prey of the West African sub-regional web of conflicts of the 1990s and early 2000s. Although Guinea has not been involved in a civil war on a scale comparable to those of its neighbours, it remains a very unstable state, and some of its nationals continue to alternate between the status of refugees and returnees.

---

<sup>105</sup>Guinea was the only Francophone member of ECOWAS to remain actively engaged in Liberia until the end of the war.

<sup>106</sup>Guinea sent soldiers to aid Tolbert of Liberia during the infamous "rice riot". In 1967, too, Guinea granted asylum to Siaka Stevens, Sierra Leone's main opposition leader, and in 1997 to Ahmed T. Kabbah, who escaped a coup d'état staged by rebels of the RUF and the military.

Even with its own internal politics and security challenges from its neighbours, Guinea generously granted asylum to Liberian refugees in record numbers, and was identified as “a major stabilizing factor in the West Africa sub-region” (OCHA, 2004: 1). Despite the Guinean government's and host communities' generosity and hospitality, however, in the late 1990s refugees, including Liberians, were targets of violence and human rights abuses. Attacks on refugee camps by armed groups, *refoulement* of refugees at the Guinean border, and harassment of refugees by Guinean authorities were among the security problems that some of the returnees identified. The effects of these security challenges on the safety of refugees and on security of asylum were aptly summed up by Reilly (2000:26), who noted that “the situation for refugees in camps [in Guinea] remains extremely critical, and the future of safe asylum in Guinea is seriously at risk.”

Guinea's proximity to Liberia and the location of refugee settlements in border sharing communities rendered the camp and refugee settlements easily infiltrated by rebels, thereby compromising the security status of both the host state and the refugees. The presence of armed elements in the various refugee camps in Guinea, allegedly with support from both refugees and the Guinean government, directly threatened refugee safety and security: which represented a clear break from the refugee protection requirements of the global refugee regime. In its fact finding mission to Guinea in October 2002, Human Rights Watch (HRW) uncovered the presence of LURD rebels in Kouankan, the largest refugee camp in Guinea, and where some of the returnees lived during asylum. As the report of the mission indicates, “many refugees described LURD combatants walking around the camp with grenades and AK-47 assault rifles, and driving in and out of the camp in trucks, sometimes full of armed combatants and supplies”

(HRW, 2002:19). Some returnees noticed that their camp was being used by rebels to recruit men and young boys for rebel activities within Liberia; the rebels also stole food and supplies from refugees and the camp warehouse (Author's interviews, Voinjama Area, 2009). The HRW (op. cit.) reported that in one instance LURD rebels threatened to kill a group of Liberian refugees awaiting UN registration in the camps to deter them from registering. Anti-RUF forces from Sierra Leone, allegedly with backing from the Guinea government, were also reported to be active in refugee camps, and adopted tactics similar to those of the LURD rebels (HRW, 2002: 6).

The presence of armed elements in the camps and refugee settlements in Guinea, and the alleged support from the Guinean government for the rebel groups, made the camps targets of periodic cross-border attacks by the RUF rebels from Sierra Leone and Taylor's NPFL as early as 1998 (O'Neill, 2000:179), and they became rampant in 2000 and 2001. Between September 2000 and March 2001, Guinea is noted to have suffered more than 30 cross-border attacks, resulting in an estimated 1,500 civilian deaths, internal displacement of between 100,000 and 350,000 Guineans and the dispersal of tens of thousands of refugees (Milner, 2009: 143). These events and Guinea's response subsequently had a greater impact on the security, safety and condition of asylum for refugees in Guinea. First, the Guinean government's response to the cross border incursions, particularly the comments and instructions of President Conté, further exacerbated the security and safety challenges of the refugees. In the midst of panic in Conakry, President Conté addressed the nation, saying:

I am giving orders that we bring together all foreigners...and that we search and arrest all suspects... They should go home. We know that there are rebels

among the refugees. Civilians and soldiers, let's defend our country together.

When you catch these people, these enemies, crush them. Wait for nothing. I order it (as quoted in Milner, 2009: 144).

This order, by its wording, perhaps attempted to distinguish between rebels and refugees; unfortunately, on the ground it was interpreted differently by the newly formed citizen vigilante groups. It sparked anti-refugee sentiment throughout the country, and set the tone for a new and very hostile relationship between the host population and the refugees. For most Guineans, especially those who joined the vigilante groups, the line between refugees and rebels was very indistinct, and they were not interested in distinguishing between them. The HRW report (2000a: 2) revealed that "mobs drove refugees out of their homes, frequently beating, raping and sexually abusing them. The attackers wielded sticks, rocks, iron bars, electric cords and knives." There were also reports that refugee camps were looted and, in some situations, burnt to prevent their return (AI, 2001b: 4).

Guinea's stance during this era, especially with the militarization of and the armed attacks on refugee camps, cannot be reconciled with the global refugee regime. The existence of international refugee law is premised on the neutral and non-political nature of asylum (daCosta, 2004: 5). As the preamble of the 1951 Convention states: The Contracting Parties [express] the wish that all states, recognizing the humanitarian and social nature of the problem of refugees, will do everything within their power to prevent this problem from becoming a cause of tension between states (UN Treaty Series 1951, no.2345).

Furthermore, the OAU Convention, of which Guinea is a signing party, contains several provisions that enshrine the essentially humanitarian nature of asylum. Article II (2) of the OAU

Convention defines the granting of asylum as a peaceful and humanitarian act, and as not to be regarded as an unfriendly act by any Member State. The Preamble urges states to distinguish between “a refugee who seeks a peaceful and normal life and a person fleeing his country for the sole purpose of fomenting subversion from outside”. Article II (6) of the OAU Convention, moreover, allows that “for reasons of security, countries of asylum shall, as far as possible, settle refugees at a reasonable distance from the frontier of their country of origin” in order to avoid some of the noted security challenges posed by armed elements and the militarization of refugee settlements, as was the case in Guinea.

Accordingly, Guinea argued that because of the numerous security and political challenges, both within (due to the presence and scale of refugees) and from its neighbours, and the limited support from the international community, it was unable to meet the humanitarian requirement of granting asylum and protection of refugees. This approach, of blaming refugees for most of the country’s bad economic and security conditions, was reiterated in its 2007 *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (PRSP), prepared for international donors, and which holds refugees responsible for the high rate of poverty in the Forest region: “This situation is the direct result of the influx of refugees it has received since the outbreak of hostilities in Liberia and in Sierra Leone, and the rebel attacks in 2001.” The PRSP also mentions residents of refugee-hosting areas as a vulnerable population group (“highway workers, women, and traveling salespersons, men in uniform and youths, and people in areas with a high concentration of refugees”) that the national development program wishes to target in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Contesting Guinea’s account, da Costa (2004:6) argues that the act of granting asylum and hosting refugees in camps was exploited for political or military purposes by Guinea.

While both sides of the argument are valid, it brings into question the role of the international community, asylum states and the refugees, as noted in the global refugee regime. Who is to act, when, and how? Although these issues are not addressed, the current research notes that it remains relevant for provision of secured conditions, which is an enabling structure for gaining resources during asylum.

Although Guinea refuted this allegation, the free movement of these armed elements sent the misleading political message that it supports such groups, justifying attacks on those refugee camps by the opposing groups. Loescher (2001: 45) asserts that when combatants are present in refugee camps, these settlements are viewed by antagonistic forces as sources of assistance to and protection for their enemies and, therefore, as legitimate military targets. Militarization of refugees and their settlements created an atmosphere of fear, and for most of the returnees, the presence of these factors was a constant reminder of the violence from which they had fled. As in the words of O'Neill (2000 :184), "this becomes appallingly clear when refugees must live next to their own persecutors, or individuals responsible for the deaths of other civilians during their time in asylum," as they did in Guinea.

#### **5.2.8. The UNHCR and Guinea**

Departing from its unaccustomed relationship with the UN System, the Guinean government appealed to the UNHCR for assistance and, as noted by Milner (2009: 138), cooperated closely in the early stages of the influx of refugees. One main outcome of this cooperation was the accreditation of the first UNHCR Charge de Mission for Guinea, and the signing and opening up of a Branch Office in March and April 1990, respectively. These

developments represented a change in Guinea's approach to the issues of asylum and refugee situations. While the scale of the influx partially accounts for this change, it is important to note that other factors, such as President Conté's desire to foster closer relations between Guinea and Western countries, which were strained under Touré, arguably played a more crucial role in Guinea's openness to international refugee organizations by addressing the refugee question (Milner, 2009:139).

The UNHCR, as mandated, began its support by deploying protection officers to border areas, as well as settlements and communities in which refugees had settled. Because of the large numbers of Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees in the southern forest regions of Guinea, in the 1990s the UNHCR sub-office of Guéckdou became the UNHCR's largest sub-branch, responsible for well over 280,000 refugees (ibid.). As noted by Van Damme (1999) and Black and Sessay (1997), most of these refugees were from the rural areas, had prior socio-economic connections with the locals, and were engaged in farming in their homelands; thus, upon arrival they took up farming, mostly of rice production on land allocated by friends and family from the host community. The UNHCR identified this as an opportunity for the refugees to become self-sufficient and their means to move away from the usual camp and food rationing projects practised in other refugee situations; therefore they encouraged and funded some of these activities.

With support from the host communities, the UNHCR, in partnership with other UN agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), provided refugees with relief items, such as clothing, health care products and materials for the construction of shelters. By early 1992 about 87 percent of refugees were engaged in some form of economic activity --

mainly crop production -- making them a UNHCR successful case study of sufficient refugee settlement (Keita and Oulare, 1992: 13). This approach of providing for refugees was not, however, sustainable because of the negative environmental impact on the host community;<sup>107</sup> subsequently, the issue of insecurity culminated in refugees being forced off the land. Furthermore, during that period the world, especially the West, had turned its attention to the Balkans; hence Guinea's and the UNHCR's appeal for more funds (for the refugees and for Guinea) to resolve the challenges posed by the cross-border intrusions and the militarization of refugees and settlement areas were not responded to favourably. Rather, in 1999 the UNHCR budget was reduced, and underfunded by 30 to 50 percent, which led to cuts in the field. These reductions in the number of field officers meant fewer protection officers and fewer health and education services. Finally, this structural constraint on asylum was further exacerbated by the withdrawal and recall of UNHCR officers from the sub-offices after the killing and kidnapping of two officers in one of the cross-border incursions in 2000. In their time of need, the UNHCR, however, prioritized the safety of its own staff over that of the refugees, leaving the latter to fend for themselves.

Following the drastic reduction in its funding, coupled with insecurity in Guinea and general anti-refugee resentment from the host communities, the UNHCR adopted a three-pronged solution of relocation, resettlement and facilitating the resettlement program (Milner,

---

<sup>107</sup>See United Nations Environmental Program (2000) "Environmental Impact of Refugees in Guinea: A Report to the Secretary General" (Regional Office for Africa: Kenyan) available online <http://www.grid.unep.ch/guinea/> and Black and Sassy (1997) "Forced Migration, Land-Use Change and Political Economy in the Forest Region of Guinea" *African Affairs*, Vol. 96, No. 385, pp. 587-605.

2009). These responses were neither prompt nor extensive. For example, the UNHCR was unable to prevent or effectively address the militarization of refugee camps or the *refoulement* of some Liberian refugees. According to interviews conducted by HRW with UNHCR officials in 2002, it appears that the agency did very little to address these problems. The report notes:

HRW had the distinct impression that the UNHCR was reluctant to openly talk about and address with sufficient urgency the pattern of *refoulement* of Liberian refugees, the collusion between the Guinean military and the LURD, and particularly the militarization of Kouankan Camp (HRW, 2002: 22).

The UNHCR was also unable to effectively cope with the physical insecurity and abuse experienced by refugees during the security crackdown initiated by the Guinean authorities following President Conte's anti-refugee speech and the campaign to purge refugee settlements of rebels. Furthermore, lack of staff and, once again, the pattern of inflow of the refugees into Guinea meant that the UNHCR could not give them the needed assistance and protection at the many security check points erected by the government, which, as noted, became sites for abuse, extortion and denial of entry. Indeed, as one UNHCR protection officer admitted to HRW during an interview on April 9, 2001, the UNHCR was not involved in overseeing the searches that took place at various checkpoints and border posts, nor were they involved in military training of these guards to ensure that standard codes and search criteria were implemented during the check point searches.

These and many other challenges faced by the UNHCR in Guinea were exacerbated by the failure of the international community to provide sufficient funding and support for the refugees. Aware that the refugee camps were located dangerously close to the borders with

Sierra Leone and Liberia, the UNHCR sought funding to move the camps further inland in 1999. Few or no funds were forthcoming, though, in part because of international attention then being on Kosovo; the camps in the border region thus remained vulnerable to attack and military incursions. If funds had been provided earlier to move the camps, some of the problems faced by the refugees in 2000 and 2001 could have been averted (HRW, 2002).

### **5.2.9. Official Views on Durable Solutions for Refugees**

Guinea's official asylum policy allows for the three durable solutions, but in practice, and judging by developments during the period being studied, Guinean officials seem to have favoured repatriation and resettlement of refugees to a third country. Prior to 2003, integration of refugees was not offered.<sup>108</sup>

Resettlement, which is the last of the durable solutions sought by the UNHCR, is only considered after repatriation and local integration prove impossible or unsuitable, and is usually initiated by the refugees or an NGO on behalf of the refugee. After the security challenges the UNHCR began looking for opportunities, however, and operated relation parallel to the option of resettlement of the refugees. The numbers of resettled refugees thus grew from 64 in 2000 to 1,931 in 2005, falling back to 22 in 2007 (as quoted in Milner, 2009). At the end of the official resettlement program in 2010, a total of 3,187 Liberian refugees in Guinea had resettled in various Western countries, compared with the 7,233 from Ghana.<sup>109</sup> In contrast, although Guinea

---

<sup>108</sup>See UNHCR (2009) Universal Periodic Review: Republic of Guinea for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report (Protection Policy and Legal Advice Section Division of International Protection Services).

<sup>109</sup>These figures are based on data provided by UNHCR 2001-2010. See UNHCR <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a02afce6.html>

hosted almost three times the number of Liberian refugees in Ghana, more refugees were resettled from Ghana than from Guinea. This trend is also noted among the study's research participants: six returnees from Ghana noted that their family members had benefited from the third country resettlement program, compared to two from Guinea. Furthermore, 20 of the returnees from Ghana noted that about 20 members from their social contacts (friends) were resettled in the West, which contrasts unfavourably with three returnees from Guinea.

The low numbers of resettled refugees from Guinea has been blamed on the UNHCR. In a 2003 report by the Foundation for International Dignity (FIND), a number of refugees interviewed claimed the resettlement process was not transparent. They claimed that they never received responses to their resettlement applications, noted that they were not aware of the criteria for selection, and accused the UNHCR of showing favouritism with regard to the selection of refugees for the program. Some of the concerns raised by the refugees are valid, however, the UNHCR is not the final decision-maker for the resettlement programs. Ultimately it is the countries that decide the criteria, including the numbers of refugees they are willing to accept for resettlement.

Although its policy prevents denial of entry and *refoulement*, Guinean authorities have been accused of denying refugees the right to seek asylum within its borders by preventing their entry into the country. As one of its strategies for dealing with the cross border incursions, the Guinean authorities began patrolling the border in the name of preventing armed elements from entering; unfortunately, most refugees were denied entry on the unproven allegation of

---

being rebels. The border was usually shut to prevent entry, or guards extorted money, resources and, sometimes, sexual favours for entry. Some returnees also noted that asylum seekers were recruited by some of the guards, who they later found out were rebel groups, to carry ammunition to their bases in Liberia before being allowed to enter Guinea. Some females were made to serve as house aides and others as wives, for periods ranging from a month until whenever they could escape. Others noted that they were detained or jailed on suspicion of being rebels. These reports are corroborated by the Amnesty International report, which says that during this period only those who could afford bribes were granted entry into Guinea (AI, 2000b:5).

Furthermore, the Guinean military, in cooperation with LURD combatants, were responsible for forcibly returning some refugees to Liberia. In a 2002 report the HRW noted that in 2001 some Liberian refugees were denied asylum after arriving at the military check point near Gueckedou, Guinea. They were handed over to LURD combatants, who directly selected and decided who should be allowed to enter Guinea as a refugee, and who should not. Hundreds were thereby denied entry, and forced to carry weapons and other supplies back into Liberia. The men and boys denied entry were forced to return to Liberia, and became vulnerable to forced recruitment by LURD rebels (HRW 2002, 13-14).

This procedure of entry, granting of asylum and *refoulement* adopted by Guinea during this era was indeed a violation of its obligations under the global refugee regime, although it had legitimate concerns for the protection of its citizens and its borders.

### **5.3. ASYLUM AND RETURNEES RESOURCE TRANSFORMATION**

The data and discussions in this section concentrate on activities that returnees were engaged in and how the conditions of asylum led to a transformation in their resources. It begins with the arrival testimonies of the returnees in their respective host communities. With regard to the opportunities and constraints present in the asylum conditions, the data presented in this section emphasizes the provision of educational and skills activities, health services, and housing facilities for refugees by three main institutions (UNHCR, (I) NGOs and Host state and community) during the asylum period. The data is presented as follows: material resources examines the income generating activities of the returnees during the asylum period, and the remittances and other support received from other agents; cultural resources focuses on the skills and educational training; social resources looks at their participation in the running of the refugee settlement as volunteers, their contact activities with members of the host community, and the location of family and friends they thought they had lost in the war, and numbers of children born in asylum, as well as the losses of social networks, including family members and friends, during this phase of their refugee experience. Finally the section discusses the personal resources of the refugees, especially health care delivery and refugee access in the refugee settlement.

#### **5.3.1. Returnees' Arrival Testimonies**

As extensively discussed in the literature and in UNHCR yearly reports, and as is confirmed by the research participants, Guineans and Ghanaians and their governments were generous in their reception of Liberian refugees. However, what seems to be missing from the literature on refugee asylum experience of the two cases under review is the cross border

experience of the refugees (see Van Damme 1999, Essuman-Johnson, 1994, Dick, 2002, Poter et al 2008, Milner, 2009). For example, although Van Damme's<sup>110</sup> work presents a very detailed discussion of the arrival patterns and settlement of the first four waves of the refugees, its limited section on border experiences creates the impression that the refugees before the 2000s enjoyed easy and free entry into Guinea. It is not, however, a comprehensive account of the entry experience of the refugees. Indeed, since members of the first and second wave, particularly, arrived in groups of not more than 20, and used well known pathways, they were spared the unpleasant experience of going through a border checkpoint. Those who arrived during the fourth wave, future arrivals and refugees of any wave arriving at border towns that had border stations were, however, subjected to screening by border officials. The officials at the entry on the Guinean side of the border are alleged to have used interrogation strategies that included harassment and extortion, or what the returnees referred to as paying Guinean border officials for their entry, or "L'Passe". Not less than 70 percent of returnees interviewed indicated that they had to part with material resources, including money and bottles of oil and rice. Some were detained for periods ranging from a day to about two weeks because they had no assets or money to pay for their entry into Guinea. Depending on the composition of the group, furthermore, the guards treated them differently. For example, if it included high numbers of young men, the guards became suspicious, and treated them as they would members of a rebel group. They were immediately detained, and interrogated before entry. As one returnee related:

---

<sup>110</sup> It is important that the literature in English on Guinea is very scanty, so that knowledge of Guinea and the refugee situation is limited, even though since the 1990s Guinea has been among the 10 African countries with the highest population of refugees. See Kaiser, T. (2001) "A Beneficiary-based Evaluation of UNHCR's Programme in Guinea, West Africa" (Geneva, UNHCR, Evaluation and Policy Unit).

When we arrived at the border, we were about 100, with about 35 men, and we had worn red bands around our heads as a means of eluding the rebel group, but the guards would not accept our explanation for the head bands, and we were detained and thoroughly searched, one after the other, including the children, the elderly and the women. After that the women, the children and those they considered vulnerable were allowed to go. About 15 of us were made to stay in a detention camp for more than two weeks, and then allowed to go, with no explanation. Later my wife informed me that they had raised money through begging for alms from the villagers, taken loans in exchange for labour on the lender's farm, and done household chores to pay the guards for our release (Author's interview, Voinjama area, 2009).

However, the cross border experience of the returnees from Ghana also highlighted some variations in host state responses to the refuge situation. As discussed above, those who went to Ghana courtesy of the Ghanaian navy and air force did not encounter border agents thus were not made to pay for their entry or required to possess documents of entry and arrested for illegally entering the country. However, the 5 returnees that arrived in Ghana by themselves via Ivory Coast shared similar border experiences with those who fled into Guinea. For example, they observed that they were required to pay for their entry in the CFA currency and since most of them did not have they were asked to pay with other material resources in their possession. The returnees who were not in possession of any of these 'requirements' were detained for periods between three days and a month. Some of the research informants noted that in some instances they were allowed to go when the UNHCR intervened or after friends and family

returned to pay for their release. However, the Ivorian border agents unlike their Guinean colleagues did not detain refugees who could not pay for their entry.

These extortions and other forms of harassment at the point of entry deprived most of the returnees of their resources that could have aided them in their settlement, and left others to start life in asylum with debts that they had to work to pay off. The lack of discussion of such asylum situations, such as the reception at the border and the losses accrued during the period constitute a lost opportunity for our understanding and appreciation of the refugees' agency as they prevailed over structures of constraint and take advantage of opportunities during the asylum phase of the forced migration experience. Furthermore, the limited discussion on this issue gives credence to the dominant view in the literature that asylum states, especially those in Africa, readily open their doors for refugees, and only closed them because of the lack of donor support, the militarization of the refugee question, and the duration of the refugees' stay, and the scale of their numbers (Rutinwa 1999; Milner, 2009). The experiences of the research participants indicate that it is not always the case that first waves of refugees are able to access the porous and limited patrol borders of most African countries. Refugees in Africa experience restriction of access to other African countries and, sometimes, even those who are noted to have historical connections across the state borders, such as those in this study, are not allowed easy entry.

### **5.3.2 Asylum and Transformation of Returnees Material Resources**

The main source of income for the refugees during the asylum period was the wages earned from working in either the informal or formal economic sectors of the asylum country. As Table

5.2 indicates, most of the returnees worked in the informal sectors, which is a reflection of the state of the economy of the asylum countries, as already described. Additionally, due to the returnee's personal constraint or lack of the necessary job skills and experience, they relied heavily on the informal sectors as a means of generating income.

According to the returnees, during the first three to six months of their arrival in asylum they relied exclusively on aid and food rations received from the UNHCR. The period of receiving aid was longer among the informants who sought asylum in Ghana than it was among their colleagues who were in Guinea. For example, some of the returnees from Ghana noted that they continued receiving food ration into the second and third years of their exile. However, most of the returnees noted their food aid was ended between the first six months and a year of their arrival in asylum. They subsequently started farming, working contract jobs within the host community, and the incomes earned were used to subsidize the ration. However the returnees from Ghana and Guinea did not consider the UNHCR ration as the major means of income during their stay in exile. Table 5.2 below indicates the various occupational activities of the returnees during the asylum period. As already explained, the returnees both in Ghana and Guinea were mostly engaged in the informal sectors of the economy, which were associated with lower wages and with limited government regulations. Thus, where possible the returnees were, on average, engaged in two or more economic activities.

Finally, remittances from friends and family, especially those living in Western countries, were a major source of income for some of study's informants. As Table 5.3, indicates, the numbers of informants from Ghana that received remittances is higher than that of their colleagues who sought asylum in Guinea. The higher numbers of remittance recipients among

the returnees from Ghana in asylum seems to be linked with the higher numbers of Liberian refugees that were resettled. This study thus notes that the benefits of resettling refugees are not limited to the individual, as they trickle down to the larger refugee community by way of remittances; they therefore play a substantial role in the process of attaining refugee self-sufficiency.

**Table 5.2. Returnees Occupational Activities in Asylum**

Occupational Activities	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Auto Mechanic	2	0
Computer/technology	2	0
Farming	1	28
Health care attendant	4	2
Journalism	2	0
Masonry/carpentry	8	2
Teaching	5	3
Trading	11	0
Tailoring	4	5
Service Provider (Farm hand, house maid, customer service)	6	15

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

**Table 5.3. Sources of Returnees Income in Asylum**

Income Activity	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Employment (Informal )	21	28
Employment (Formal )	9	2
Remittance from friends Abroad	19	0
Remittances from family abroad	7	2

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

### **5.3.3 Asylum and Transformation of Returnees Cultural Resources**

The asylum conditions, including the refuge policies and laws and the international community support, generated the context within which the returnee's cultural resources were shaped. As discussed, the cultural resources refer to the skills, knowledge and beliefs that are learned within a particular cultural setting, and whose value is intimately related to their adaptation and deployment in such a setting or in a similar one. As noted in chapter 3, this study gives special attention to the provision of skills training and formal education to the refugees during the periods of asylum. Tables 5.4 and 5.5 thus indicate the levels of formal education and skills training received by the refugees during their stay in exile.

**Table 5.4. Educational levels attained in Asylum**

Level of Education	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Primary	0	4
Primary to High School	3	0
Middle School to High School	3	2
High School to University	1	0
Middle School to University	1	0
Primary to University	1	0
Primary to College/Polytechnic	2	0
Middle School to College/Polytechnic	3	0
High School to College/Polytechnic	12	2
Primary to Middle School	0	10
Adult Night School	4	8
None	0	4

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

The data in Table 5.4 validates the study's position that the returnees from Ghana encountered more opportunities for skills training and education beyond elementary levels than their colleagues who went to Guinea. It is equally important to point out that the skills training and education statuses of the returnees presented in the tables below represent those that they completed during the period. As noted above, some of the returnees, especially those from Ghana observed that skills training activities that were initiated by NGOs were sometimes abandoned due to lack of funding or poor planning by the organizers.

**Table 5.5. Occupational Skills Acquired in Asylum**

Type of Skill	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Agriculture	3	7
Auto Mechanic	4	0
Carpentry	5	6
Computer (Hard and Software)	6	0
Conflict Resolution/Peace Education	30	30
Electricals	2	0
Health Care Attendant	5	3
Masonry	5	5
Pastry Making	10	0
Peer Counselling	10	5
Tailoring	5	9

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

Skills training and provision of education for members of every society are not luxuries. A society's level of economic growth and prosperity is intimately linked to the quality of education and training. Education and training should not be seen as ancillary, but as vital, primary, and no less important than the provision of food and health care for refugees. Providing education and skills training, especially for youth, should be a key component in promoting livelihoods for refugees (Crisp, 2001). It is important for young people to develop the practical, intellectual and social skills that will serve them throughout their lives. Concrete possibilities for putting education and skills training to income generation, however, be they in the field of farming or trade and services, must be assessed realistically. Accordingly Sesnan, Wood, Anselme and

Avery (2004) have argued that the rule should be simple: no market demand, no training.

Vocational training schemes, they add, should be oriented towards the local labour market of the host country, or towards employment opportunities in the country of origin in case of impending repatriation (ibid.).

According to the research participants, accessing educational and skills training activities was a long-term coping strategy. They regarded education and training as anti-conflict strategies, and as the principal means of making capital out of their asylum experience, and perceived education as a key to escape poverty. Most of the returnees thus recounted the great lengths they went to and the sacrifices they made to ensure that either their children or they could go to school or learn a new form of skill to help them in their quest to better their lives. For example, some of the returnees from Ghana noted that due to the limited space and lack of better facilities in the only Public Senior High School in the Buduburum community, some of them travelled to Accra, which is about 100 kilometres from the camp, every day for school. Others, who could not bear the cost of travelling, sometimes slept in public buildings during the week, returning to their homes in the camp on weekends. One returnee recounted: “At the beginning of the term of my first year at Accra Senior High School, I slept at the bus stations, and sometimes in the classrooms, which was illegal. Then a woman offered me her shop to sleep in, and gave me a stipend, since I was also providing security service for her products. The shop became my home for the next three years as I pursued my high school education” (Author’s Interview, Monrovia, 2009). Noting his appreciation for the woman’s offer, and the fact that nothing evil befell him during the period, the returnee added: “Those years were really difficult and, even though I slept

in a locked up room, it was a huge personal security risk, because of the possibilities of robbers attacking the shop and harming me or, even, taking my life” (ibid.).

With respect to the situation in Guinea, language and security conditions were the main barrier against returnees’ access to post-middle school education. Since the language of instruction in the Guinean schools is French, most of the returnees could not access educational institutions outside the refugee camps. As already discussed, the UNHCR supported refugee camp schools were from the primary to middle school level, with the expectation that secondary to post-secondary education would be provided for by the host state or the refugees themselves as was in the case of Ghana. For the returnees from Guinea, however, their inability to communicate in French meant they could not attend the Guinean Public Schools. Furthermore, the security situations in Guinea prevented them from freely moving out of the camp and settlement areas to access other opportunities for education or skills training outside what were provided for by the UNHCR and its other agencies. These two challenges not only constrained the refugees’ agency, but were also a barrier to their potential to increase a major cultural resource: formal education. The security situation in Guinea, as recounted, constrained not just the refugees but, also, other international organizations that are at the forefront of providing post secondary education for refugees around the world. Finally, Guinea’s international reputation, dented by long years of autocratic rule and long history of human right abuses, did not make the country a favourable place for other INGOs and educational institutions to get involved in the provision of education, as it did for the refugees in Ghana.

### 5.3.4 Asylum and Transformation of Returnees Social Resources

The pre-flight and flight phases, as described in Chapter Four, were periods of losses of social resources, such as the death and disappearance of family and friends, as well as a sense of belonging in a social network. Some of the losses, such as the death of a loved one, are permanent; however, others, including an individual's social networks, when mediated by opportunities in asylum can be recovered, renewed, and supplemented. This section pays attention to the volunteering activities of the refugees, reunion of friends and family, children born or adopted in asylum, contact with family and friends both within Liberia and in a different country of asylum than theirs. Finally, this section presents the findings of the research participants' contact with members of the host community through religious, professional or trade and educational activities, as well as their perceptions of the asylum community.

**Table 5.6. Returnees Volunteer Activities in Asylum**

Associational Group	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Education Committee	6	4
Health and Sanitation Committee	22	12
Neighbourhood Watch Committee	16	13
Peer Counselling	9	7
Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee	8	9
Religious Association	25	20
Welfare Committee	12	16

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

Volunteering by refugees, members of the host communities and people worldwide, has become a main feature of most of the refugee settlements around the world, especially in Africa. Engaging refugees as volunteers is a wonderful opportunity to get them involved in the daily activities of running refugee camps, cutting down the UNHCR's costs involved in hiring personnel, and helping the refugees to improve their social networks. As noted, the majority of my research participants before living in asylum were not involved in volunteering activities, and few were associated with religious activities. As the data indicates, however, each returnee was engaged in a volunteering activity, with a variety of options available to them.

This change notwithstanding, association with religious activities is highly meaningful for most of the returnees. Most of them noted that their religious association was mainly through active involvement in church activities, such as attending regular services, attending to one another's needs, and maintaining a close association with other members of the community. This observation is similar to that of Dick (2002:56) among Liberian refugees in Ghana. According to her, Liberians' involvement in the church is a ubiquitous feature of camp life: "Needing to re-orient their lives in exile around something familiar and powerful, many Liberians look through the lens of Christianity to see the world and to interpret their experiences"(ibid.). There are various reasons for their active interest in religion but, as the views expressed by the returnees indicate, the mutual assistance especially seems to fill essential needs.

Although the UNHCR encouraged the creation and formation of committees to facilitate the efficient maintenance of the settlements, the refugees decided which groups they associated with. That decision, most of them recounted, was based largely on the skills they had before their flight and the new skills they acquired in asylum. For example, most of the returnees

who volunteered for health and sanitation, peer counselling, and peace and conflict resolution committees decided, after completing their training, and if their performance was adequate, to join the committees; some of them became trainers for these committees as well. Finally, engaging and working among themselves as volunteers, according to most of the returnees, became a means of making new friends and establishing social networks that became helpful in their coping strategies, as well as aiding their abilities to overcome the personal and social challenges of living in exile.

**Table 5.7. Other Forms of Social Resource of Returnees in Asylum**

Social Resources	Country of Asylum	
	Ghana	Guinea
Contact with friends and family	15	26
Contact with friends and family outside Liberia and country of asylum	25	4
Contact with friends and family within Liberia	5	14
Number of Children had in asylum	34	29
Intermarriage between refugees and host community	2	0

Source: Author's Interview with Liberian Returnees in the Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

Living in asylum, as can be seen in Table 5.7, also gave some of the returnees' opportunities to recover social resources, such as finding friends and family members within the asylum country or in a different country of asylum, as well within their country of origin. Most of the returnees noted they reunited with some friends and family, which they thought they had lost prior to flight. Most of them noted they received information about missing relatives and friends received from more recently arrived refugees from their community of origin. As well,

reunion of family and friends within the same asylum country was facilitated through the UNHCR refugee registration database. Another means used by the returnees to locate missing persons was word of mouth; or, sometimes, as one returnee noted, by sheer coincidence. One returnee related to me: “One day as I was walking around the settlement, I heard someone calling out my name very loud, and when I turned around I saw my best friend running towards me. I was very happy when I saw him, because I thought he was dead” (Author’s interview, Monrovia, 2009). Moreover, some returnees during the asylum period welcomed new additions to their family through child birth or adoption of some unaccompanied minors during the flight period. Some recounted how they did the honourable thing by adopting children whose parents had either died during the flight trip or, sometimes, children they found in the refugee settlement who had arrived unaccompanied and were unable to locate family members in the camp.

Finally, all the returnees noted that during this period they had various contacts with members of their asylum community. Some of the major activities that brought them together were economic, where some returnees from Ghana noted that they had formed a friendship with some Ghanaian traders, who introduced them to the profession and trained them in the activities. The returnees from Guinea told of working as labourers on the farm lands or in their homes and, sometimes, at the market where the returnees sold their farm produce. Other activities that brought the returnees and members of the host community together were religious ones, where they worshipped together, or educational activities, where they studied together or shared dormitories in boarding schools, mostly in Ghana.

The returnees further recounted the generosity of the host community expressed through their volunteering activities in the refugee settlement, especially in the early days of arrival; and

allocation of land, not just for housing, but for economic activities, such as farming and construction. Other returnees, especially from Guinea, recounted how some community individuals allowed them into their homes until they were allocated UNHCR shelters. Most returnees, from both countries, noted changes in the community's attitude towards them. After living in the community for a while they realized that its members no longer enthusiastically extended a helping hand towards them. For example, the returnees from Guinea noted how the landowners demanded payments for the land allocated to them for farming, and those who could not afford it were kicked off. They added that since the price was not regulated, the landlords charged them exorbitantly, most of time leaving them no option but to give up the land and work as farmhands for the landlords, who underpaid them compared to their Guinean colleagues. The returnees could not report their predicament to the Guinean authorities, because they believed that the officers would arrest them for working without permits. Finally, the study identified the security conditions of the asylum country as a main constraint on the returnees' contact with members of the host community. This is principally true in the case of Guinea, after the so-called government crackdown on its security threats: which, as described, targeted the refugees. This action by both government and community members resulted in the UNHCR decision to move all the refugees into a camp, and restrictions on their movement, which hindered their contact with the communities.

Although there were asylum conditions that constrained and operated against their abilities to gain and transform their resources, the returnees noted that sometimes the constraints were personal (as associated with the individual and not the environment): such as language barriers and different religious orientations, automatically limited their contact with their asylum

communities. For example, returnees from Ghana noted that communicating with Ghanaians was quite frustrating, because they did not speak any of the local languages, and even fewer Ghanaians understood Liberian Pidgin English. Returnees from Guinea noted, moreover, that since they are Christians, the majority of their host population being Muslims constrained them in their community engagement at religious levels. Their inability to communicate in French limited their encounters with the host community through educational institutions. The personal constraints on the refugees and returnees account for the limited intermarriages between them and their host community. They are also evidence of the low level of social integration experienced by the refugees in their host community.

#### **5.4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The observations from the two cases presented in this chapter lead us to return to the study's conception of factors of conducive and less-conducive asylum structures and their implication on returnee's resources. It was noted in Chapters 2 and 3 that to explain the transformation (gains and losses) in returnees resources, examination of security, political and refugee policies and practices of the host state are vital because although the refugee returnee's agency was consequential, these factors act as either constrains or opportunities. Moreover, the study defined conducive asylum as when asylum states are politically stable, enjoy good international reputation and not engaged in its own conflict or as part of the conflict that led to the refugee situation. The study further hypothesised (H2 a, H2b) that under these factors associated with conducive asylum, the potential for gains in returnee resources are higher. It was

further suggested that the reverse of these factors will act as a constraint and account for lesser resource gains and/or loss of resources.

Therefore, from the analysis of the two asylum countries in this chapter, it becomes clear that, there are two main ways that refugee returnees who experience resource losses due to the forced nature of their flight experience can simultaneously experience resource gains during the asylum phase.

First is the overall security and political conditions of the host country as a factor in evaluating asylum practices. Following from the discussion, it is clear that there are similarities between the contents of the refugee policies and laws of the two asylum states. However, the internal challenges arising out of insecurity, lack of internal and international support for the authoritarian government and limited international support for the Guinean government, even with the refugee question, accounts for its not so progressive asylum practices, which this study argues served as a constraint on the returnees, resulting in losses of resources with fewer opportunities for gains. Some of the asylum constraints as experienced by returnees from Guinea include their limited access to secondary and post-secondary education, resettlement opportunities and their accompanying benefit of material resources through remittances and skills training.

Second is through services provided with such comprehensive coverage and ease of access thus reducing the restriction on returnees choices. The most obvious are education and skills training, health, shelter and access to job opportunities, but famine relief and food for work, when needed, also belong here. The importance of education and skills training for refugees cannot be overemphasized. As rightly observed by various sources, providing a refugee

with skills and education enhances their coping skills during asylum and for the future.

Elaborating on the cost of depriving refugees' education and skills, a former UNHCR High Commissioner Lubbers noted "a refugee who goes without education cannot look forward to a more productive and prosperous future... A refugee who is unable to attend school or vocational training courses is more likely to become frustrated and involved in illegitimate activities. A refugee who remains illiterate and inarticulate will be at the serious disadvantage in defending his or her human rights" (UNHCR 2001, Foreword). Providing education and skills training is thus a forward looking venture whose benefits extends beyond the refugee returnee's reintegration activities to include such beneficiaries as the home and host state.

However, host states in most developing countries, including the two under review, continue to argue that they do not have the resources to cater to this livelihood needs of refugees although they advocate self-sufficiency for refugees (Crisp, 2000). While this is an effort clearly beyond the economic capability of these countries, it is equally important that the host states engage in practices and adopt strategies that address the gap between their policies and practices. As noted above, the provision of education and skills training for refugees is not omitted from the refugee policies and regulations of these countries considering the fact they claim an adherence and cooperation with the global refugee regime and the OAU Convention. For example, as part of the Ghana Refugee Law, the entire OAU Convention is attached to the policy indicating the intention to abide by the provisions of the convention including that of providing education. Moreover, instances where the state explicitly acknowledges the right of refugees to education, it is not accompanied by guidelines and regulations as compared to for example, the elaborated guidelines in status determination or right to employment provisions.

Furthermore, with respect to Ghana, the stable political and security conditions and the country's international reputation as noted above opened up the space for external actors including organizations and individuals who filled the policy and practice void in terms of refugee's access to education and skills training. Thus, as demonstrated above, the higher number of returnees from Ghana as compared to those in Guinea who were able to access post-secondary education was due to the aid received from other actors other than the government of Ghana. Furthermore, the decision by the University of Ghana to for example, reduce the cost of tuition for refugees enabled the UNHCR and DAFI to increase their support to more refugees, which included some members of the study's research participants.

Moreover, as demonstrated in this chapter, refugees, like everyone, manage risks, cope and adopt strategies to better their lot. It is important to note that the ability of refugees varies, and it is never the same for each member of a refugee community. As argued by this study, individual resources play a major factor in a refugee's agency, which are demonstrated through their choices, capacities, learning, and transformation. These resources encourage each of the refugee returnees in their ability to cope, and to identify opportunities and surmount the various challenges and constraints imposed by their new status as refugees, living in communities with new rules and regulations and with the losses incurred during their flight. However, they encountered a range of barriers which as discussed above were not only structural but personal (as related to the returnee) as well which blocked their access and utilization of opportunities in the host society. A notable personal constraint among the returnees was associated with their cultural values such as religious beliefs and language compatibility (language for conducting business). As was revealed by some of the returnees from Guinea, their inability to communicate

in the official language of Guinea limited their access to Guinean educational institutions. These personal constraints notwithstanding, the data on returnee resource from the two groups of returnees supports Hypothesis 2. That the general conducive asylum structures of the Ghanaian context accounts for the relatively higher material and cultural resource gains of refugees exiled there compared to their colleagues who were in Guinea.

Finally, the empirical evidence from the two cases supports the study's assertion that asylum policies and practices are not static and that the presence and activities of the refugees is very important factor in the host state responses and structures of granting asylum. First as noted in the discussion, prior to the arrival of the refugees, both Ghana and Guinea did not have asylum policies thus they relied on the global refugee regime stipulations to grant asylum to the refugees. Secondly, it was noted that the state's adoption of refugee laws and policies clearly aligns with the global refugee regime requirements although in practice they varied. Indeed, it is important to note both asylum states, during various periods of the presence of refugees, responded with both restrictive (negative) and open (positive) policies. The choice of a particular response, as demonstrated in this chapter, is a reflection of the political, security and socio-economic conditions of the host state combined with international relations and the presence and activities of the refugees. This conclusion contrast with Kibreab's (1991:24) findings that the African governments' "overriding concern" in the formulation and implementation of asylum policies is to minimize cost and maximize benefits to themselves and their citizens. Thus consistent with Jacobsen's (1996) and Milner's (2009) conclusion of the inadequacy of single factor analysis, this chapter notes the combination of domestic and international conditions and factors associated with the refugee situation accounts for the varied asylum practices.

The next chapter examines process of refugee repatriation from Ghana and Guinea to Liberia and the transformation in resources of the returnees.

## **Chapter 6. Returning to Liberia: Structures of Repatriation, Refugee Agency and Resource Transformation**

### **6.0. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter examines the dynamics of the repatriation of refugees from Ghana and Guinea to Liberia, and identifies the factors that contributed to its complexity and the role of refugees, in the decision for and practice of repatriation. The structures involved and the role of the agents (returnees) who contributed to the variations among the Liberian refugees' repatriation from the two countries of asylum (Ghana and Guinea), and why the process was easier to manage in the case of Guinea than in that of Ghana, are emphasized. Why did some Guinean refugees repatriate of their own volition following the announcement of the signing of the Peace Accord, while the majority of the returnees from Ghana opted to wait for assistance from relief organizations and governments? In addition, the chapter examines the roles of the UNHCR and the Liberian, Ghanaian and Guinean governments in the repatriation process, respective policies and assistance given to returnees to help them reintegrate. Furthermore, this chapter presents the findings of the interviews with returnees regarding their participation in the process and their resource stock upon their return. The analysis in this chapter is mainly based on interviews conducted by the author, but also relies extensively on documents from the UNHCR, the home and asylum governments of refugees, literature and policy documents on repatriation in general, and particularly such documents on Liberian returnees from Ghana and Guinea.

The issues surrounding the decisions that have to be made throughout the repatriation process are often highly complex, and involve a variety of actors and factors. The attempt to model and examine the complex nature of the decisions to be made in the repatriation process

has resulted in two dominant discourses. One group consists primarily of game theorists, who contend that the focus should be the three main actors (asylum and home governments and the UNHCR) with higher capabilities; they thus discount any influence or contribution by the refugees (Zeager and Bascom, 1996; and Zeager, 1998). Contrary to the game theorists' approach is that of the group that proposes that refugees are important actors whose decisions are uniquely dominated by comparison of the conditions of the home country (Koser, 1997) with those of the asylum country. They are either pulled in by the new positives of the home country, or pushed out by its negative ones. Furthermore, as exemplified by Koser (1997), the single factor analysis only applies to situations of self-repatriation, and not during assisted repatriation. Thus, in his research into refugee repatriation in the Horn of Africa, Bariageber (2006) concluded that assisted repatriation is complex, while self-repatriation is simple.

The present study, by way of contrast, finds that irrespective of the type of repatriation, refugees are important agents and proactive actors, and their decision to return or not is not based wholly on comparing the asylum country with the home country. Repatriation decisions, as argued in this chapter, generally involve three main institutions: the host state, the home state, the UNHCR and the refugee as an actor, each of whom has their resources (capabilities), interest, and motivation and any of which might increase or diminish the chances of a consensual agreement. Exclusion of an actor and/or reduction of the factors involved to a single factor are not thereby, however, justified. This study therefore departs from both the game theorists' model for examining repatriation, Koser's (1997) argument that information is a critical variable only for self-repatriation, and Bariageber's (1999, 2006) assertion that assisted repatriation is complex while self-repatriation is simple. Thus following, the study's theoretical framework of the double

effect and constitutive relationship existing between structures (UNHCR and governments of asylum and home states return policies and practices) and the agency of the refugee returnees, this chapter argues that the refugees were not passive and did not act on impulse but thought and strategically made return decisions which not only transformed their resources but also altered the policy and practice (structures) of repatriation as implemented by the UNHCR, asylum and country of origin.

There are two main sections in this chapter: first, repatriation from the two asylum countries (Ghana and Guinea) to Liberia; second, the 60 returnees interviewed, including comparative examination of their resource pool upon arrival in Liberia. The first part addresses, the structures involved in the repatriation of Liberian refugees from Ghana and Guinea and the narratives of refugees return process. This includes the policies of the UNHCR, the asylum country and the country of origin. The second section describes the returnee resources as they arrived and the changes that occurred as a result of the refugee's choices and the structures that they encountered during the period of return which includes at the point of arrival in Liberia.

### **6.1. REPATRIATION OF LIBERAN REFUGEES**

The end of the 14 years of civil war has created conditions for refugees to return to Liberia. The global refugee regime and the refugee laws and policies of Ghana and Guinea already described stipulate the voluntary nature of repatriation as a requirement. Studies of refugees demonstrate that they respond differently to the option of repatriation (Koser, 1997). There are, however, two main broad circumstances under which they decide to return. First is when the conditions that caused them to flee have ceased (Rogee and Akol, 1989). Other studies

reveal that refugees sometimes decide to return to their country of origin in spite of existing hostilities (Larkin et al. 1991).

Some of Liberia's nationals living in asylum around the world, particularly in the West African sub-region, returned in 1998. According to the UNHCR, the security situation improved after the 1997 presidential and parliamentary elections that brought Charles Taylor to power. By June 1998 an estimated 50,000 refugees had repatriated by boat, truck, and bus and on foot, mainly from the two largest host countries, Ivory Coast and Guinea. Liberian officials estimated that a further 180,000 people may have 'spontaneously' returned without any official help (Refugees Magazine, June 2008). The process was slow to start, mainly because of limited funding, which, according to the UNHCR, was primarily due to the world's attention shifting to the Yugoslavian crisis, leaving little funding for Africa and, in particular, for the repatriation of Liberian refugees (*ibid.*). With limited funds and the resumption of the conflict in Liberia in 2000, the process of repatriation had to be halted, because it had once again become a refugee producing country.

The second wave of repatriation, which is the main focus of the current study, was triggered by the end of the war in 2003, after Liberia's signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Accra on August 18. With the various warlords agreeing to end hostilities, the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was established on October 1, 2003; in conjunction with the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) it began the process of disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRRR) in December 2003. The CPA mandated the NTGL to work with the international community, in

designing and implementing a plan to assist with the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Liberian refugees (Article XXX of the CPA).

### **6.1.1. The Accra CPA**

The most significant provisions of the Accra CPA for the purposes of this discussion are contained in Part Seven, Article XIV, Part Nine, Article XXX, Refugees and Displaced Persons and Annex 4 Allocation of Cabinet Positions, Public Corporations and Autonomous Agencies/Commissions under the NTGL. The main thrust of the Accra Agreement is to establish a peace that will outlast international military enforcement of ceasefire lines and zones of separation and operation by the various groups engaged in the civil war. The agreement contains important provisions, explained below, and aimed at countering the effect of displacement and at promoting rebuilding and reintegration of Liberians.

### **6.1.2. Agreement on Refugees and Displaced Persons**

Part Nine, Article XXX of the CPA contains the agreement on Refugees and Displaced Persons, which has three main sub-sections. Furthermore, the right to safe return of refugees and displaced persons is firmly established in Article XIV, Section 4. Section 1a of the Article XXX mandates the NTGL with the assistance of the International Community to design and implement a plan for voluntary return and reintegration of Liberian refugees and IDPs. Section 2 of Article XXX notes the right of refugees and displaced persons to freely choose their county of return and to receive assistance to do so. In support of these rights the signing parties committed themselves, in the final section of the agreement, to supporting 'peaceful co-existence amongst

returnees and non-returnees in all Counties'. The signing parties also promised to work towards the establishment of political, economic, social and security conditions that are conducive to return, and to facilitate repatriation assistance to all returnees.

With respect to the practical aspect, the NTGL, as noted, was tasked to seek international assistance to develop a plan for the safe return of refugees. Recognizing that self-return of refugees and IDPs could begin even as the peace agreement was yet to be signed; the CPA mandated the UN, the International Community and the interim Government of Liberia (iGOL) to assist them. The assisted repatriation process was, however, set to begin 30 days after the installation of the NTGL (see Annex 3 of the CPA). Furthermore, under Annex 4 of the Agreement: "Allocations of Cabinet Positions, Public Corporations and Autonomous Agencies/Commissions under the NTGL", the LRRRC -- the Liberian government agency responsible for refugees and returnees -- was allocated to MODEL. Thus, until an elected government came into office, the MODEL, which formed part of the NTGL, had the responsibility of reconstituting the LRRRC to serve as the local partner of the UNHCR in implementing the repatriation process.

### **6.1.3. The UNHCR Repatriation Program**

Although the CPA did not indicate the UNHCR as the main international agent for return of refugees, the latter responded to the former's call for international assistance to support the process. The UNHCR has a reputation for helping governments organize repatriation and is the lead agent for the refugees. To pursue its objective of helping Liberians return in safety and dignity, the UNHCR instituted a three-year operational plan, called the '4Rs Transitional

Planning Approach'.<sup>111</sup> It recognized that return is linked with security and developmental issues; the UNHCR thus signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the UNDP to help implement the agenda. Furthermore, the UNHCR partnered with the American Refugee Committee (ARC), the Foundation for African Development Aid (ADA), Dutch Refugee Assistance (ZOA), the Christian Child Fund (CCF) and the Liberia Opportunity Industrialization Center (LOIC).

The UNHCR emphasized that repatriation, as established by the Accra CPA, had to be voluntary, and that the safety and dignity of the returnees had priority. To achieve this objective, the UNHCR prepared and signed tripartite agreements of governing conditions and modalities of voluntary repatriation with Governments of asylum countries and the NGTL. The agreements address “the rights of returning refugees and outlined specific protection guarantees in the implementation of the repatriation and reintegration programs” (UNHCR-Monrovia, 2003:59). The various agreements with the asylum countries signed in 2004 also established the responsibilities of all parties.

To facilitate the returnees' safety, the UNHCR said the communities and countries of return should have an UNMIL presence, and that the areas ought to be in the process of disarmament, free of hostility, and with preparations for elections in progress. Additionally, the UNHCR demanded unhindered access to the population on the part of humanitarian agencies (ibid.). The promotional phase of the repatriation exercise included the UNHCR informing refugees that in the places of return conditions for them to repatriate had been met. It also conducted interviews, counselled and registered potential return candidates. These actions

---

<sup>111</sup>The 4Rs stand for Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction.

facilitated the UNHCR's organization of orderly return movements and ensured adequate reception arrangements in Liberia.

The UNHCR promotional campaigns, which took place in the various asylum countries, gave potential returnees the information they needed to make their decision. These campaigns were very important because, in all of the aforementioned processes and agreements, refugees were not involved, yet the decision of whether to join the process was ultimately the refugee's own. The information campaigns focused on the modalities of the repatriation and reintegration operation, including: the beneficiaries of the repatriation/reintegration program; procedures and criteria for facilitated repatriation; the time frame for the process; registration procedures; transportation arrangements, including maximum luggage allowance; pre-departure health examination requirements; agreed border crossing points for organized movements; measures to prevent family separation en route and upon return; special arrangements for vulnerable persons and accommodation facilities in transit centres; and temporary settlements for those in need of UNHCR-assisted accommodation. Accordingly, all 60 returnees interviewed said they had either attended the information sessions or spoken privately to a UNHCR representative about the repatriation process which formed a major part of their return decisions/plans.

Finally, the UNHCR instituted individual, family and community programs to aid the process of return and (re)integration. It assisted in transportation from the countries of asylum to a place of the refugees' choosing in Liberia. In addition, each returnee received a blanket, a sleeping mat, a bucket, and 5 USD to cover the cost of internal transportation. In addition each family head received one mosquito net, plastic sheets, a kitchen set, and a lantern. Women above 12 years of age also received two bars of soap of 250g each, two pairs of underwear, and one

piece of Lapa (cloth) (UNHCR, Monrovia: June 2005). At the community level, the UNHCR's development partners, which included the UNDP, the WFP, the JICA, and the IRCC, helped with education, health care services, agriculture and food security, legal protection and other income generating activities.

#### **6.1.4. Liberian Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC)**

The LRRRC is an organization of the government of Liberia, enacted into law on November 1, 1993, by the Interim Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Liberia. Its policy body comprises the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Planning and Economic Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Justice. The resident representative of the UNHCR in Liberia is a non-voting member on the board of the LRRRC. The Commission is managed by an executive director, who is appointed by the President of Liberia. However, prior to the elections in 2005, in accordance with the CPA, the MODEL rebel group was assigned the responsibility of reconstituting the Commission to enable it play a part in the repatriation of refugees from asylum and the return of IDPs to their communities. In 2006, after the inauguration of Johnson-Sirleaf as President of Liberia, the Commission was reconstituted, and the President appointed the executive and deputy directors to oversee the affairs of the LRRRC.

The primary function of the Commission is to formulate policies designed to ensure the welfare of refugees, IDPs, and Liberian returnees. The LRRRC is the local partner of the UNHCR in the return of both Liberian refugees from asylum and IDPs to their communities (LRRRC-Monrovia 2009). To achieve its objective the Commission, which has its head office in Monrovia, has seven regional offices and 15 satellite offices in all 15 counties of Liberia. To

better serve the returnees, the LRRRC deployed most of its field staff to counties with large numbers of them, including Lofa, Bong, Gbarpolu, Nimba, Maryland and Grand Gedeh.

The Commission further instituted a number of supportive activities, including capacity building and skills training, and employment referral services linking returnees with institutions. It offered protection services to returnees seeking to reclaim their property through negotiation, settlement and litigation. To further enhance their employment opportunities, the Commission put returnees' education and skills on an online database that can be accessed by employers. Finally, to encourage and facilitate the informational elements of repatriation, the LRRRC with the support of UNMIL, launched a website and a radio program, titled "Home Sweet Home" (LRRRC, Monrovia, 2008).

## **6.2. REPATRIATION OF LIBERIAN REFUGEES FROM GUINEA**

The war in Liberia became a major security concern for Guinea in two distinct ways. First, the Liberian war as discussed above demonstrated a high potential of spreading across the sub-region thus it was in Guinea's own interest to ensure that it did not fall into the same war trap as Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast. Second, the high number of Liberian refugees in Guinea with little international support became a concern and according to the Guinean government was a threat to its national security (Milner, 2009). The external threat to its security coupled with the internal political and economic insecurities of the Guinean government became the driving force for the two conflicting roles it played during the Liberian war. First, as an ECOMWAS member state, it helped broker peace among the warring factions and was the only Francophone West African country to contribute troops to the first ECOMOG peace keeping mission in Liberia

(Adebajo, 2002; LTRC, 2009). Secondly, Guinea during the Liberian second war became a major player, through its support for the LURD group, which fought against Taylor's government (Milner 2005). Therefore once the Liberian war ended with Taylor's flight into exile, Guinea turned its attention to its remaining so-called internal security threat i.e. 'the presence of refugees'. Furthermore, since majority of the refugees considered asylum as a temporary solution, the end of the war was regarded as an opportunity to return to Liberia. It is within this asylum structures and factors relating to the individual refugee, that decisions to return either as self or assisted when and what to carry along were arrived at by the returnees.

The UNHCR's organized program of voluntary repatriation (VP) for Liberian refugees officially began in October 2004. The process of assisted repatriation from Guinea began with the signing of a tripartite agreement (MOU) between the UNHCR and the governments of Guinea and Liberia. The MOU laid down the ground rules for the process of repatriation and allowed the UNHCR in both Guinea and Liberia to be the lead agency for the process. The first convoy of 1,280 returnees arrived in Liberia on November 15, 2004 (Fontanini and Kountara, 2004). Below is a photograph of the first convoy of returnees' crossing over the St. John Bridge, which marks the border between Guinea and Liberia. Numerous convoys crossed into Liberia from various border sharing points between Guinea and Liberia.

**Figure 6.1. Photography of the first Convoy of Liberian Returnees from Guinea (2004)**



Source: UNHCR/F.Fontanini (2004)

**Table 6.1 Figures of Liberian Refugee Repatriation from Guinea: 2003-2010**

Year	Refugee Population at the start of the year <sup>112</sup>	Number of Refugees Repatriated at the end of the year	Percentage of Refugee population Repatriated
2004	149,600	22,500	15
2005	127,254	29,600	23.3
2006	54,810	54,206	98.9
2007	21,816	6123	28.1
2008	14,847	421	2.8
2009	11,097	110	1
2010	11,120	116	1

Source: Compiled from UNHCR Statistical Year Books 2005-2010

<sup>112</sup>This column includes population changes resulting from administrative corrections, adjustments as a result of registration, new arrivals, births and deaths and the occurrence of the two other durable solutions (Resettlement and reintegration). Therefore, in most cases the population at the start of the New Year does not equal the total population minus numbers repatriated in the previous year.

According to the UNHCR, at the end of the official repatriation process in 2007, a total of 112,429 Liberian refugees had returned. From 2008 to 2009, the UNHCR notes, 531 more refugees returned to Liberia. As can be seen in Table 6.1 above, at the beginning of the 2010 the Liberian refugee population in Guinea had decreased from 149,600 in 2004 to 11,097. In 2006, the UNHCR estimated that 35,000 Liberians will return (UNHCR Notes, 2006), however, as the Table 6.1 indicate almost double that number returned. The high rate of return during this period was associated with the improved political and security conditions as well as the successful inauguration of a democratically elected government. These conditions which were considered positive developments became the rationale for the UNHCR, BNCR (Guinea's refugee organization), and LRRRC's encouragement for Liberians to their country of origin.

Furthermore, the security and political conditions of Guinea also played a role in facilitating the return of significant numbers of Liberian refugees. For example, in January 2007, the Trade Unions began a strike action which resulted in thousands of Guineans demonstrating and demanding that President Conte steps down from power. The strike and subsequent Guinean government's response of imposing a curfew and martial law further heightened security tensions in the country.<sup>113</sup> The security situation, according to UNHCR officials, paralyzed economic activities and limited the organization's access to the camps (UNHCR-Conakry Notes, 2007). The refugees were therefore caught in the middle of the security crises in Guinea which resulted in more refugees registering to join the UNHCR assisted repatriation exercise (ibid.) while others took the risk of self-returning.

---

<sup>113</sup>By February, 2007 it was reported that about 100 Guineans had been killed by government forces. See Guinea: Change or Chaos Africa Report No. 121 (International Crisis Group)  
<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/west-africa/guinea/Guinea%20Change%20or%20Chaos.pdf>

The higher numbers of Liberian refugees that returned from Guinea has some analysts concluding that the repatriation of Liberian refugees from Guinea was successful relative to that of Ghana (Essuman-Johnson, 2011). Nevertheless, as Table 6.1 indicates Guinea still has a little over 11,000 Liberian refugees that have not benefited from either the resettlement or repatriation options of durable solution. In line with its mandate, the UNHCR began exploring the third durable solution option, i.e. integration into the Guinean society for the remaining Liberian refugees. Thus, since August 2007, the UNHCR has been working with the Guinean government in the creation of integration sites and in the drafting of a new asylum legislation regarding protection of refugees, asylum seekers and those seeking to remain and integrate in this country (UNHCR, 2010).<sup>114</sup> Barring any future challenges, the UNHCR hopes the implementation of the local integration process will help draw the curtain on the Liberian refugee issue in Guinea (ibid.).

### **6.2.1 Returnees Journey from Guinea to Liberia**

Returnees from Guinea began arriving just after the signing of the ceasefire agreement in August 2003. According to the UNHCR-Liberia (2004), returnees from Guinea began arriving in Lofa County as early as November 2003. However, until the UNHCR facilitated return began in October 2004, there were no reception centres for these returnees, and no data exist on the actual numbers that arrived in Liberia during this period. Among the 30 research participants, four male returnees noted that they arrived in Liberia before the UNHCR facilitated process began. They

---

<sup>114</sup> See “UNHCR helps Guinea ease the local integration of Liberian refugees” Available online <http://www.unhcr.org/46c474702.html>

came to their towns by walking an average of six hours, with the objective of returning early to prepare a place to receive their households (Author's interview with returnee, Voinjama, 2009). Since the UNHCR had yet to begin its repatriation program, returnees who chose to arrive during this period did not benefit from the aid packages just described. When they subsequently demanded their share, they were informed that since they had arranged and undertaken their own arrival they did not meet the criteria for receiving aid packages (Author's interview with returnee, Voinjama, 2009). Some of the returnees consider the regulation unfair. Others suggested that the stipulation was an infringement on their rights. Thus in the words of one of the returnees "it is my right to receive the package since the UNHCR says it for Liberians who return from exile and I am one of them" (ibid).

The UNHCR officials in Voinjama, though, indicated that later in the repatriation process self-returnees did receive packages once they reported to their office upon their arrival and turned in their refugee card. However, most of the 11 participants who chose to self-return to Liberia did not benefit from the individual packages because they could not present refugee cards to the UNHCR. One returnee asked: "How do I return something I was not given in the first place?" (Author's interview: 2009). This procedure used by the UNHCR might have been efficient if the asylum country had readily issued the refugees with ID cards. As discussed, however, the Guinean government never fulfilled its promise of issuing the refugees with identity cards, and the UNHCR was not allowed to fill that void. It is important to point out that although the 11 returnees were not recipients of individual aid packages, they noted they had benefited from both the family returnee packages and the community projects, such as schools

and health facilities, by the UNHCR, the JICA and the IRC, and the annual seed distribution programs organized by the WFP in conjunction with the Liberian government.

Furthermore, their decision to self-return meant that most of them lost material resources, such as cash, animals, seeds and seedlings, and agricultural tools at the Guinean border. According to the returnees, they had to surrender these resources because the Guinean authorities told them “they could not send anything out of Guinea since they arrived in asylum without them”, and some had to pay before they were allowed to exit the Guinea border (Author’s interview with Returnee, Voinjama, 2009). This statement was supported by a UNHCR official, who noted that border officers imposed various duties on some personal effects they considered durable. He further suggested this practice might have been attributable to ignorance on the part of the immigration, border, and other relevant officers of the tripartite agreement between the governments of the countries of asylum, Liberia and the UNHCR (Author’s interview with a UNHCR Official, Voinjama, 2009).

Most of the self-returnees said they arrived with very little, and had to begin all over again. A few pointed out that they were not strangers to starting over; in fact, this time it felt less challenging, because they had experience they could rely on. When asked why they chose to self-return, since they knew the consequences, such as not receiving returnee aid, and the fact that their security could not be guaranteed in the community of return, they indicated that they needed to come and assess what was left of their villages and houses, and to prepare the place to receive their household and members of their community: especially the women, children, vulnerable and aged. Furthermore, some noted that security and economic challenges in Guinea made them less secure, so that once they heard that the war had ended, they decided that they had

to return to Liberia. In addition, they all noted that they consulted and discussed their return decisions with family, friends and UNHCR officials. Thus in their opinion, they carefully planned and initiated their return journey.

Some returnees continued to self-return to Liberia during the period of the UNHCR assisted repatriation program. Of the 11 who did not join that effort, seven arrived even as the assisted repatriation process was in progress. Five members of this group said that the process and the timing of the departure of the UNHCR convoys were not favourable because they needed to return earlier in order to clear their land for the farming season in Liberia. The remaining two returnees noted that their declining to participate in the assisted repatriation process was a result of their frustration with the UNHCR procedures, such as the timetable for repatriation, the category of people allowed in each convoy as well as both the weight limitations and item restrictions to travel along.

Furthermore, the 19 returnees that participated in the assisted repatriation noted that they each received the individual returnee aid packages at the reception centres before they left for their communities with the aid of the Liberian government and the UNHCR. Their inability to take all their possessions was also a major concern for this group, as was the fact that they had to leave behind crops yet to be harvested and the unsold products from their farms. Two female returnees explained that they had to forgo their wages because their employers kept postponing the date for paying them, and they had no option but to return without their money. One returnee complained: “Some Guinean employers deliberately stopped paying us for the products they purchased or wages for work done because they knew that we were being repatriated” (Author’s interview, Voinjama, 2009).

### **6.3. REPATRIATION OF LIBERIAN REFUGEES FROM GHANA**

The Government of Ghana has been an active actor in seeking both military and political solutions to the Liberian war. It sponsored the peace process and supports the ongoing peace building process, of which the return of Liberian refugees is considered an important element. Similar to the case of assisted repatriation exercise from Guinea, before its implementation in Ghana, a tripartite agreement between the governments of Liberia (GOL), Ghana (GOG) and the UNHCR was signed in 2004. The agreement defined the procedures for the process and upheld the notion of non-coercion of the repatriation as stipulated by the global refugee regime. Furthermore, it set out guarantees for the refugees' return in safety and with dignity (UNHCR-Monrovia, 2004).

In 2004, prior to the Liberian presidential elections, Voluntary Repatriation (VR) was strongly advocated, but fewer refugees responded and joined in the process. As can be seen from Table 6.2 below, at the end of 2005, less than 8% of the total Liberian refugee population in Ghana had returned. Thus, in 2006, with only one year to end the official repatriation process, the UNHCR, GOG and GOL embarked on another massive campaign to encourage the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees from Ghana. The campaign included GOL officials visiting the Buduburum refugee camp and explaining the need for the refugees to return and exhorting them to do so in order to contribute to the rebuilding of Liberia. This led to the first ever visit of a GOL delegation led by the Minister of Internal Affairs, to the Liberian refugee settlement in Ghana since the beginning of the VP in 2004 (UNHCR-Accra, 2006). The tour of the refugee camp was also a forum to inform the refugees of government policies and projects to help the

refugees integrate after return and opportunities available in Liberia (Author's interview with LRRRC Protection official, Monrovia, 2009).

Another program organized in collaboration with the Governments of Liberia and Ghana and the UNHCR was dubbed "Go and Tell", where some selected returnees went back to the camp to showcase to the refugees the opportunities that exist in Liberia (UNHCR-Accra, 2006). According to the LRRRC, a major outcome of this campaign was that 2007 recorded the highest numbers of Liberian refugees repatriating from Ghana, where 41 per cent of the refugee population returned to Liberia. Although the increase in returnee figures from Ghana was a boast for the repatriation exercise, this did not result in the expectation of the GOL, GOG and UNHCR who had anticipated more than 80 per cent return numbers (LRRRC official *op ct.*).

Furthermore, there seem to be two contesting reasons for the record numbers of refugees returning at the end of 2007. Although the officials claim GOL led activities as a significant variable, some of the returnees noted that both the UNHCR and GOG imminent decision to shut down the Buduburum camp was a factor in their return decision.

From the point of view of the governments of Ghana and Liberia, the main reasons for advancing repatriation were the end of the war, the successful conduct of elections in 2005 and the Presidential call for people and funds to aid with peacebuilding.<sup>115</sup> The UNHCR, on the other hand, cited logistical and budgetary constraints, and the support of the ECOWAS decision in favour of return. Most of the refugees preferred resettlement, though, and seemed unhappy about the repatriation program -- especially the returnee aid package (Essuman-Johnson, 2011). There

---

<sup>115</sup> See Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Inaugural Address, Jan. 16, 2006, available at [http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/inaugural\\_add\\_1.pdf](http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/inaugural_add_1.pdf).

appear to be differences between the official and the refugees' representations of the solution that best addresses what Ghana has referred to as its 'Liberian Refugee Problem' (Bartels, 2008).

The differences in the durable solution preference by refugees, the UNHCR and Ghana, came to the world's attention in 2008, when refugees protested to the UNHCR against the repatriation package offered to them and in their words a demand for better durable solution. Before the demonstration, a group of refugees calling themselves "Liberian Refugee Women with Refugee Concerns" sent a communication to UNHCR-Geneva requesting for a repatriation cash grant of 1000 (USD). They also cited their preference for resettlement to a Western country and opposed local integration. UNHCR officials in Ghana were notified of the communication, and explained to the refugees that their request could not be met due to budgetary constraints and that the official resettlement program had ended (UNHCR-Accra, 2008). However, the refugees embarked on more than a month of demonstration. They called on the UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations to meet their demand of 1000 (USD) to enable them return to Liberia and reiterated their non-acceptance of reintegration into Ghanaian society. The Government of Ghana, as discussed, saw the demand of the refugees as insulting and outrageous, and indicated that reintegration was indeed not even an option for the refugees (Bartels, op. ct.). Moreover to stop the protest -- which, according to the government, was illegal and disrupting traffic -- security forces arrested 16 Liberians, and deported them to Liberia, arguing that they were in the country illegally. Furthermore, to defuse the tension in the camp, some of the organizers of the protest were moved to a location about 100km east for about three weeks (Essuman-Johnson, 2011:122).

After defusing the tension and ensuring the safety of the refugees and Ghanaians living around the camp area, another tripartite commission was convened in hopes of finding a lasting solution to the remaining Liberian refugee caseload in Ghana (ibid.). The agreement declared that Liberians must leave Ghana within the next six months. As noted by Holzer (2012), “the time frame was impractical because UNHCR did not have the means to facilitate the repatriation of such large group in six months (p.14)”. Subsequently, Ghana agreed to reduce the numbers to 50 per cent and an extension to seven months. Although Ghana never enforced this agreement, a little over eight thousand Liberians returned to Liberia during this period. This number is significant because the UNHCR had declared 2007 as the end of its assisted repatriation, yet it revived its earlier decision and provided support to this higher numbers of returnees. Another reform of the practice of the repatriation as a result of the refugee protest is in relation to the UNHCR’s extension of the period beyond what Ghana had demanded at the tripartite meeting to additional 2 years. This was achieved as a result of the firing of the Minister of Interior by the GOG, which “diminished Ghana’s position on enforcing the agreement” (ibid.) especially with respect to the period of repatriation. Although the GOG did not indicate the reason for the dismissal of the minister, it was reported that among others the ex-minster’s alleged mishandling of the Liberian refugee protest might have cost him his job.<sup>116</sup> While it is not clear the reason for the minister’s dismissal, his exit gave the UNHCR an opportunity to extend the period of the repatriation to 2009.

---

<sup>116</sup> See General News May 28, 2008 “Kwamena Bartels Dismissed!” available online at <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=144284>

Another reform in the practice of repatriation from Ghana was that the UNHCR began granting of cash (100 USD for adults and 50 USD for children). This is a far cry from the demand of the refugees, however it represents a shift in the UNHCR assisted repatriation of Liberian refugees. For example, refugees that repatriated prior to 2008 did not receive cash grants; they were given 5 USD for cost of transportation from the airport to their final destination. Eventually cash grant became part of the UNHCR standard returnee aid package to Liberian refugees' returnees from the various asylum countries in West Africa (Author's interview with UNHCR Official, Monrovia, 2009). It is important to point out that cash grant as part of repatriation and reintegration package for returnees is not new but is consistent with UNHCR's increasing focus on cash as an incentive for return (Haver, 2009).<sup>117</sup> For example, during the 1990s, the UNHCR gave cash grant of 50 USD to Cambodian returnees, considered unconventional but it was successful. Indeed, it was credited in part for enabling the large repatriation of 370,000 refugees within a thirteen month period before the May 1993 elections (ibid. 6). However, as noted by Haver (2009) the first time it was implemented in Africa was in 2007, among the Burundian refugee returnees from Tanzanian. Furthermore the policy remains ad hoc and is inconsistently applied by the UNHCR.

Moreover, there are number of variations in the policy and practice of cash grants as implemented towards Liberians and the Burundian repatriation. First, as noted above, the UNHCR had not offered it to Liberians and the refugees believed that it was their right to receive grants as a supplement to the already existing repatriation and reintegration aid package.

---

<sup>117</sup> For extensive discussion of cash grant as a repatriation incentive sees Haver, K. (2009), "Money Matters: An evaluation of the use of cash grants in UNHCR's voluntary repatriation program in Burundi" UNHCR, PDES-Geneva.

Secondly, there is a variation in the amount received by the two groups of refugees; Liberians received 100 USD while a little less than a year before, Burundians from Tanzania were given 41 USD. Finally, in the case of the Burundian returnees, the initiative of giving cash grants was prompted by institutions such as the UNHCR, other UN agencies, and the governments of Tanzania and Burundi. Thus, the Burundian returnees became beneficiaries of the new policy which the various institutions had adopted as a “response to the critical slowdown in the numbers of repatriation” (Haver, 2009:7). However, as noted above, the Liberian refugees in Ghana proposed and embarked on political protest<sup>118</sup> to demand for the adoption of cash grant as part of the repatriation package.

Although the official repatriation program has concluded, the UNHCR continues to provide support for refugees who wish to return, but this is done by evaluating the merits of request by the individual refugees (Author’s interview with UNHCR Official, Monrovia: 2009) . Thus, at the beginning of 2010, there were more than 11, 000 Liberian refugees living in Ghana for whom durable solutions were yet to be found.

---

<sup>118</sup> For a discussion on the political actions of the Liberian refugees in the Buduburum settlement see Holzer E. (2012) “A Case Study of Political Failure in a Refugee Camp” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 1-25

**Table 6.2. Numbers of Liberian Refugee Repatriation from Ghana: 2004-2010**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Refugee Population at the start of the year<sup>119</sup></b>	<b>Number of Refugees Repatriated at the end of the year</b>	<b>Percentage of Refugee population Repatriated</b>
2004	42,500	1,900	4.5
2005	40,900	1,200	3
2006	38,700	4,665	12
2007	35653	14,641	41.1
2008	29967	8,816	29.4
2009	15,797	714	4.5
2010	11,476	181	1.6

Source: Compiled by author from UNHCR Statistical Year Books 2005-2010

### **6.3.1. Returnees Journey from Ghana to Liberia**

According to the 30 Liberian returnees from Ghana interviewed, deciding to return was not always as easy as juxtaposing the positive conditions of Liberia with the negative ones in Ghana, such as scarcity of jobs and difficult economic environment. One returnee related, “there were days that I really wanted to return and others that I decided not to, but to continue looking for resettlement opportunities” (Author’s interview, Monrovia, 2009). Furthermore, much like their colleagues from Guinea, consultations formed a major part of the decision-making process, although the final choice was theirs only. Therefore, most of the twenty-three (23) returnees that described return as voluntary noted that they had consulted friends and family members in Ghana, Liberia and abroad, as well as UNHCR officials. However, the five returnees that

---

<sup>119</sup>This column includes population changes resulting from administrative corrections, adjustments as a result of registration, new arrivals, births and deaths and the occurrence of the two other durable solutions (Resettlement and reintegration). Therefore, in most cases the population at the start of the New Year does not equal the total population minus numbers repatriated in the previous year.

described return as forced suggested they did not feel they were the ultimate decision-makers because the choices provided were limited. They noted the visits to the camps by the governments of Ghana and Liberia and UNHCR officials to give them information about repatriation always included threats of closing the camp once the official repatriation exercise ended. In addition, they contended that the withdrawal of services to the camp by both the UNHCR and the government of Ghana meant they had no option than to return.

Conversely the other two (2) returnees, who felt indifferent about the process, explained that given the choice, they would not have returned and did not prefer the option of reintegrating in Ghanaian society. Their desire was for resettlement however, since they no longer had that option, returning to Liberia was the best way to achieve that. They opined that they had returned to Liberia because they have the option to apply and migrate to any Western country without relying on their refugee status. In this situation, the decision to return, according to these two, was mainly based on the fact they that had exhausted the opportunity for resettling abroad as refugees, returning therefore, presented them with another opportunity to achieve their aim with a different status (as an economic migrant). The motivation was thus premised on factors that had nothing to do with either the pressures of negative conditions in Ghana or the positive conditions in Liberia to opt for return as a solution.

Other concerns for the returnees about returning to Liberia came to light during my interviews with the returnees in Monrovia. First, the length and magnitude of the Liberian civil war had destroyed houses and infrastructure, and many of the returnees knew that they had no houses to return to. Some noted that returning meant leaving behind their houses and economic security in Ghana to begin over. Furthermore, the 20kg luggage limitation of assisted

repatriation was said by most of the returnees to be a significant consideration in their decision to return. Most had lived in Ghana for well over 15 years, and had acquired personal belongings and materials for their business that they would have preferred to bring back with them. One lamented: “After completing my skills training in baking and pastry, I received a loan from an NGO which I used to purchase equipment for my bakery, and that provided me with economic independence in asylum; yet I could not bring along the majority of this stuff, so I had to give them away or sell some cheaply, and now I seem to have lost my means of survival” (Author’s interview: 2009). When further asked why she chose to return, knowing that she could not carry along all her business equipment, she responded: “I knew it was not going to be easy, but I did not want my children to be forever known as refugees, so I settled for a compromise, hoping that when I return to Liberia I might receive assistance to begin the business; and this time it was not going to be difficult, since I had the skill and experience of starting a business” (ibid). These were some of the realities of the choices some of the returnees had to make, which were not solely based on the conditions of the home country positively pulling or the conditions of asylum negatively pushing them out.

All but one of the returnees from Ghana interviewed for this study, arrived in Liberia by joining the UNHCR assisted repatriation. The returnees arrived in Liberia onboard either private airline flights, or the UNMIL aircraft for transporting UN personnel and goods from Accra-Ghana. The average flight trip from Accra to Monrovia is 2 hours, however, the returnees noted that factoring in the duration of travelling to and waiting at the airport and the security checks, the travel time was about 10 to 12 hours. Generally buses were arranged by the UNHCR to shuttle the refugees from the Buduburam settlement to the airport, however, some of the

returnees elected to travel on their own to the airport. According to 2 of the returnees, the decision to travel on their own to the airport was in part to avoid the constraints associated with the bus system such as number and weight of luggage regulation which they noted was not consistent with the airline stipulations.

Others noted the frustration of the lack of information about the flight where they sometimes arrived at the airport and were informed of either flight cancellation or change in flight date and/or time. The UNHCR and LRRRC noted that one of the challenges of transporting the refugees from Accra to Monrovia was the fact most of the refugees were not showing up at the airport, although they had registered and confirmed their flight itinerary (Author's interview with UNHCR and LRRRC Officials, Monrovia, 2009).

As part of the UNHCR assisted repatriation, refugees were given the option of shipping their assets that could not accompany them during the flight. However, this program was available to returnees who registered to return before 2007, two of the returnees interviewed for this study noted that they had participated in the program however, after 3 years they were yet to receive the items. According to the LRRRC protection official in Monrovia, some returnees received their items however, they were aware of others who gave up due to the long period it took for the ship to arrive in Monrovia. He further noted that other returnees have also failed to show up at the sea port to receive their items which are kept in a warehouse at the port.

#### **6.4. REPATRIATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF RETURNEE RESOURCES**

As with the process of flight, the process of repatriation, as just shown, led to changes in the resources of the returnees. However, as revealed below, due to the longer duration of refugee

preparation for the trip and the more organized process by both the refugees and respective institutions, the resource losses accrued as a result of the return was far less than during the flight phase. Following is a presentation of the data and a discussion on the resources of the 60 returnees interviewed for this study. Using the four resource categories of material, social, personal and culture, this section addresses the transformation (losses and gains) in the resources of the returnees as narrated to the researcher by the returnees.

#### **6.4.1 Returnees Material Resources**

Material resources broadly include money, movable assets and personal belongings of the returnees at the point of arrival in Liberia. The table below shows the numbers of returnees from the two asylum countries their material resource stock when they first arrived in asylum, and upon their arrival in Liberia. As can be seen from Table 6.3 below, the returnees arrived in Liberia with moveable assets such as car, bicycle, and most with tools and seeds to begin with their economic activity. Some of the business tools include personal computers, masonry and carpentry tools, sewing machines, and farming equipment such as machete and hoes and plants/seeds for planting. Furthermore, as can be seen from Table 6.3 each returnee from Ghana noted that they had cash in hand other than what they received from the UNHCR, however only 16 of the returnees from Guinea noted that they were in possession of personal cash.

Two plausible reasons account for the higher numbers of refugees returning with assets compared with the few that they arrived with in asylum. First it is in part due to the long stay in asylum coupled with the asylum structures of opportunities which enabled the refugees to accumulate these resources. Secondly, are a combination of the fact that the structures of return

is embedded with opportunities such as adequate time for preparation and the reduction of insecurity as a result of the cessation of the cause of flight. Under this condition, pressure was reduced substantially when compared with the flight phase, which enabled the returnees to consider and extensively consult or gather information about necessities and choices regarding what to take along or when to return. Finally, although, as noted in the table 6.3 below, most of the returnee's arrived in Liberia with some of their possessions, however, due to the constraint of either the option of transportation (air travel) or the border official's treatment, the returnees also noted material losses such as cash and heavy equipment/tools for business.

**Table 6.3. Returnees Material Resources After Return**

Material Resources	Ghana		Guinea	
	Arrival in asylum	Return to home country	Arrival in asylum	Return
Bicycle	0	0	2	1
Car	0	1	0	0
Clothing and personal effect	30	30	30	30
Money (cash in hand)	8	30	5	16
Plants/seeds/seedlings	0	0	0	17
Tools for business	0	14	0	7

Source: Author's Interview with Returnees in Voinjama areas and Monrovia: 2009

#### **6.4.2 Returnees Personal Resources**

In terms of their personal resources, each returnee noted that they were healthy and highly mobile. One male returnee from Guinea who is physically challenged noted that his movement is not limited since he can easily go wherever he wants with the aid of his stick. The healthy condition of the returnees contrasts with their health and mobility status upon arrival in asylum. As discussed, the majority of the refugees, especially those who went to Ghana via the naval ship, arrived very sick or tired or both. Those who went to Guinea arrived exhausted because of the long walk through the forest with little access to food or water. The positive change in the personal condition of the returnees is a testament to the effectiveness of the UNHCR and IRC health care programs for the refugees in the countries of asylum. Each of the 60 returnees interviewed said that they had free access to health care in the refugee settlements. One of the requirements of joining the organized repatriation, moreover, was a medical examination, paid for by the UNHCR. Most of the returnees were declared healthy. Indeed, one of the returnees from Ghana related that her participation in the pre-departure medical examination resulted in the detection of a medical condition which resulted in her undergoing surgery which was funded by the UNHCR.

#### **6.4. 3. Returnees Cultural Resources**

Cultural resources refers to the skills, formal educational status and occupational skills acquired during the asylum period. Tables 6.4 and 6.5 below represent the occupational skills and levels of formal education acquired by the returnees during the period of living in asylum. The data on the skills are presented as per the numbers of returnees who noted them as cultural

resources acquired during the asylum period. The average returnee acquired two skills during the period and, since peace building seminars are part of the UNHCR activities for refugees, it is no surprise that every returnee is found to have attained a certificate of participation in this seminar. Furthermore, the health care attendant programs were facilitated by the IRC in the refugee camps, and had the objective of training personnel for the refugee settlement health care facilities. Most of the returnees who received this skill were subsequently employed or became volunteers at the health centres in the camp. Indeed, two of the returnees from Ghana who became nurses were first trained as health attendants, and briefly volunteered in the Buduburum health clinic. Other material resources include educational certificates and other related school documents.

**Table 6.4. Returnees Cultural Resources after Return**

<b>Skills Acquired in Asylum</b>	<b>Ghana</b>	<b>Guinea</b>
Agricultural	3	7
Auto Mechanic	2	0
Baking and Pastry Art	6	0
Carpentry	5	11
Computer Hard/Soft Ware	6	0
Early Childhood Education	3	1
Electrician	2	0
Hair Stylist	5	0
Health Care Attendant	5	3
Literacy and Numbers (Night School)	0	3
Media (Radio and print)	2	0
Masonry	5	9
New Language	24	6
Peace Building Seminars	30	30
Peer Counselling	10	6
Tailoring	5	9

**Source: Author's Interview with Returnees in Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009**

As noted in Chapter Four, due to the limited time of flight preparation, although majority of the research participants were students, very few of them arrived in asylum with education related materials and documents. These documents according to the returnees are essential resources for future opportunities such as securing jobs and continuation of education. As can be seen in Table 6.4, 21 returnees from Ghana and 14 from Guinea noted that they arrived in

Liberia with educational materials such as books and diplomas. Although these numbers are higher compared to the numbers for flight phase (3 from Ghana and 1 from Guinea), some of the returnees noted losses mainly because of the weight of luggage restrictions especially as a result of travelling by air. According to them they threw away books and set fire to some of them because they were too heavy to carry along. This loss was considered severe by most of them either for their emotional attachment or the fact that it was a lost opportunity to hand over to others who might need them for their education.

With regard to language, as Table 6.4 indicates, 24 returnees related that they could hold a meaningful conversation in at least one Ghanaian language. Among the six returnees from Guinea who indicated that they had acquired a new language, two said they could have a meaningful conversation in French. The remaining four said they perfected their Liberian Pidgin English while in asylum. They noted that prior to fleeing Liberia, they did not speak English but I had very good conversations with them with little difficulty. A member of this group observed: “If this research had happened about 16 years ago, I would not have qualified, because I did not speak English then” (Author’s interview, Voinjama, 2009). The number of returnees from Ghana who had acquired new language skills being higher than the number from Guinea correlates strongly with differences in asylum conditions and the pre-flight condition of the refugee. That is, since refugees enjoyed freedom of movement and were not restricted to the refugee settlement, they constantly came in contact with Ghanaians. For example, the majority of the returnees noted that they learned the language through religious or economic activities or in school. One returnee from Ghana said: “I decided to learn the language, so I had an agreement with one of my Ghanaian friends at the market to teach her Liberian English in exchange for

teaching me her local language". Since most of the returnees from Guinea were restricted to the camp, however, they were limited in their encounters with the local community. Indeed, most of the returnees from Guinea said they consciously stayed away from the Guineans, especially after the security measures taken in the early year of 2000 and most said they only came in contact with members of the host community through economic activities. Furthermore, another plausible explanation for the lower numbers of returnees from Guinea acquiring a new language is the fact that most members of the host community spoke a dialect similar to that of the refugees, and did not speak French in their day to day activities.

In terms of the value of the new language as a cultural resource, however, the few returnees from Guinea who are now proficient in French or English are more marketable than those from Ghana who acquired local Ghanaian languages. Thus, although acquiring a local language was of high value to the returnees while in asylum, that value has been reduced since they returned to Liberia, because they are neither local language preferences in the home country, nor an international language. For the returnees from Ghana, this is considered a resource lost through returning to the home country.

**Table 6.5. Formal Education Level of Returnees after Return**

Level of Formal Education	Ghana		Guinea	
	Before Asylum	After Return	Before Asylum	After Asylum
Completed University	0	4	0	0
Enrolled in University	0	0	0	0
Completed College/Polytechnic/ Post-Sec.	1	17	1	1
Enrolled in College/Polytechnic/ Post-Sec	0	0	0	2
Completed High School	9	6	6	9
Enrolled in High School	3	1	3	5
Completed Middle school	7	2	9	8
Enrolled in Middle School	2	0	2	0
Completed Primary	6	0	4	0
Enrolled in Primary	2	0	0	0
None	0	0	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Author's Interview with Returnees in Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009

#### 6.4.4. Returnees Social Resources

All 60 returnees interviewed indicated that they arrived with at least one member of their family, which indicates a high level of family ties. Most of them noted that although all members of their family were currently with them in Liberia, they arrived at different times. When asked why they did not return on the same trip, especially when the UNHCR had a policy of not

splitting up families during the assisted repatriation, most said they had deliberately split up their families in order to get more aid packages. This strategy was observed among the returnees from Ghana and Guinea and, according to the UNHCR, it became a major challenge for the organized repatriation exercise. Furthermore, all the returnees from Guinea said that most of the new friends that they made among the refugees in asylum have returned, and are living in the same community or in the surrounding villages and towns. They added that they have maintained their relationships, and continue to extend helping hands to one another, just as when they were in asylum. Returnees from Ghana, however, noted that most of their friends are either in Ghana or abroad. Of the 12 who said they returned with their friends or knew that their friends had returned to Liberia, only five indicated that they lived in the same community as their friends. The remaining seven noted that their friends have since moved to other parts of Liberia, and have not contacted them since they moved out of Monrovia.

**Table 6.6. Number of Children under Returnees Care after Return**

<b>Number of Children</b>	<b>Ghana</b>	<b>Guinea</b>
1	19	12
2	5	9
3	1	5
None	5	4

**Source: Author's Interview with Returnees in Voinjama area and Monrovia: 2009**

Other forms of social resources the returnees noted that cannot be quantified are the “new ideas” they acquired during the asylum period. Prominent among the returnees from Ghana were the notions of saving for the future and living beyond one’s means. According to the majority of

returnees, before living in asylum they had little inclination to save some of their income for the future or, even, towards the education of their children. When asked how they got the idea, some said that during their trading with some Ghanaian women at the market place they realized that the women had organized themselves into groups, with the objective of saving some of their daily earnings, which they used to pay their rent and, sometimes, invested in their trading. Furthermore, some of them noted that during their period in asylum they witnessed the government project of encouraging Ghanaians to save for the future of their children, as well as to help the economy. This practice of saving towards the future, as noted by the returnees, has helped some of their Ghanaian friends to be economically independent, and also strengthened the Ghanaian economy. The idea of being patriotic and responsible citizens resonated among both groups of returnees. One returnee added: "It is sad that I had to live in asylum to realize that Liberia is all that I have, and that we need to protect our country from rebels" (Author's interview, 2009). Furthermore, most of the returnees noted that prior to fleeing into exile, they cared very little about what was happening in Monrovia or in the government; and, indeed, they had never been privy to that, since the political elite had excluded them.

According to the returnees, this new idea of being patriotic was formulated when they observed the changes in host communities' attitude to them. For example, as already noted, the initial hospitality shown by both Ghanaians and Guineans seemed to evaporate as the refugees' stay was prolonged and their numbers increased. Finally, another idea worth mentioning is the Ghanaian returnees' strong sense of the need for rule of law as the basic tenet of governance in Liberia. As most of them rightly pointed out, "We witnessed the introduction of democracy and rule of law in Ghana and how this new form of governance was used to end the country's long

history of human rights abuses and authoritarian regimes. Among the returnees from Guinea, all of whom expressed their preference for a democratic government, however, very few knew of their responsibilities in implementing and maintaining democratic government based on the rule of law.

## **6.5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter has examined the two main types of repatriation (self and assisted); how the needs, priorities, interests and capabilities of the refugees and the various institutions (states and IGOs) and conditions played a critical role in the complex return of refugees from Ghana and Guinea to Liberia. The chapter has argued that refugees are capable actors in the decision to repatriate and that multiple factors are considered by the refugees and the governments of the host countries (Ghana and Guinea) and the home country (Liberia) and the UNHCR, who are engaged at various levels in determining the policy and practice of repatriation. The two cases discussed in this chapter demonstrate the complexity of return which have similarities with the flight phase but are not a mirror image of the latter. Furthermore, through the examination of such factors as the role of the refugees and the structures it was revealed that return is not a unique episode, but one linked with their forced migration experience, which begins with flight into asylum and continues with the building of lives after return to the home country.

As with other studies in Africa, during the planning phase of the repatriation process from both Ghana and Guinea, the UNHCR, the governments of Ghana and Guinea (the asylum countries), and the government of Liberia assumed a paternalistic attitude to the refugees (Harrell-Bond 1989). These three institutions assumed the refugees were a passive, unresponsive

and unfortunate group requiring their mercy and protection. In other words, they took as a given the refugees' grateful acceptance of decisions about their fate by others. The refugees, therefore, were not consulted during the negotiations that led to the CPA that outlined the process of repatriation and the signing of the tripartite agreement between the host states, the home country and the UNHCR. As already shown, the refugees were far from passive or reactionary actors, and demonstrated their agency in various forms and capacities during the process of return.

For example, the refugees in Ghana protested the process, and made demands for things they believed would better meet their needs and interests, and should have formed part of the initial negotiations leading to the peace agreement, as well as the consultations for the tripartite agreement. They were able to push for a bigger returnee aid package that would include an increase in the cash amount from 5 to 100 USD for each returnee. Moreover, they were able to extend the period of repatriation by another two years; thus, the official return exercise ended in 2009, rather than the originally intended date of 2007. In addition, the UNHCR noted that there were large numbers of refugees not showing up at the airport, although they had signed up to return and attended the information sessions. In the case of returnees from Guinea, they began returning to Liberia earlier than the schedule provided and agreed upon by the three actors. The returnees decided to arrive earlier, although they knew the consequences, such as not benefiting from the individual returnee aid packages. Once they arrived, however, they requested that they also be given their packages, and the UNHCR subsequently changed its policy to reflect the request of the self-returnees.

Furthermore, their decision to return without assistance meant they had forgone any form of protection; thus, there were no guarantees for their protection, yet they took the risk, and

decided that the benefits to them outweighed the risks involved. These individual decisions by the refugees, as noted in this chapter, are an instance of refugees or returnees portraying their self-reliance capabilities and agency as similar to what they were during their flight and living in asylum. Thus, although the refugees' capabilities and resources pale in comparison to that of the institutions such as the governments and the UNHCR, they demonstrated their agency in forms which "encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose" (Kabeer, 1999) they brought to the process of repatriation. Among the other forms, the refugees reflected on the process, bargained, negotiated, resisted and, sometimes, used deception to change the policy content and practice (structures) of the process. Furthermore, the repatriation process as it unfolded in both asylum countries is an indication of the refugees' attempt to shape the policy choices and practices of the UNHCR and governments, in accordance with their particular refugee experiences and expectations of the future. The role of the refugees during the process implicitly challenges both the notion of a lack of agency on the part of the refugees and the single factor analysis of examining repatriation as a choice between the good of the home country and the bad of the asylum country.

In addition, this study contends that although the process of repatriation was easier to manage in the case of Guinea than in that of Ghana they both had challenges. The main reason was the proximity of Guinea to Liberia as oppose the further distance of Ghana to Liberia. Thus, the UNHCR could easily transport the returnees from Guinea at a lower cost than they could from Ghana. The long distance challenge for returnees from Ghana was further compounded by the fact that both the UN and ECOWAS had issued a security warning against travelling to and through Ivory Coast, which was enduring a civil war. Both refugees and the UNHCR therefore

had to rely on travelling by air, which cost more, so that the luggage allowance was substantially reduced. As noted, all the self-returnees who arrived from Guinea came on foot; they thus did not have to pay money or arrange transportation. On the other hand, the returnees travelling from Ghana to Liberia had to pay about 500 USD by air, or 200 USD to travel -- dangerously -- by road. According to the returnees from Ghana, self-returning to Liberia would have meant extra resource losses, such as of cash (material) or, even, lives (personal). The material and security costs associated with travelling from Ghana to Liberia meant that most of the returnees, unlike their colleagues from Guinea, did not have the benefit of a family member or friend returning in advance to prepare for their arrival, as was the case with those from Guinea. Thus, while the majority of the returnees from Guinea noted that houses and settlements had been prepared for their arrival, most of the returnees from Ghana did not have these benefits. A few of them who kept contact with friends and family members in Monrovia were offered places of settlement, but most had to rent places immediately after they arrived in Liberia; they thus spent longer in the reception centres, which were meant for only an overnight stay.

As demonstrated, the decision to return, according to the returnees, was not a simple choice between the conditions of the asylum and those of the home country; rather, it included such factors as the academic calendar for their children, the cost and nature of the trip, the farming season, and what resources to carry. Additionally, among most of the returnees from both Ghana and Guinea, returning to Liberia represented a new beginning, with very little resemblance to life in asylum; yet they conceded that the experience of flight and living in asylum had equipped them with skills and survival strategies that they hoped to adopt to make the process of integration less challenging. One returnee from Guinea noted: "Having survived

in a strange land, I am positive that I can do a better job at surviving in Liberia” (Author’s interview with returnee, Voinjama, 2009). These views of the returnees affirm Koser and Black’s (1999) questioning of the idea of repatriation as the end of the cycle of refugeehood. Although the returnees noted that returning marked a new beginning, the research demonstrated that majority of them are able to draw on the flight and asylum experience to better manage life in Liberia. Thus reflecting the current study’s proposition that repatriation is not a unique and isolated process, but one that has links with the entire refugee experience, including life after return.

Additionally, as the data on the returnees’ resources indicate, the returnees were not the same when they returned to Liberia. Generally, the ones from Ghana experienced relative gains in resources than those from Guinea; however, such a sweeping generalization fails to address the gains made by the returnees from Guinea. The data show that the conditions in Guinea were less favourable in terms of such resources as formal education level and employment skills; however, the returnees from Guinea certainly acquired and returned with resources that can aid them in rebuilding their lives and their communities.

In terms of the effect that the experience of repatriation had on returnees’ resources, the study concludes that repatriation, like flight, is embedded with structures that are more constraining with fewer opportunities thus less resource gains. Thus, the analysis supports Hypothesis 3 which states that the process of return similar to flight leads to returnee resources losses which are mediated by the refugee’s agency such as their choice of self or assisted return, when to leave, distance travelled and pre-return activities. Thus as seen from the foregoing discussion, most of the returnees had longer preparation duration as compared with the shorter

flight preparation. Even among the refugees who self-returned, they recounted that they had planned and discussed their intention with family and friends and had strategically decided on which members of the family should return and at during what period as part of their strategies to mitigate the resources losses. The idea that potential self-returnees similar to those who joined the assisted repatriation thought and strategically selected their options before they embarked on the journey of return contrasts with the impulse notion associated with the UNHCR's widely used term of spontaneous-repatriation/return (Koser, 1993).

Finally, the data on the transformation of returnee resources affirms hypothesis 3. As discussed all of the returnees experienced resource losses and it was high among the group from Ghana due to the constraint of travel distance and mode of transportation. Each returnee mentioned the loss of their house in country of asylum, and some, as described, noted losses such as of money, family ties, economic and personal security and life opportunities. Moreover, each returnee acknowledged that part of their decision-making process was consideration of the losses they would incur by returning. Armed with this information, most of the returnees chose to return during certain periods in which they believed they would incur fewer resource losses. Most of the returnees noted some relative gains in resources, including the aid packages received upon arrival, access to their assets and properties, and reuniting with family members and friends who either stayed in Liberia or have also returned from other countries of asylum. For example, some of the returnees from Guinea who elected to self-return with the objective of returning earlier to prepare their lands strategically left some of their family members in asylum in order to minimize their losses with respect to the returnee aid package. Although they were not recipients of the individual returnee aid, they benefited from the individual packages and family packages

of their family members. It reduced the family's aid losses and, at the same time, enabled them to take advantage of the planting season in Liberia. Similarly, returnees from Ghana decided that returning with the UNHCR assisted program meant smaller losses and a guarantee of their safety and security, as well as receiving the aid package.

The foregoing discussion has made clear the pivotal role of refugees in the decision to repatriate, which demonstrates their agency. The level of participation may vary, and may seem less than that of the respective governments of asylum and country of origin and the UNHCR which were involved in the process; however, these limitations should not be used to discount the refugees' role in the final decision, including the components of when and how they chose to return and what to carry along with them during the trip. Finally, it is important to note that processes of repatriation were not static but similar to the returnees' resources, were transformed a situation the current study contends is the dual impact of the agency of the returnees and the structures of repatriation.

The next chapter discusses the peacebuilding process in Liberia and how returnees' deployment of their resources towards their reintegration links up with post-conflict reconstruction.

## **Chapter 7. Returnees (Re) integration and Peacebuilding in Liberia**

### **7.0. INTRODUCTION**

The deployment of returnees' resources, towards their reintegration or rebuilding of their lives and that of the large community of return and how that links up with to peacebuilding process is the main focus of analysis in this chapter. This chapter argues that peacebuilding in Liberia is characterized by the top-down structures approach with a focus on establishing institutions. Thus the returnees are presented as beneficiaries rather than partners or participants in the process. This fits with what Paris (2004) has described as the enduring features of the liberal peacebuilding. All this serves to constrain the engagement of citizens, including returning refugees. However, the findings reveals that through their agency in rebuilding their lives and their communities in general, the returnees engage with the process of post-conflict reconstruction which has gone unnoticed by both the Liberian government and its international partners. One should note here that the focus of this study in general, and this chapter in particular, is not an examination of the success or otherwise of the peacebuilding activities of Liberia. Neither is it an evaluation of nor a comparative analysis of the contribution of the various actors involved in the process. Rather, this chapter discusses the reintegration experience of the participants of this research, as a highlight of returnee's engagement within peacebuilding which goes beyond their arrival and presence in the country of origin. Furthermore, it seeks to point to both the constraints and opportunities that exist in post-conflict reconstruction environment such as that of Liberia for the returning forced migrants in their attempt to rebuild their lives.

The main findings in this chapter is that although the Liberian government had indicated that the returnees are a resource for peacebuilding, it lacks a policy on how to harness this resource and its external peacebuilding partners seem to be also less interested in this approach. There is thus limited funding and policy response for incorporating returnees into the broader agenda. Secondly, this chapter reveals that the level of resources of the returnees have been very crucial in the choices and decisions about their reintegration; however, the study does not find any evidence to suggest that lesser resources leads to challenges for the state or the process of peacebuilding. Indeed, the returnees from Guinea, just as those from Ghana, have deployed their resources to improve their livelihood and the community at large, albeit to varying degrees which is a manifestation of the level and quality of their resources.

## **7.1. PEACEBUILDING IN LIBERIA**

After 14 years of a brutal civil war, decades of economic mismanagement, over a century of systematic exclusion and marginalization, and a catastrophic failed attempt at peacebuilding under Charles Taylor, Liberia has launched its recovery, and is poised to avoid repeating its past. The road map for Liberia's peacebuilding is in its Poverty Reduction Strategy document (LPRS, 2008). Indeed, Liberia's strategy for rebuilding rests on four pillars that resemble the strategies of peacebuilding advanced by both academic (Mathews and Ali, 2004) and practitioners (UNSG, 2011): expanding peace and security; revitalizing the economy; and strengthening governance and the rule of law. The discussion below is thus organized to reflect these various areas of peacebuilding policy and practice in Liberia and begins with a brief overview of involvement of external actors.

## **7.2 INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND PEACEBUILDING IN LIBERIA:**

### **Peacekeeping and Funding**

After their role in helping to end the violence,<sup>120</sup> external actors (primarily, the UN, ECOWAS, and AU) were called upon to help consolidate the peace in Liberia. Respective Articles of the 2003 CPA indicate the respective role of external actors which include as partners, facilitators, monitors, fund raisers/financiers and implementers of Liberia's peacebuilding. Responding to this call, the UN by Resolution 1509 of 19 September 2003 established and mandated UNMIL to collaborate with ECOWAS and AU to oversee the implementation of ceasefire agreement. Subsequently the UN through its other agencies such as the UNDP, WFO, and UNHCR among others became the lead international actor in Liberia's peacebuilding process.<sup>121</sup> UNMIL's operations which is headed by the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative in Liberia has since been extended to include an oversight over Liberia's administrative and security policies and programs (Author's interview with official of the government of Liberia, Monrovia; 2009).

In theory this oversight role of international organizations through UNMIL with the consent of the CPA corresponds with what Chesterman (2004) defines as "light footprint model of intervention." The light footprint model implies that intervention will not be too intrusive in form, but rather a partnership between the intervening powers and the national authorities. The reality in Liberia, however, is best characterised as one in which the actors exist in a pyramid

---

<sup>120</sup> See Chapter 4 of this study for a brief discussion of the role of external actors in ending the Liberian Conflict. However, for an in-depth discussion see Adebajo A. (2002) *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG, and regional security in West Africa* (Lynne Rienner: London)

<sup>121</sup> The role of each actor under the CPA is further discussed below as part of the discussion of the various strategies of peacebuilding.

relationship where UN agencies sit at the summit, the national authorities occupy the middle, and the local citizens sit at the bottom.

This is problematic for two main reasons. First, the formal responsibility for the outcome lies not with the intervening actor conducting the reforms, but with the national authorities by whom they have been called upon to assist (Chesterman, 2004). Secondly, this intrusive activity tends to emphasize the grand strategies and thus pays less attention to the self-initiated activities by local citizens, which reinforces the notion that they are beneficiaries and not partners (Bøas and Stig, 2010). Conducting peacebuilding that is accountable, inclusive and locally owned is crucial for both the future of self-government (Ghani and Lochart, 2008) and as a means to ensure that future governments of Liberia will be more inclusive in their policy-making and implementation.

The pillage of Liberia's financial and natural resources during the war rendered Liberia incapable of not just servicing its debt but incapable of financing the cost of peacebuilding (LPRS: 2008). To deal with this financial difficulty the CPA, in article 39 section 4, called on ECOWAS to collaborate with the UN, AU and International Community to periodically organize donor conferences for resource mobilization for post-conflict reconstruction. To this end, the first donor conference for Liberia's reconstruction was organized in February 2004, where UN member states pledged \$500 million. By 2007, when the UN organized the second donor conference for Liberia, less than half of the 2004 pledges had been fulfilled (Author's interview with official at the Ministry of Finance, Monrovia, 2009). Other major source of funding has been through the UN Peacebuilding fund which first allocated funds to Liberia in 2008 and by

the end of 2011 had provided \$35 million (UNPBF 2011)<sup>122</sup> towards post conflict reconstruction activities.

The United States is the largest single bilateral donor in Liberia, followed by the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan. Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Ireland Spain, France, Italy, and the People's Republic of China are also significant players in international investment (Author's Interview with official of the Ministry of Economic Planning, GOL, in Monrovia, 2009). In addition, to the bilateral donors, a growing number of non-governmental organizations, the Roman Catholic Church and other religious organizations are acting as private-sector donors in Liberia. The European Union and the World Bank are Liberia's highest multilateral donors (ibid).

On September 16, 2010 Liberian government's request to be placed on the agenda of UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was granted. This new status of Liberia is expected to help marshal more international resources, bring together all the external actors and to extend the period of international attention to Liberia. One major achievement under the Commission has been the extension of UNMIL's mandate to November 2012. UNMIL was scheduled to exit Liberia in 2010, however, President Johnson-Sirleaf asked for an extension to cover the period of the second post-conflict elections in 2011 (see UN Security Council Resolution 1938). Subsequently as the electioneering activities were drawing to an end, the PBC through the UN Secretary-General's request for extending UNMIL's mission to for 12 months was granted (see UN Security Council Resolution, 2008). It is important to note that \$20 million of the total

---

<sup>122</sup> Available online at <http://www.unpbf.org/countries/liberia/> (Accessed on January 12, 2012)

UNPBF of \$35million was granted to Liberia in 2011, after it was placed on the UN PBC Agenda.

### **7.3. REFORMING THE SECURITY SECTOR**

States emerging from war are known to have a high probability of relapsing into conflict unless they address their security dilemma (Stedman et al., 2002; Milliken and Krause, 2002). The task of the post-conflict states, and of international organizations involved in brokering peace in war torn countries, among others is to find the best way to integrate ex-combatants either into civilian or security forces, such as the military, the police and the navy. In the short term they have to deal with the Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) of former combatants, refugees and IDPs (Furley and May, 2006). The long-term security strategy, however, includes reforming the security governance of the state to be inclusive and representative of the various social groupings, and working together to manage and operate in a manner consistent with democratic norms and principles of good governance (Matthews and Ali, 2004).<sup>123</sup> This means that the state's armed forces, police, intelligence services, and the judiciary, among other institutions, are crucial in promoting the peace and security of the state as well as its citizens.

The current government and people of Liberia are faced with the enormous task of addressing the challenges of both short- and long-term state security and human security. The

---

<sup>123</sup> This formulation and approach to the security of a post-conflict is based on the concept of 'human security' where the security of the state or the regime is not secured at the expense of the needs of the citizens. For in-depth discussion on the concept of human security and its application to peace building, see Cockell, J.G. (2000) "Conceptualizing Peacebuilding: Human Security and Sustainable Peace" in Pugh M ed., *Regeneration of War-Torn Societies* (Macmillan: London)

failure of Charles Taylor's government to formulate any such security measures led to the resurgence of war in 1999. As noted by both policy-makers and scholars, every state emerging from conflict must address its security issues if it is to find durable peace (ICISS, 2001; Keating and Knight, 2004), but Liberia's history makes it even more imperative.

With support from its international partners, therefore, Liberia's government has instituted a number of activities to the end of reforming its security structure. It is in the process of rebuilding its security forces, and has made progress in the return of refugees, reintegration of IDPs and ex-combatants. Through formal reintegration programs it has demobilized and reintegrated 90,000 ex-combatants, 11,780 of whom were children, and deactivated or retired over 17,000 members of the Armed Forces of Liberia, the Liberian National Police and the Special Security Services. In 2010, Liberia formally announced the successful completion of the process of repatriation and reintegration of Liberian refugees and IDPs. It added that with international assistance it had provided support and temporary cash assistance to over 108,000 refugee returnees and 325,000 registered IDPs (LRRRC, 2011).

The involvement of the international community in Liberia's Security Sector Reform (SSR) is covered in the CPA's part four, articles VII and VIII, and also through the UN Resolution 1509. Article VII of the CPA is concerned with reconstruction of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) requested ECOWAS, the UN, AU, the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) and USA to be involved in the process. The US was expected to play a leading role but not exclusively; however, America ended doing just that and outsourced the role to DynCorp, a private military company. This decision by the US has been questioned and suggested to undermine the democratic credentials of the reform since it excluded not just civil society but the

legislature and the elected government (ICGL, 2009). The contract between DynCorp and US is not available to the Liberian Ministry of Defence and the private firm is accountable to the US and not to the state whose military they are reforming (Loden, 2007).

This shortcoming in the contractual agreement notwithstanding, there is ample evidence to suggest that DynCorp in its activities has been open especially in its recruitment and has invited civil society and government officials to join their recruitment tour of the country. To this effect Liberians and some government officials are noted to be at ease with US taking a lead role and view the Americans' choice to outsource as unquestionable rather an opportunity to strengthen the ties between the two countries which Liberia can benefit from in the future (Bøas and Stig, 2010).

Training and restructuring of the Liberian National Police (LNP), the Immigration Force, Special Security Service and any other statutory security units were allocated to the UN Civil Police Components (UNCIVPOL) as noted under article VIII of the CPA. The responsibilities of the UNCIVPOL are limited to the recruitment and training of members of the security forces. The government of Liberia is responsible for appointing the leadership. Although the UNCIVPOL, reached its international benchmark of training a police force of 3,500 by 2007, it had to lower the criteria for recruitment to reach this target (ibid). This has resulted in an increasing number of officers who are unable to "fulfil the task required of a conventional force, such as reading and writing reports" and according to Boas and Stig (2010) represent the general tendency in international peacebuilding to prioritise technicalities of training a new force within a certain timeframe. Furthermore "in the eyes of Liberians, the new LNP are no improvement compared to the police force that operated during the war and worse compared to

the force that to the existed pre-war period” (ibid. 290). This perception by Liberians of the new LNP and inability of the police to perform their duties should be of concern to the government and the international organizations involved in the process.

There remain uncertainties in Liberia’s implementation of SSR agenda due to its preference for technical efficiency rather than local ownership. However it is important to point out that the recruitment process for the new security services has generally been open and accessible to the citizens. In view of its long history of limiting access by certain social groups, the current process is designed to produce a service that is representative of the various socio-cultural groupings of Liberia. To achieve this new objective, and transform the image of the security services, the various external actors and the government of Liberia have adopted a robust vetting process for new recruits. It includes publication of applicants’ names in newspapers to expose them to the scrutiny of citizens and, especially, to help identify those who may have perpetrated war crimes or otherwise have a criminal past (Author’s interview with official of the Ministry of Defence, GOL, Monrovia, 2009).

### **7.3.1 Returnees Personal Resources and Domestic Security-Rebuilding**

As noted previously, returnees from Guinea began arriving in Liberia before the commencement of both the UNHCR assisted repatriation and the UNMIL supported DDR for ex-combatants. Their earlier arrival and place of location outside the capital, Monrovia, exposed them to security challenges such as encountering rebels and isolation from both the government and international security mechanism. As one returnee recounted, “I was among the first 5 group of men who returned to this village in 2004 after the war. On the first day of our arrival, we

cleared a place under a tree where we used as our sleeping area and then began rebuilding our houses through each other's help" (Author's interview, Voinjama Area, 2009). Subsequently, they were joined by their respective families, and other returning refugees and IDPs. The returnee's decision to return and settle in communities without the presence of a security force was not encouraged by UNHCR and LRRRC, however, as one returnee noted "returning and preparing a place for me was my way of ensuring that my family arrived in a safe and secured village (Author's interview, Voinjama area, 2009).

Returnees' decisions about means and time of arrival as well their scattered settlement choices especially outside the Liberian capital city as well as the capitals of the various counties has contributed to the GOL's increased attention towards them and an outreach of government and non-governmental agencies in the various returnee settlements. First, the UNHCR's demand that the presence of the UNMIL in the areas of return be a prerequisite of organized repatriation resulted in the creation of security satellite offices in the counties (see UNHCR 2005 for Repatriation and Reintegration of Refugees and IDPs). As part of their mandate, the UNMIL has been involved in not just providing security but, also, in training the police forces in their respective areas, and increasing the accessibility of these sectors by Liberians living outside the capital. Moreover, the LRRRC, which is the government partner of the UNHCR in the repatriation and integration of the returnees, is present in all the communities through its offices and the returnee reception centres. Indeed, in some of the villages surrounding Voinjama, the LRRRC is the only government agency present.

Although the security situation in Liberia has improved in the past few years, it still has a long way to go. Some of the current challenges noted by the returnees, and confirmed by

government officials, are crimes such as rape, theft, and drug abuse, and distrust of the security agencies. In response, returnees, in cooperation with other members of their communities, have formed neighbourhood watch programs, for which they volunteer, and also inform and educate the public on safety and security of their lives and properties. Establishing these self-help projects is more prevalent in Voinjama than in Monrovia because of the limited state security agents within the community. For example, during the period of research, the Voinjama police force had 10 officers and had to consistently rely on the UNMIL service for technical and personnel assistance. Thus it was therefore not surprising that 12 returnees from Guinea indicated that they were involved in the community neighbourhood watch programs to safeguard their lives and property. Furthermore, two of the returnees from Ghana, who lived in Monrovia, noted their participation in the community watch programs as their volunteering activity.

Peace education for citizens has become one of the aims of the state, and in this direction they offer community based activities through the media, educational institutions and professional activities (Author's interview with the JPC official in Voinjama, 2009). The task is shared with NGOs, in which a number of returnees are engaged as either employees or volunteers. For example, the Voinjama office of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) Organization, which is the main NGO responsible for the Peace Education Program in Liberia, has employed the services of one returnee from Guinea as a peacebuilding facilitator. Three other returnees from Ghana and Guinea said that they volunteer as peacebuilding facilitators in their communities. As peacebuilding facilitators, the returnees related that they are engaged in training other facilitators. They also act as the organizers and team leaders for their

weekly community meetings. According to them, although they received training from the JPC after they were recruited, they draw on materials and lessons learned from their participation in peace education seminars during asylum.

Other areas of the security and the peace expansion agenda in which returnees noted as their participation are the signing of the peace agreement in Accra, Ghana, and the disarmament program in Liberia. During the former, some refugees in Accra protested and demonstrated, demanding that their leaders end the war in Liberia and find a non-violent solution to their differences. The refugees organized a petition, collecting over a thousand signatures, and presented it to the ECOWAS secretary in Accra during the peace negotiations. One of the returnees from Ghana interviewed was a member of the team that organized that protest, while nine returnees noted that they had participated in the one-day protest and in the presentation of the petition, and five of them had signed it. This action by the refugees evidenced their frustration with their leaders and their preference for peace, and their insistence that their voices be heard, even though they had not been invited to participate. Rarely are refugees as noted by Zaum (2011: 291) “participants in the negotiation leading to the political settlement or are represented in the institutions implementing the agreement”. Although, there is no evidence on the effect that the refugees protest action had on the final peace agreement, this initiative is an example of how the refugees engage with the process of peacebuilding is not limited to the period of return but including the asylum phase as well.

As noted above, location of the returnees from Ghana served as an opportunity for the refugees’ engagement in activities leading to the signing of the 2003 peace agreement but the returnees from Guinea were constrained because of their distant location. However, the returnees

from Guinea also noted that their earlier return and presence in some communities became enabling factors in their engagement with other sectors of Liberia's security rebuilding agenda. As previously stated, the earlier arrival and decision to settle in distant locations from the capital Monrovia indirectly contributed to the sitting of both local and international security forces. Furthermore, some of the returnees from Guinea spoke of their direct involvement in the DDR program. Five of them said that during the national campaign against the keeping of arms project, they had volunteered with the UNMIL, collecting and accepting weapons, and had also volunteered as community educators campaigning against the owning and keeping of arms.

Finally, two returnees from Ghana noted that they were employed in the security sector as immigration and police officers. Their role as security officers might be a means of earning an income but in the broader security sector reform; these individuals, including other Liberians, are essential personal resources needed to pursue this peacebuilding strategy. It is important to point out that my period of data gathering in Liberia coincided with the period when the new recruits for both the army and police service were in camps for their training services. According to the refugee employment referral officer at the LRRRC, five returnees from Ghana had been recruited, and were in training to become police officers (Author's Interview, Monrovia, 2009).

#### **7.4. ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

Liberia's central economic goal is to "firmly establish a stable and secure environment and to be on the irreversible path toward rapid, inclusive and sustainable growth and development" (LPRS, 2008: 61). Currently, Liberia's economy is highly dependent on the agricultural sector, which accounts for over half of its GDP in the post conflict period (ibid). A

large proportion of its population is engaged either directly or indirectly in smallholder subsistence agriculture or fisheries. The main challenge in this area is increasing access to seeds, fertilizers and other inputs, and strengthening linkages to output markets, primarily by constructing farm-to-market roads (Author's interview with official of Ministry of Economic Planning GOL, in Monrovia, 2009).

The government recognizes that to achieve its goals of reducing poverty, generating income and maintaining security, it needs to collaborate with the private sector. To this end, it has embarked on a project of laying the foundation for diversification of the economy to encourage private sector participation in areas such as agro-processing, furniture, and other downstream wood products, as well as rubber products. Indeed, most of these industries are labour intensive, and could create jobs, stimulate exports and create more economic opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled Liberians that have the potential of generating more inclusive and sustainable growth for all Liberians. The main challenges are: the lack of a functional national power grid, which makes electricity very expensive; a weak infrastructure, especially roads and telecommunications; and inadequate and inappropriate skills and knowledge in the labour force (LPRS, 2008).

Furthermore, progress has been made in the delivery of basic services and construction of infrastructure and road networks across the country. With technical support from UNMIL, the government has rehabilitated and constructed major highways, and many secondary roads, bridges, culverts and drainage facilities in several areas around the country. Electricity and pipe borne water have been restored to some areas in Monrovia. The government has rebuilt and reopened many schools across the country. Tuition and fees in public primary schools have been

abolished, and in public secondary schools they have been reduced, leading to an increase of 44 per cent in enrolment (LPRS, 2008: 38). Services have been restored to over 350-health post across the country, and about 95% of children are immunized annually (LPRS op. cit.: 39).

Liberians and government officials alike see their country as facing a huge challenge in service delivery, and economic recovery in general, because of the high levels of illiteracy (68% in 2008), resource constraints and capacity gaps. Accordingly, the UNDP and its Liberian implementing partners, the Civil Service Agency (CSA) and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA), have initiated the National Capacity Development Project (NCDP), which seeks to address the country's capacity challenges. With a two-pronged approach, in the short term the NCDP has the objective of responding to Liberia's capacity needs through a quick infusion of the system with skilled and experienced experts. The long-term strategy includes the formulation of the National Capacity Development Strategy (NCDS) and the integration of technical expertise with the capacities to plan, manage and deliver, together with the 'soft skills' that promote dialogue, trust and long-term consensus-building (UNDP-Liberia).<sup>124</sup>

Two notable short-term programs initiated under this project are the Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) and the Liberia Emergency Capacity Building Support (LECBS), which encourages the return of qualified Liberians dispersed in the global West. These programs were sponsored by the UNDP, which established a repatriation fund from which appointees were remunerated. These short-term programs lasted two years; the TOKTEN successfully recruited 10 Liberians, and the LECBS another 23 (UNDP-Liberia,

---

<sup>124</sup>Further information and details of the UNDP's general involvement, and specifically about the NCDP, are available online at <http://www.lr.undp.org/index.htm>

2011). While the UNDP's role is commendable, these programs were restricted to Liberians living in the West; they thus excluded the thousands living in the neighbouring West African countries and those who have returned.

The high unemployment rate, especially among youth, is a major concern of the government and the Liberian people. The government is understandably concerned, especially, that ex-combatants who are without employment may pose a risk to the fragile peace. Some of them come from cash-for-work programs that have been phased out; others have been through skills training, but have not secured employment. The need for sustainable job creation for recovery has been recognized, and partly addressed, by the government and its development partners. The Ministry of Labour, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Works and with support from the UNMIL, the World Bank, the UNDP, the UNHCR, the WFP and the ILO, has introduced two initiatives: the Liberian Employment Emergency Programme (LEEP), for the short term, and the Liberia Employment Action Programme (LEAP), operating in the medium term; together they are called LEEP/LEAP (Author's interview with official at the Department of Labour Affairs in Monrovia, 2009). The LEEP/LEAP is a six-component strategy<sup>125</sup> that aims to generate a vision for immediate employment creation, while also laying the foundation for longer-term, sustainable, employment (ibid.).

While issues of capacity and employment are very clearly at the top of the government's agenda, it was also apparent from the interviews that underlying all of these issues is a continuing tension. On the one hand the government and its partners are struggling now to do the

---

<sup>125</sup>The six key initiatives are: public works investments; skills training; enterprise development; production of statistics and labour market information; the promotion of social dialogue and strengthening of the labour administration; and the revival of agriculture.

best that they can with the limited financial and technical resources available and, on the other hand, to manage the expectations of the population.

#### **7.4.1 Returnees Material and Cultural Resources towards Economic Recovery**

The arrival and reintegration of Liberian returnees has spurred economic development by way of consumption and production. That refugees are of economic benefit had been realized by the countries of asylum. Ghana especially is known to have profited economically from their presence through remittances they received from friends and family, and the donor support from the UNHCR and other international organizations that helped provide for them.<sup>126</sup> Thus, once the returnees arrived in Liberia, they partially boosted the economy, because they have continued to receive remittances from family and friends abroad; and the cash earmarked for the returnees from the aid agencies, such as the UNHCR, made available to the Liberian economy both foreign currency and cash needed to increase the production and purchasing power of the returnees.

Furthermore, the returnees also arrived with their own savings and cash. Accordingly, 10 returnees from Ghana related that they were receiving monthly remittances from family and friends, and 16 said they occasionally receive money from friends and family abroad.

Furthermore, all 30 returnees from Ghana noted that they arrived in Liberia with various amounts of cash and travellers' cheques from their banks. On the other hand, 21 returnees from Guinea arrived in Liberia with cash in two major currencies, the US dollar and the Guinea Franc.

---

<sup>126</sup>No national data exist on the amount of remittances received by the refugees in Ghana. According to data compiled from the two Western Union branches located in front of the Buduburum Camp, however, between 2006 and 2008, approximately 800,000 USD flowed into the camp area per month. For further discussion of the remittances received by Liberian refugees in Ghana, see Omata N. (2011), "The Significance and Limitations of Remittances from the West to Liberian Refugee Population and Local Host Community in Ghana."

Fewer returnees from Guinea noted that remittances formed a major part of their monthly income. The higher numbers of returnees from Ghana receiving remittances correlates strongly with their asylum experience, where more refugees in that country than in Guinea were resettled abroad.

Returnees' demand for housing and settlement facilities has resulted in an increase in the prices of construction materials and services, as well as in the cost of rent. This increase and the resultant price escalation were very high in Monrovia, and according to the majority of the returnees from Ghana, it was a major constraint on their resources. I must point out that the demand for housing in the Monrovia area is exacerbated by the presence of expatriate staff of the UN and the international agencies involved in Liberia's peacebuilding activities. It is thus difficult to single out that area as showing the effect of the presence of the returnees in the community. In Voinjama, however, the majority of the returnees noted that housing was not constrained. A good number of them are engaged in building houses and renting them out to stayees and other returnees, as well as to the staff of government and non-governmental agencies operating in the area.

On the other hand, returnees are helping rebuild the economy as producers and service providers. Among them are farmers who have cultivated tracts of land that had been abandoned during the long period of war, some employing both returnees and stayees as seasonal labourers. Others who underwent occupational transformations or acquired new skills in exile are engaged in either the informal or formal sectors of the economy as major sources of livelihood for the returnees. Below is a table of the various economic activities of the returnee participants in the study.

**Table 7.1. Employment Profile of Returnees**

<b>Form of Employment</b>	<b>Returnees from Ghana</b>	<b>Returnees from Guinea</b>
Carpenter	1	2
Electrician	2	0
Farmer	0	14
Health Care Attendant	2	2
Immigration Officer	1	0
Journalist	2	0
Nurse	2	1
Police Officer	1	0
Public Service	3	2
Tailor	2	6
Teacher	4	3
Technology/Computer Service	3	0
Trading	6	0
Unemployed	1	0

**Source: Compiled from Author's Interview with Returnees in Monrovia and Voinjama area: 2009**

Table 7.1 above reveals that the returnees are spread out in the various sectors of the economy, and are not idly awaiting handouts. They brought opportunities, such as marketing outlets, and others for self-employment. For example, most of the returnee farmers from Guinea, as noted, brought with them seeds and seedlings for farming when they arrived and immediately began cultivating the land. Thirteen of the fifteen returnees who noted farming as their main economic activity classified themselves as either small or part-time farmers and that they work the land with their family. However, the remaining two indicated that farming is their main

source of income, where they have large tracts of land and between them they employed the services of six individuals to help them with their farming activities. Furthermore, the farmers revealed that they are beneficiaries of the World Food Program and Liberian government's annual seed distribution program. Two of the returnees from Ghana who noted that they were engaged in computer services are self-employed, and operate Internet cafes in Monrovia, where they provide Internet service to people for a fee, and train and employ people for the various services they provide.

Moreover, the returnees, especially those from Ghana, have boosted the economy with their trading activities. Some of them travel to Nigeria and Ghana, taking products to sell, an activity that is considered a source of income and to constitute an important exchange market. This new trend, of Liberians trading with other English speaking West African states, is facilitated by the ECOWAS trading agreements and the improvements in road and air travel infrastructure between the states. As can be seen from the table, however, the pre-war cross-border trading activities observed among the refugees who fled to Guinea no longer exist. Indeed, this trend deviates from what has been observed in other studies conducted among returnees whose home settlements are closer to that of their former host communities. In his study of Eritrean returnees, Bascom (1996: 73) observed an increase in cross border trading activities among returnees and their former host communities, and suggested that it was primarily attributable to the proximity of the returnees to their former hosts. This noted reduction in trading activities between returnees from Guinea and Guineans reflects the general asylum conditions and more particularly the transformation in the livelihood activities of the refugees during this period. As noted, the majority of the refugees were engaged in farming, and not

trading; and the security conditions of Guinea have still not improved since the arrival of the returnees, so that they do not feel safe travelling to Guinea. The current study, therefore, reveals that other factors, such as the security situation and the refugees' overall experience of asylum, other than proximity of locations, better explain the continuing relationship between returnees and their former host communities.

Finally, as can be seen from the table, the returnees' employment activities include the delivery and provision of services that are essential to the Liberian economy. The returnees are engaged in the health, education, security, technology, and agriculture sectors, among others. The majority of the skills and resources that returnees deploy in these sectors according to each one of them were acquired during their stay in exile. The numbers presented above are revealing of the aggregate results of the research participants economic activities; below I present the narratives of two returnees respectively exiled in Ghana and Guinea to effectively make the point about the importance of asylum acquired skills as a major cultural resource which is deployed towards the returnees reintegration which have links to the economic recovery agenda of peacebuilding.

Julia currently lives in Monrovia and returned to Liberia from Ghana in 2008 with a diploma in nursing. She remembers her forced migration experience as follows:

I arrived in Ghana after two years in Ivory Coast. Upon arriving at the camp, I reported to the UNHCR, and was given a UNHCR/Ghana Refugee Card within two months.<sup>127</sup> Before my flight from Liberia, I had only completed

---

<sup>127</sup>This, she said, surprised her, because she had lived in Abidjan for two years, and was unable to secure a refugee identity card from the Ivoirians.

middle school, and was engaged in buying and selling goods. My expectation was to continue with the trading activities in the camp, but I did not have capital; and the NGOs, especially the religiously based organizations, were providing funding only for education and skills training, so I decided to go back to school. I enrolled in the high school in the Bududbrum community which I was able to complete in 4 years although it was a 3 year program. After I received my grades my Ghanaian adopted family suggested that I continue with a post-secondary education to get professional training which will enable me secure a job. I applied to a nursing training college wrote the entrance exams, and was successful. UNHCR and my adopted Ghanaian family provided financial aid, which helped me to complete the three years nursing course work and one year of clinical training at a hospital. I completed the program in 2006 but I could not get a job, although I secured a job permit from the Government of Ghana.

In 2007, I decided to return to Liberia with the hope of securing a job and to give my son the opportunity of knowing his country. I registered to return, and through the UNHCR program I flew back to Monrovia with my son with the 'hope of a better life'. When I arrived, I began looking for job, and my biggest setback was the fact that consistently potential employers kept telling me that "I had the education qualification but did not have the work experience required".

At the time of interview, Julia, was volunteering as a nurse with an international NGO, and receives an honorarium. She expressed the hope that through the volunteering, she would acquire the necessary work experience to enable her to gain employment in the future. According to informant A, prior to the war, she had never thought of herself as working in the public sector and that thinking back now she thinks that her decisions about flight, choice of asylum and strategies adopted to overcome asylum challenges was the beginning of her current career path as a professional health care provider.

Saba remembers his personal and material transforming experience of forced migration and draws linkages between his current job as one of the only two teachers teaching in the local public school in a village close to Voinjama.

I arrived in Guinea in 1992 with my mother and two younger siblings. At the time of the war and flight I had completed high school and had agriculture experience after years of working on the family farm. Like most of the refugees in Guinea, I cultivated a piece of land and sold the produce as well as some of the food ration received to Guineans for our survival. Through the trading and other social activities with Guineans, I gained good oral communication ability in French. After three years of staying in the camp I began volunteering for IRC primary school as a "pupil teacher", and began learning to read and write French from a Guinean teacher who was also volunteering in the camp. In 1998 I gained admission to a teachers' training school with funding support from the IRC. I had funding for three years, but struggled with the French language, and failed some courses, so that the

funding was withdrawn. I returned to Liberia in 2004, with the hope of continuing the teacher education program, but I was informed I had to start all over because of the differences in the education systems. I hope to do that someday but in the meantime, I have to work to earn a living and take care of my family.

When asked how he became a teacher he responded:

As more people continued to arrive in the community, the number of school-going children increased so the teacher was overwhelmed and warned that he was going to quit, if the community did not recruit additional teachers. I was at the community meeting, so I decided to apply. I sent my application to the district office in Voinjama and I was appointed after two months. This was sometime in 2006. Yes, I know I do not have the necessary education qualification for the teaching appointment; however, I believe I was employed primarily on the basis of my experience which I gained in Guinea. I was unable to complete post-secondary education, but after years of teaching in the refugee camp, I acquired skills on the job and I believe made me a good candidate for this job. As a pupil teacher, I provide for my family and at the same time help with the community.

Saba is aware of his limitations; however, he considers his teaching as a service to the community noting that it is very unlikely for a college trained teacher to accept transfer into this community due to the lack of facilities compared to city life. In response to a question on if there were any variations in his current position as teacher in Liberia compared to Guinea, he related:

the salary I receive in Liberia is a bit short of what I was earning in Guinea and in asylum my pay check was regular. But in Liberia, I am told I do not have educational qualification, so I am paid less and also the first pay check I received came after more than 6 months of teaching and after that every other month. Furthermore, I am responsible for more classes and pupils here than compared to the 2 classes that I was teaching in Guinea.

However, similar to the period in asylum, Saba noted that he supports his family with his income as a pupil teacher and with produce from the family farm.

#### **7.5. GOOD GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS**

Most Liberians, including the government, agree that the series of crises that besieged the Liberian nation, from war to mismanagement of resources, human right abuses and deepening of poverty, can be blamed largely on lack of good governance. Remedying these ills was supposed to have begun with the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), which served as the government from October 2003 to October 2005. However, many Liberians, and the international community, were let down by the NTGL. This government, made up mostly of representatives of the three main warlord combatant groups, did not seem to have the welfare of the average Liberian at heart. Their period in office was characterized by the pursuit of self-interest -- filling their pockets -- and trying to find ways to remain in or close to power after the October 11, 2005 elections (McGovern, 2005:764). For example, the President of the National Transitional Assembly, George Dweh, and two others were relieved of their duties in March 2005 for having allegedly embezzled US\$92,000 (UNMIL, 2005). The 2005 elections and

the inauguration of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as president were thus seen by Liberians and the country's main peacebuilding partner (UNMIL) as the third and, probably, the final opportunity for Liberia to genuinely begin the process of good governance. In addition to the election of a democratic government, a legislature, an independent judiciary, and media that are not dominated by private concerns have since been established.

To further the cause of good governance, upon assuming office in 2006 President Johnson-Sirleaf declared 'zero tolerance' for corruption, and restructured the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMPA) to oversee the economic and political affairs of the state. The main components of the GEMPA are: i) financial management and accountability; ii) improving budgeting and expenditure management; iii) establishing effective practices of procurement and granting concessions; iv) supporting key institutions; and v) capacity building. Some significant achievements of the GEMPA are: the establishment of a concession program for mineral deposits that introduced measures to maximize the sustainable contribution of mining to the national economy; since 2005 Roberts International Airport, Liberia's main international airport, has nearly doubled its revenue; the improvement in the budgetary process and its monitoring of the state's spending has resulted in potential savings of over 9.3 million USD in the 2008-09 and 6.5 million USD in the 2009-10 National Budget.<sup>128</sup> These achievements notwithstanding, reports of corruption among politicians, government officials, and security officers remain rampant, and the giving and receiving of bribes seems to be the norm for conducting business with officials or individual Liberians. It is therefore not

---

<sup>128</sup>For a detailed description and some success stories of the Liberian Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMPA), see <http://www.gemap-liberia.org/>

surprising that most of the returnees claim pillaging of the state by government officials as the main constraint on Liberia's developmental quest and peace building. This concern of the returnees was echoed by the stayee research participants interviewed for this study.

Other measures adopted by the Johnson-Sirleaf's government are the public declaration of assets by officials of the government (executive, legislature and judiciary), strengthening and ensuring civil society participation in governance, building a system of national integrity, addressing gender inequalities, reviewing of laws and the constitution, and building effective and efficient institutions (LPRS, 2008). Although Liberia has achieved successes in its attempt to institute good governance, such as successfully conducting two highly competitive elections, in 2005 and 2011, that were characterized by less violence, it without doubt faces a number of challenges. Fundamentally, according to McGovern (2005: 764), Liberia "needs to make politics less attractive to former rebels and warlords who pillage the state during the war, to open up a space for discussion among Liberians on the way forward for their country, improve and increase the administrative and technical capacity of the various arms of government, especially members of the judiciary, as well as a commitment of the population".

#### **7.5.1. Returnees' Social Resources and Strengthening Good Governance**

The participation of displaced persons, including refugees, in post conflict elections is critical to ensure governance that is legitimate and accountable. However, the enfranchising of those displaced by conflict is often forgone through the demands of tight electoral timetables and weak support from the international community (Kumar, 1998). An electoral process, in which refugees and IDPs do not participate, according to Lopez-Pintor (1997), can reward the very

group that instigated the conflict. Furthermore, such elections are unable to achieve one of the government's main roles: reconciliation and sustainable peace. Needless to say, this was the situation in the flawed elections of Charles Taylor in 1997. According to Tanner (1998), two of the principal flaws of the 1997 elections were the tight schedules under the Abuja II Peace Accord, and the fact that at the beginning of the election, most of the displaced persons had yet to return, and had not been registered in their various locations to participate. It was therefore welcome news that the Accra CPA had called for the establishment of an interim government, for a period of two years, to enable the country and the international community to prepare and conduct an inclusive election.

With a longer election schedule to enable their participation, returning refugees participated in the 2005 elections in various capacities. They voted, campaigned for candidates, donated money to support candidates and political parties, and volunteered for political parties. The numbers of returnees who voted was higher among returnees from Guinea than those from Ghana, because most of the returnees, as already noted, arrived in Liberia before and during the voter registration period. Since the election rules did not allow the refugees to participate in the countries of asylum, most of the returnees were disenfranchised. Although they did not vote on the Election Day, eight of the returnees from Ghana said they made calls to friends and family to campaign for their preferred candidates and political parties, and to encourage them to vote, since they trusted them to decide the government of Liberia and its future. The returnees' involvement in the process of attaining an accountable and transparent government in Liberia extended beyond the election period, and includes their registration and membership in political parties.

Furthermore, returnees demonstrate their civic responsibilities through such activities as participating in media and community discussions on economic, political and social issues. They contribute to national and local debates, either on the radio or in community gatherings in the famous ‘Palaver Huts’<sup>129</sup> dotted around cities and towns in Liberia. Finally, the increase in the numbers of returnees engaged in volunteer activities is worth mentioning and recommending. A good number of the returnees said that they are currently volunteering for NGOs operating within their communities. Some have created their own local NGOs, or work for INGOs as employees or volunteers. This form of civil participation is new to most of them, because before fleeing and living in asylum, very few were engaged in volunteer activities, and mostly associated with their trade or religion (see Table 4.7). Their volunteer activities, however, currently extend further, and include such areas as the health and sanitation sectors, education, politics, security and social issues such as gender and human rights. The returnees attributed these changes to their asylum experience, where they were made to form groups and volunteer for community associations as part of maintaining and governing the refugee settlement groups (see Table 5.6). One returnee hinted: “If it worked in the refugee settlement and made life bearable, then we can certainly continue with it in our community” (Author’s interview, Voinjama area, 2009).

---

<sup>129</sup>Palaver Huts are generally sheds with benches put up by members of the community who meet to discuss national and local issues. It is a more common sight in Monrovia than in Voinjama, where I noticed one such hut. Topics for discussion each evening are usually scribbled on the board by individuals, and those interested show up to participate. It is important to mention that some journalists usually attempt to engage the public or to assess the public mood. It is a less expensive means of citizen participation than calling in to a radio station by expensive mobile phones, and with the cost and limited access to the Internet, very few people can write to newspapers. Unfortunately, few government officials realize the Huts' importance for citizens' engagement with governance.

Below is the narrative of a returnee from Ghana, whose account of his forced migration experience and his deployment of the skills gained towards both his personal economic activity in peacebuilding as that resource is availed to the benefit of his community through his volunteering activities.

Roberts is a male returnee who currently lives in Monrovia. He relates his story of asylum and reintegration as follows:

I arrived in Ghana at age 19, and lived in Gomoa-Budubrum Camp. After a year in the camp, I decided to continue with my education by picking up from where I left off in Liberia. The differences in the education systems of Ghana and Liberia caused me to be admitted into the final year of high school, where I wrote the nationwide Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE) and, subsequently, the university entrance exams. I then entered the University of Ghana. My education was primarily funded by the UNHCR and individual Ghanaians -- mainly church members. However, it was not always easy, because I could barely survive on the stipend I received.

After four years I graduated with a BA honours, and enrolled in the national service program, which is a requirement for Ghanaians and optional for foreigners, including refugees. I was advised by one of my professors at the university that it was going to give me a monthly allowance and help me gain employment experience that would serve as an opportunity for me to gain access to the Ghanaian job market. After the one year of national service, I was recruited by the company (which helped him get a work permit) and,

subsequently, enrolled in night school at the Ghana Institute of Journalism for a diploma in journalism and public relations. At this point, I moved out of the camp and rented an apartment in Accra.

I subsequently rose up the employment ladder to become a programs manager with a team of eight to 10 employees. I lived in a very good area of Accra, with services and utilities, and owned a car and married a Ghanaian lady and we have two children. In 2005, after 14 years in exile, I made my first return trip to Liberia to assess the conditions and for possible return of my family. After a month of traveling around Liberia, I returned to Accra, and decided with my wife to permanently return to Liberia. I must confess it was a difficult choice to make, since it meant a change of life, and it was even more difficult to convince my wife that Liberia would be a good environment for the family. In 2006, I left Accra with my family arrived and settled in Monrovia. Since my wife could not secure a job in Liberia, we agreed that she return to Ghana with the children; and I opted to stay because of my conviction that Liberia needs me and I can help.

When asked how he achieves this desire, Roberts related:

I work in the media as a broadcast journalist and also as public relations consultant. Besides earning a personal income, I know that as a journalist my task include informing Liberians to help combat the ignorance that led some Liberians to trust thugs who only ended up abusing them and undermining the destiny of Liberia. Furthermore, I mentor young Liberians to get them

interested in the media profession. Since there are fewer trained journalists working in the country, I have persuaded two other colleagues and my employer to adopt the Ghana national service model as a method of training future journalists on the job. Our plan is to recruit post-secondary graduates and use our resources in the news room to train and give them allowance for the period of one to two years. Also I founded an NGO for the promotion of access to education for children in Liberia.

Another aspect of the returnees' social resources which came to light and could be harnessed for deepening democracy and good governance in Liberia is their high levels of hope and optimism, and their choice of the current democratic process to reconcile and rebuild the country after years of authoritarian rule and human rights abuses. As can be seen from the narrative of Roberts above, returnees have high levels of hope for a better Liberia and their participation in this journey. For others, this hope for successful rebuilding is bore out of their experience of forced migration especially during the exile phase and their desire never to return to that situation churns them on to demand for respect of rule of law to avoid a return to war. In the words of a returnee from Guinea "Liberians must respect the human rights of every person, the security forces should be educated on this wonderful value and the court must be effective in their duties...because if war happens again, no country will accept us because they are tired of us and I heard that even Ghana is asking every Liberian to return" (Author's interview with returnee in Monrovia, 2009).

Furthermore, the returnees are aware of their duties as citizens and the fact that the new Liberia needs citizens who do not feel alienated from the political process and are, rather,

patriots who put country first. A returnee from Guinea asked: “How different are Guineans from us, that their country has experienced long years of authoritarian regime, yet the country has not experienced a civil war on the same scale as Liberia? Whatever the challenge, Liberians should resolve their differences through peaceful means; war does not have to be the only solution” (Author’s interview, Voinjama, 2009). Accordingly, some of the returnees from Ghana said that watching Ghana rise above authoritarianism to become Africa’s best example of democratic rule convinced them that their country could follow in the same direction.

## **7.6. SEEKING JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION FOR SOCIAL COHESION**

Liberia’s political landscape, as just described, is hopeful, but the emerging political class very closely resembles those who brought mayhem and misrule to the country in the past. The loose opposition parties comprise Taylor loyalists and former members of the NTGL, including Edwin Snowe, a member of the House of Representatives and former Managing Director of the LPRC during its time of alleged mismanagement and abuse of public funds.<sup>130</sup> They include the soccer legend, George Weah, who came second to President Johnson-Sirleaf in the 2005 and 2011 contests as candidate for vice president to Winston Tubman, the nephew of Liberia’s longest ruling president, William Tubman. A number of members of parliament continue their political careers in the face of serious allegations about their roles in the past conflict. Such individuals include Prince Johnson, who allegedly presided over the extrajudicial execution of

---

<sup>130</sup>Snowe is accused of stealing over US\$1 million while serving as Managing Director of the LPRC. He is also subject to a UN travel ban and asset freeze for constituting “a threat to the peace process in Liberia’ and for engaging in activities aimed at undermining peace and stability in Liberia and the sub region.” See, Human Rights Watch, (September 2005), “Backgrounders: Liberia at a Crossroads: Human rights challenges for the new government”.

the former military dictator, Samuel Doe. He is further alleged to have committed several massacres and extrajudicial killings of civilians during the armed conflict. Other high ranking commanders and leaders of rebel groups, such as Alahji Kromah, from the ULIMO-K, and Adolphus Dolo, a former NPFL general, contested both the 2005 and 2011 presidential and parliamentary elections.

Liberians continue to debate the merits of allowing persons accused of crimes, including Sirleaf-Johnson, or those subject to U.N. sanctions to run for office. Compared to earlier peace accords to end Liberia's civil war, the Accra Peace Accord was lauded for not including a blanket amnesty for individuals and groups accused of war crimes and human rights violations during the war. However, Human rights watchers have noted that its failure to maintain the original clause of prohibiting leaders of the former factions, individuals accused of serious human rights violations, and persons with criminal records from seeking elected office is partly to blame for the current political landscape in Liberia (HRW, 2005). With such a political atmosphere and the war history, the establishment of a TRC became more imperative to obtain justice for, and reconcile, ordinary people. Thus, although the establishment of the Liberian TRC (LTRC) was stipulated in the CPA,<sup>131</sup> the prevailing political forces of Liberia have shaped the commission's character and implementation.

In June, 2005 the Act establishing the LTRC was passed; the commission's work began in 2006, and concluded in 2009. It released a final report, including recommendations for

---

<sup>131</sup>The TRC approach was more accepted among the warring factions because they did not want an International Criminal Court established. The warring parties' fears of the International Criminal Court stepping in and demanding criminal prosecution became very real for most of the warring factions when the ICC Prosecutor issued an arrest warrant for President Taylor during the final days of the peace negotiation in Accra. This conclusion was arrived at by the author, who worked as a Broadcast Journalist with an Accra Radio Station, and was privy to some of the press meetings of the various factions during the negotiation period.

reparation for victims, amnesty for some perpetrators, and various forms of reprimand for others. The Commission's method for achieving its objective included accepting individual petitions from Liberians both at home and abroad; it also conducted hearing sessions within the communities, and travelled to Ghana and the US as part of its attempt to reach Liberians living elsewhere. It held institutional consultations and conferences on reconciliation at the national, county and community levels. Although the Commission's work ended in 2009, and its report was submitted to the president, the government has yet to present the final report to Parliament for deliberation and implementation of the recommendations.

The bold decision of the TRC to recommend that former faction leaders and current politicians, including President Johnson-Sirleaf, be reprimanded for their roles in the war is, arguably, the cause of the government's reluctance to implement. Indeed, during the 2011 runoff elections, Presidential Candidate Prince Johnson, who came third in the first round, declared his support for President Sirleaf, and encouraged his supporters to vote for her, because, according to him, Weah and Tubman had called for him to be punished, as recommended by the TRC (BBC Report, 2011).<sup>132</sup> It is obvious from the following discussion that the current political elites in Liberia are unwilling to pursue the national reconciliation agenda through the TRC's proposed scheme. In the meantime, for individual Liberians, such as returnees and stayees, to prevent a repeat of the past they must live peacefully and look for alternatives to achieve reconciliation, at least at their local community levels.

---

<sup>132</sup>BBC (2011) "Liberia Vote: Prince Johnson backs President Sirleaf" <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15347980> . Accessed on October 20, 2011

### **7.6.1. Returnees' as Agents for Social Change and Social Cohesion**

The case of Liberian returnees shows that returning refugees do not generally reintegrate into their former communities. First, the majority of the returnees, from Ghana compared to those from Guinea, did not return to and live in their former communities. Among the returnees from Guinea, 10 said they had moved to new communities. Desire for access to higher education and for employment opportunities was the main reason for the returnees' decision not to settle in their pre-flight communities or necessarily settle among members of the same socio-cultural community. One of them, however, cited memories of what happened to his family in that community, as the main reason for his decision to move to a different community and county. The numbers were higher among the returnees from Ghana, 23 live in a different town or city than their pre-flight community. Indeed, seven of these returnees had never been to Monrovia before the war. Among the returnees from Ghana; absence of economic opportunities, location of family and friends, and differences between the pre-flight communities and the asylum communities were associated with their decision to not return to and settle in their previous communities.

Second, the stayee population had changed, and the social networks of both the returnees and the stayees had changed as well. All returnees interviewed indicated that they had had some form of social contact with other returnees and IDPs. Returnees from Ghana indicated that there seemed to be some form of unease between them and the stayees and, even, among some other returnees from Ghana as well. Some of the returnees cited their employment and economic status as the main cause of friction. Some said that their later arrival in the community meant that they needed help from some of the stayee population who were already established in the community

in identifying resources and opportunities, so that they were considered to have wasted their lives and time in Ghana. They related that they are referred to as “waste” or “just come”. A good proportion of them said that they are often castigated for not participating in social activities, such as partying -- which, according to the returnees, is a waste of resources -- and they have very little interest in such activities. The returnees observed that their life priorities had changed in ways that are sometimes at variance with those of the stayee population. For example, in Monrovia, children, at every stage of their education, go through some form of graduation ceremony, which involves organizing a party for your child. Graduation ceremonies are therefore held from nursery to primary school, at primary to junior high, and so on. Most of the returnees, however, observed that the case was different in Ghana, where graduation ceremonies begin at the senior high school level, and students and families even have the option of not participating; in Monrovia, however, it is part of the school activities, where the expense is added to the tuition fee, thus increasing the cost of education. Most of the returnees from Ghana said, moreover, that although they have made friends and established new contacts, they often preferred to keep to themselves, because they needed more time to get used to life in Monrovia and, for that matter, in Liberia.

Finally, returnees have developed interpersonal trust, optimism and other values that foster co-operation and readiness to live peacefully, to do business with each other, and to further strengthen the state-society relationship. Based on their shared experiences of displacement, struggle, and overcoming constraints, and their dream of a renewed country, the stayee and returnee participants stated a greater preference for a restorative approach in their country’s quest for justice and reconciliation. Returnees’ participation in the TRC process began even when they

were in asylum. For example, 28 of them from Ghana attended when the commission visited the refugee camp, and six petitioned the Commission during that period. Moreover, two of the returnees from Guinea had petitioned the TRC for redress after arriving in Liberia. Furthermore, since their arrival in Liberia, the returnees continued to participate in the process by attending the Commission's hearing sessions with most following the proceedings through the media.

The desire to live peacefully together is expressed by both returnees and stayees through their preference for negotiations as the approach to reclaiming assets and for property restitution. As observed, most of the returnees from Guinea arrived in their community before the stayee population; thus, very few were involved in any form of property restitution. However, the five returnees who said they had retrieved their properties said they used negotiation and, in some instances, decided to share the house or land with the current occupant or occupants. In addition, the six returnees from Ghana who said they had retrieved properties and assets pursued negotiation, which did not result in legal action. The returnees sounded appreciative for the occupants of their houses and farmlands because, according to them, they acted as caretakers of their properties, and deserve to be remunerated and not to be treated as criminals.

It is thus clear that the social networks of the returnees had changed, but there is no evidence of lack of social cohesion among the returnee and stayee members of the community. The relationships among the returnees from Guinea and the stayees seem, however, to be tighter than those of the returnees from Ghana and the stayee community in Monrovia. Some of the research participants (both returnees and stayees) in Voinjama and the surrounding villages, attributed the tighter social cohesion between them to the fact that in most of their communities, everyone is a returnee, either from other parts of the country or from outside. Voinjama and its

surrounding communities were one of the major sites of the war, so that the whole population was displaced as either IDPs or refugees. Furthermore, most of the returnees, as already observed, arrived in the community before the IDPs began doing so, so they hosted some of them, which partly accounts for the genial relationship between the groups. Even among the returnees from Ghana, their limited social contact with the stayee population does not make them feel as socially outcast or oppressed. Rather, they are positive that with time, more members of the communities will appreciate their new social orientations towards what they describe as the opulent life style of prewar Liberia and, perhaps, imitate them for their individual progress as well as that of the community.

#### **7.7 CHALLENGES OF RETURNEES (RE) INTEGRATION**

Liberian returnees continue to face many challenges in their attempt to rebuild their lives and that of their communities. During the interviews, the returnees revealed that the four most important issues facing them are: unemployment, lack of access to education and health care facilities, lack of housing and infrastructural facilities and high levels of corruption among government officials.<sup>133</sup> These challenges constrain the returnees' efforts at integrating into Liberia and their participation in the broader post conflict reconstruction activities; however the greatest risk of not addressing these challenges is the threat to social stability and even possible violence.

---

<sup>133</sup>The 2008 Report of the UN Secretary-General identified "high unemployment and rising food and fuel prices" as two key challenges facing returnees, and stated that the Liberian government and the UN would continue to look for ways of helping grow food and gain training in income-generating activities. U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION OF LIBERIA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, U.N. Doc. A/63/295

### **7.7.1 High Unemployment**

Even though most returnees are actively engaged in both the personal and community rebuilding and proud of what they have achieved there is an increased anxiety about their future. This is primarily associated with their economic situation. Although Liberia seems to have a high demand for human capital especially in the delivery of service such as education and health care (LPRS, 2008), some of the returnees complained of their inability to access these jobs, even though they meet the advertised requirements. According to most of them, they are informed that they do not qualify because they do not possess the required number of years of experience. Others indicated that although the government had made efforts to eliminate favouritism, cronyism and patronage in the public services, this corrupt culture still prevails, especially in the hiring of public service personnel. They therefore contend that their lack of connection to politicians or a “big man” has been a major obstacle in their quest to access employment in the public services of Liberia (Author’s interview with Returnees in Monrovia, 2009).

Furthermore, while the returnees were prepared for a certain period of difficulties and scarcity, they did not imagine that this period will be protracted. The constraint on their securing jobs especially among the returnees from Ghana with higher levels of educational and skills training have been much more overwhelming than they had imagined. Those who have acquired jobs in the formal sectors have to deal with situations of irregularity of the salary payment as well as the lower wages compared with the high cost of living in Monrovia.

Finally, Liberia’s inability to provide hydro at least to the level it was before the war has been a source of constraint for those engaged in the informal sectors, manufacturing, construction and production. Prior to the war, the total electricity installed capacity of the Liberia

Electricity Corporation (LEC) was approximately 191 MW, while that of concessionaires was 212 MW. By mid-2008, electricity installed capacity will be a mere 12 MW (LPRS, 2008:130). This situation, according to some of the returnees from Ghana, has contributed to a reduction in their economic activities and thus their earning is less than their asylum income. For example, a dressmaker had to abandon her electric powered sewing machine and is currently using the manual type which she notes limits the number of clothes she is able to complete and return to customers. Adding that while in Ghana, she could produce 5 different sets of clothes for women each month however, in Liberia, she is lucky if she is able to complete two of them (Author's interview, Monrovia, 2009).

#### **7.7.2. Access to Public Service: Education and Health Care**

Liberia is currently experiencing a severe shortage of human and financial resources and infrastructure. The UNHCR Global Appeal 2008 reports that there are still major needs in the country for basic educational facilities and health care, safe drinking water, sanitation in areas where returnees and former IDPs are settled. Among other shortcomings, Liberia's effort to implement a free and compulsory primary education has been stalled by a lack of human and financial capital.

Liberia is currently a member of the West African Examinations Council, which organizes examinations for junior and high school students about to enter high schools and post-secondary institutions (university) of English speaking countries in the West African sub region. This has made it relatively easier for the majority of the returnees from Ghana, who completed middle and high schools in Ghana to further their education without the challenge of their academic

credentials not been recognized. However, the story is different for the returnees from Guinea who are aware of the low quality of education received in Guinea. A small number of returnees from Guinea interviewed noted that they had written the high school entrance exams but failed so they had to go back to middle school (junior high school) with the hope of passing the exams in the future. Nevertheless, most of the returnees from Guinea have given up on the idea of returning to school and their goal is to provide for their family and rebuilding their community. Furthermore, the returnees from Guinea complained of the non-availability of institutions of higher education in their communities; thus their children have to travel long distances to access high school which they blamed for the lower rate of high school and post-secondary school graduates in their communities. Compounding the problem of lack of opportunity in rural parts such as those inhabited mostly by the returnees from Guinea is that many qualified and experienced teachers are not willing to work in those areas.

Finally, the returnees complained of the poor access to safe drinking water. The source of drinking water for most of the returnees in Monrovia was through the truck distribution system, where individuals had to buy from suppliers and store them in their houses. While those in Voinjama and the surrounding areas rely extensively on bore holes or individual and community dug up wells. Others resort to harvesting of rain water during the raining season for other house hold chores and daily activities. According to the Liberian government by the end of 2008, only 25% of Liberian's had access to safe drinking water and with plans to expand access to 50% by 2011. The majority of these people are located in county capitals and the nation capital Monrovia. Non-availability of safe drinking water has links with the diseases such as cholera which causes a burden for Liberia's already limited health care capacity.

### **7.7.3. Housing and other Infrastructural Developments**

The research participants both in Voinjama and Monrovia recounted the challenges of lack adequate housing facilities and the expensive cost of renting but the problem seemed to be more acute in Monrovia. Most of the foreign nationals involved in Liberia's peacebuilding process live in Monrovia thus there is a high demand for housing and with the limited supply, the cost of renting is very high and beyond the reach of most Liberians, including the returnees. This problem is further compounded by the fact that landlords readily abrogate the rent contract with Liberians whenever there is an opportunity to get higher rent cost. Furthermore, landlords demand advance payment of one year rent which means that potential tenants part with huge sums of money prior to signing a rent contract. According to a returnee, "I was ejected by my previous landlord although my rent contract had not expired. The landlord claimed he had a better offer so he returned the balance of my advance payment and gave me a week to move out of the room" (Author's interview, Monrovia, 2009). Some returnees suggested that funds and loan facilities should be made available to reconstruct their family and personal house that were either destroyed during the war or has become inhabitable as result of their long absence. In the immediate period, some were of opinion that the government should institute rent-control policies which will compel landlords to abide by rental agreements and set limits on the cost.

With respect to infrastructure, most of the returnees were concerned with the poor road networks especially for the returnees in Voinjama. They complained about the bad road network as a hindrance to their ability to cart farm produce to Monrovia where they expected to make more profit and also help feed the nation. This concern of the returnees is shared by most

Liberians, including the government. As noted in the 2008 LPRS, perhaps the most critical infrastructure problem is roads, which Liberians across the country consistently placed at the top of their priorities during PRS consultations. Currently there is only around 700 km of paved road surface, almost all of which is damaged, and 1600 km of unpaved roads, which are mostly in need of repair (ibid.: 21 and 28).

These challenges expressed by the returnees are linked to Liberia's overall problem of underdevelopment and economic deterioration as result of the civil war. Between 1980 and 2005, Liberia's per capita gross domestic product fell from US \$ 1,269 to US \$ 163. It is estimated that three-quarters of the Liberian population lives on less than US \$1 per day. Even in the largest areas of the capital Monrovia, power and water services were restored to some parts in 2006 after fifteen years of no utility service (LPRS, 2008). Liberia also has a huge external debt burden, estimated at US \$3.7 billion, equivalent to over 800 percent of GDP and 3,000 percent of exports by mid-2005 (Radelet, 2007). However, as demonstrated above, Liberians, especially the returnees are excited about the future and hope that Liberians get it right for the last time.

## **7.8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Generally, Liberia's peacebuilding approach emphasizes an institutional and top down approach, and seems to have very little room for participation by individual local actors such as returnees. In many ways, both the policy documents and practices have limited space for the returnee's agency. The practice extensively focuses on the bureaucratic role of the state and international organizations, with limited opportunities for the public's effective and efficient involvement. For example, the consultations that took place under the RSP were considered

neither by stayees nor returnees to have been a sufficient forum to count as a national policy dialogue exercise. The feeling among most of them is that they need a forum in which to articulate what Liberians want for Liberia. Moreover, the PRS document, the main policy for peacebuilding activities, is not easily accessible for ordinary Liberians. It is accessible via the Internet, and only in English. For a country whose literate population is 38.3% (LPRS, 2008) and where Internet access is a luxury most cannot afford, it is fair to say that only a few will be able to read the document. It was, therefore, not surprising that out of the 70 returnees and stayees interviewed, only five returnees from Ghana indicated that they had seen and read portions of it. If Liberia and its international partners are serious about supporting Liberia's recovery, then they need to not only discontinue the practice of handing down policies and programs to them, but also to help build their capacity to own and effectively participate in the process.

Furthermore, the Liberian government's claims of needing the presence and skills of the refugees seem to be words not backed by action. As already seen, the government has been involved in programs to encourage Liberian refugees, especially those in Ghana and Nigeria, to return and bring their skills to bear on the peacebuilding process. However, these advocacy programs have been supported neither by policies and programs describing the role of refugees and government support activities, nor by encouraging the participation of the returnees. Once they had arrived and been fed, the returnees noted, they were left to their own devices. For example, the returnee employment referral services section of the LRRRC was set up later in the repatriation exercise -- that is, in 2008 -- and was limited to returnees who came through Monrovia. The data-base containing the skills and experience of the returnees therefore has information mostly on returnees from Ghana and Nigeria. This practice of collecting data is a

remarkable feature of the Liberian refugee repatriation, and is a good initiative; however, the department is underfunded and under resourced, so it has not been able to achieve its objective. Furthermore, as was revealed in an interview with officials at the Ministry of Labour, very few employers are aware of the existence of such data, and most of the returnees have skills, but not the experience needed for jobs; very few of them thus have gained employment.

The findings in this chapter lead us to return to the study's conceptualization of links between returning refugee's reintegration activities and practice of peacebuilding as noted in Chapter Three. It was noted in that chapter that an alternative approach to examine the engagement of returning refugees in the post-conflict reconstruction is to associate their individual utilization of their resources towards their reintegration activities with the strategies of peacebuilding. Second it is observed that the aggregate of this individual deployment of returnee resources has the potential to contribute to the overall rebuilding of the communities of return as well as the broader peacebuilding of the country. Thus below are summary of the findings from this case with regards to both the formulated fourth hypothesis and the study's proposal for evaluating returning refugees as participants of peacebuilding process.

First, the case shows that both groups of returnees scattered to locations across the country have stimulated the state's increased presence and improvement of security especially in the remote areas of country. Moreover, their return and presence has also triggered humanitarian assistance and development programs that have been beneficial to all members of the community and to the state's reconstruction process. For example as noted above, the communities in and around the Voinjama area have seen a number of development projects such as the construction of schools, health sectors among others. These findings are similar to Jacobsen's (2002:578)

observation of refugees helping develop areas of their host country. Moreover, the returnees through choices such as where they settle after return partly explains both state and its peacebuilding partners' decision to extend their bureaucratic reach to such areas thus increase the welfare of not just the returnees but the community at large.

Second, applying the concept of returnee's resources, the analysis revealed that returning refugees have deployed significant resources towards their reintegration which collectively reflect their participation in their activities of peacebuilding. Returnees have used their resources towards agricultural production, trade, business and job creation, social changes, service delivery and security. Their respective economic activities include engaging in existing sectors and in other areas integrated their new skills and techniques into production processes. Moreover, returnees' integration into their various communities has provided the larger Liberian society with new inputs for the socio-political and economic spheres in the post conflict reconstruction agenda. For example, personal choices such as participating in neighbourhood watch activities or settling disputes over property ownership with stayees by adopting ideas and values from their forced migration experience therefore have fostered societal cohesion.

Third, in both cases as noted in hypothesis 4c, it was revealed that the returnees' reintegration activities and engagement with peacebuilding is strongly correlated with their resource levels. For example, their asylum acquired cultural resources – such as skills and educational levels – which were crucial in the area of economy and their engagement with the peacebuilding activity of restructuring the social and economic sectors. Thus, most of the returnees from Ghana, due to their higher levels of formal skills training and educational qualifications, are engaged in the formal sectors, while a substantial number of the returnees

from Guinea are engaged in small scale agriculture production and as tradesmen. What is very important, however, is that the returnees are spread across the various sectors of the economy and social spheres of Liberia, making them, essentially, personnel for the reconstruction activities.

Fourth, some of the returnees especially those from Ghana, hold a view of themselves as a model for others to follow. They believe that they have gained insights that others, including those who did not flee and those who fled to different countries, do not have. Knowledge of their rights as equal citizens is often mentioned as a very important achievement of their experience. They speak up at community meetings, when government and humanitarian agents visit them in their communities or through the media. They seem aware of the challenges of their country's reconstruction activities and express their discontent at attempts or government officials that they perceive as derailing the peacebuilding agenda.

Finally, notwithstanding the peacebuilding policy and practice constraints and the challenges of living in a country whose political, economic and social structures were destroyed by war, the case study reveals that returnees have demonstrated their agency through their reintegration choices and capabilities to re-tool their skills to suit the environment of post-conflict rebuilding. By this, the returnees in this case study have exercised agency in overcoming the compatibility of skills challenge as noted by Black and Amassari (2006).

The returnees in this study do not fit the image of refugees as passive, traumatized victims of war, which is the image that is commonly spread by the media as well as by aid organizations (Malkki, 1997). During their stay in asylum they acquired new skills, knowledge and learned to assess new situations and opportunities and take advantage of them. This and the

experience of forced migration in general made a return to the life they had once known unattractive to most of them. They returned with ideas, hope and enthusiasm to build their lives and to participate in rebuilding their communities and to live in unity. They want to have good schools, health services and thriving economy, but at the same time they want to participate in the economic, social and political life of their country. Moreover, the returnees are actively engaged in the rebuilding of their lives and that of the larger society. They have not necessarily been a burden on the already fragile state that has little or nothing itself, but that the two communities live “side by side ... benefitting mutually from the *resources* of the other” (Kibreab 2002:261; emphasis added). Overall, the accounts from the foregoing discussions and data examined support hypothesis 4. It is not just the resource level that determines returnees’ engagement in peacebuilding per se but the behaviour of state and IGOs towards the elimination of uncertainty and insecurity. This allows for the conclusion that return of refugees and the integration of returnee have links with the peacebuilding activities of Liberia that goes beyond the returnees’ mere arrival and the sheer numbers that return.

## **Chapter 8. Conclusion of Study**

### **8.0. Research Problem Revisited**

This study has aimed to demonstrate that refugee returnees through the experience of forced migration are transformed and that as agents, they possess resources for their reintegration and peacebuilding activities. Drawing on social constructivism and scholarship on forced migration and the politics of peacebuilding, this study has argued that returnees are active agents with the capacity to process social experiences and invent new ways of coping with life even under conditions of constraint. In order to create a better understanding of returning forced migrants and their engagement in peacebuilding, this study has challenged the established notion of refugee returnees as passive victims of violence, as recipients of aid and as lacking resources.

Social constructivism provided the theoretical lens through which this study looked at the forced migration experience, its impact on returnees' resources and how returnees engage in the politics of post-conflict peacebuilding. This theory as defined by Wendt (1987, 1992, 1999), and Barnett and Finnemore (1999, 2004) guided the study's analysis of the various identified structures, and themes derived from the case study. The choice of this particular theoretical framework was based on its ability to capture the multifaceted and multiple structures that refugee returnees encounter during each phase of the forced migration experience. Moreover, acknowledgement of structures as not all material and the importance of the individual (refugee) as an agent in his or her own life constitute another key factor for adopting social constructivism as the umbrella theory for this study. Within the umbrella of this analytical framework, structures of forced migration, returnee's agency, resource transformation, returnee's reintegration and links with post conflict reconstruction were discussed in the study.

Further, the ongoing peacebuilding process in Liberia and the fact that Liberian refugees are returning in their thousands from their various asylum destinations in the West African sub-region provided a good opportunity to test both the study's hypotheses and answer its questions. To reiterate, the thesis examined two cases. Using the comparative method of "most similar systems", the cases were made up of conducive and less conducive asylum conditions. Ghana represented a conducive whilst Guinea represented less conducive asylum conditions. The cases differed in outcomes, but were similar in many respects: they are both West African countries and members of UN, AU and ECOWAS; colonized by European powers; less developed; signatories to the global refugee regime and have two or more socio-cultural groups within their respective territories. The important question that emerges from the cases examined in this thesis is why Liberian returnees from Ghana gained relatively more resources (material and cultural) than their colleagues from Guinea and how these variations in resources are reflected in their individual reintegration as well as their participation in rebuilding of their country of return. A summary of the findings from this study are presented next to address this issue.

### **8.1. Summary of Findings and Theoretical Implications**

#### *Flight into Asylum*

People can be forced out of their communities for many reasons. As shown in this study one of the leading causes of the refugee situation is a civil war which renders a state incapable of providing security for lives and properties, thus the citizen's decision to seek asylum in a different country. The cause of the Liberian civil war which led to the displacement of the study's research participants as explained in Chapter 4 has its roots in the state sponsored politics

of exclusion from institutions of governance and human rights abuses against its citizens. As the rebel groups marched unto Monrovia destroying everything in their way, including civilian lives and properties, the study's informants made the individual and sometimes family decision to seek personal security beyond Liberia's boundaries. This and many other decisions by the informants reduced their experience of losses as they encountered the constraining structures of the war.

The analysis of the flight conditions of Liberian returnees to Ghana and Guinea supports the first hypothesis formulated in Chapter 3. It was shown that all the returnees experienced various resource losses associated with experiencing the war and fleeing to safety in asylum. Each narrator of the stories in this study noted that the threat or perceived threat to their lives was the main reason for fleeing into asylum. Their stories were also characterized by major resource losses, including death of family members, loss of family contact and support, family and personal homes, financial, and food and water deprivation. In short, all the study's informants experienced severe levels of personal, social, cultural and material resources losses before arriving in asylum, i.e. Ghana and Guinea. Thus, under immense pressure and threat to their lives, the refugees calculated and evaluated options such as where to seek refuge either within or outside. Their decisions were mostly associated with factors such as losses incurred or perception of potential future losses, the duration of the flight, and their proximity to the site of violence. This deliberative nature of the research participants in this study even under such conditions is in opposition to Kunz's (1973) idea of pressured individuals who act on impulse. To be sure variations exist in the period of deliberation and preparation; however this is no justification for dismissing the fact that the process of fleeing including the choice of asylum destination and

travelling plans such as means of transportation, decisions about resources to carry along and routes are planned.

Moreover, as demonstrated in Chapter 4, seeking asylum in Guinea, according to most of the study's informants, was a decision arrived at by considering two main factors. First the travel distance to Guinea was shorter than traveling to Monrovia and seeking protection from their government. Secondly, based on information regarding rebel and government forces activities in the southern part of Liberia including Monrovia, they concluded that not only was their government incapable of protecting them but they also ran the risk of encountering violence if they fled towards the capital which could result in further social resource losses. However, for those who sought asylum in Ghana, the majority of them revealed that it was not their first choice of refuge destination. However as, they encountered violence even in Monrovia where they had earlier sought refuge, they decided to move to the 'safe zone' created by ECOMOG officials where they subsequently joined the evacuation trips to Ghana. Furthermore, the few who arrived in Ghana after first seeking asylum in Ivory Coast shared similar flight experiences with those who sought asylum in Guinea. Indeed, Ghana becoming a major asylum destination for thousands of Liberian refugees is quite different from the general evidence of first asylum destinations of refugees in developing countries especially in Africa, where the overwhelming majority of refugees settle in states adjacent to the state from which they flee. It is therefore not surprising that both scholarly and policy discourse on Liberians flight to Ghana, have long portrayed the arrival of Liberian refugees in Ghana as an accident (see Essuman-Johnson 1994, 2011 and Dick 2002, Porter et al., 2008), which according to this study dismisses the agency of the refugees. The notion that the refugee's arrival in Ghana was an accident distracts from the

evidence that the potential refugees ultimately decided to venture out to look for security be it in Monrovia or at the sea port and finally when they boarded the naval ships and air crafts to Ghana. Moreover, although the majority of the refugees arrived through the Ghana armed forces' evacuation activities, this is not comprehensive of the flight experiences of the refugees. Very few discussions have been dedicated to those who arrived in Ghana either by travelling through other countries or arriving onboard passenger ships.

Choosing and settling in asylum states that are contiguous to or further away from the refugees' home state has constraints and opportunities. In the case of the refugees in Guinea, the main advantage was that flight duration was shorter thus reducing the resource loses associated with longer flight duration. However, this choice presented the returnees with constraints as revealed in the case of Guinea. Due to the close proximity of the area of settlement to Liberia, they were easily penetrated by rebel groups which caused further stress on the security of the host states. On the other hand, settling further away from the home state also meant a longer duration for flight and arriving in the asylum state with lesser resources such as deteriorating health conditions as was in the case of the refugees who arrived in Ghana. However, according to most of the returnees, living further away removed them from further personal and psychological trauma of encountering rebels or the perceived threat that their settlements could be invaded.

Finally, the agency of the refugees, demonstrated in their decision to flee outside the boundaries of their home state, as noted in Chapter 4, became one of the rallying points for the ECOWAS response and subsequently the international community intervention to end the war. Thus to borrow the words of Malkki (1996), the returnees were the "speechless emissaries"

whose action of flight helped changed the war structures of Liberia to one of post-conflict peacebuilding.

### *Returnees' Asylum Experience*

The structures of asylum were neither neutral nor eternal and the cases revealed that host state internal factors coupled with those associated with the presence of the refugees contributed to the changes and variations in the provision of asylum. The findings in Chapter 5 reveal that initially both Ghana and Guinea adopted open asylum policies and readily welcomed international support. However, as the stay of the refugees become prolonged, with worse asylum domestic security conditions and limited international support to provide for the socio-economic needs of the refugees, the host states shifted towards more restrictive asylum policies. In the case of Guinea, it is suggested that the historical and political context explains its initial adoption of an open door policy towards Liberian refugees; however, the scale of the refugee flow and the changing dynamics of the Liberian conflict -- particularly its capacity to spread across borders -- account for the later restrictive asylum practice adopted by Guinea. Those conditions and later restrictive asylum practices, the current study notes, created an atmosphere less conducive to an increase of the returnees' resources. With respect to Ghana, it was suggested that its open-door policy to the influx of Liberian refugees formed part of the broader agenda of the government's attempt to reclaim its post-independence glory of leading the continent and showing the world its transition towards more liberal and democratic governance with a commitment towards humanitarianism. However, internal economic situations, the numbers of refugees and their longer stay, with limited international solutions account for Ghana's later

somewhat restrictive approach as demonstrated in its commitment to repatriation as the solution for its Liberian refugee problem.

Moreover, the changing dynamics and arrival pattern of the refugees was also a major factor in changing the structures of asylum practices in both states. First, it was revealed that both Ghana and Guinea did not have national asylum policies and institutions to handle their asylum cases, however, with the increase in numbers and the prolonged stay of the refugees, they both shifted from their history of ad hoc policies and practices of asylum. Subsequently, both states created their local refugee policies and passed laws to guide the provision of asylum which internalized the rights and obligations of the refugees.

A major area of variation identified among both host states is their initial involvement in the creation of refugee settlements. As noted in Chapter 5, Ghana played a prominent role in the construction of camps and the Guinean government became involved five years after the first refugee influx (Van Damme, 1996). In the case of Ghana, it was revealed that since most of the refugees had no prior relations to Ghanaians, the government had to immediately set up reception centers and did not hesitate to use the term refugees since it considered the situation humanitarian. Guinea, on the other hand, was not immediately involved in the creation of settlement since most of the initial influx of refugees settled among friends and family and the local communities took care of them as visitors in their midst. However, when the refugee numbers increased and new arrivals had limited historical relations with Guineans, it created camps and reception centers located in the forest region which was closer to Liberia than to the capital Conakry. Eventually after the 2000 rebel incursions in Guinea, refugees were also ordered to move into camps in order to control refugee entry and settlement in Guinea. In other

words, both Ghana and Guinea's policies, which took humanitarian concerns into account initially, became political and continued to change (see Milner, 2009).

Furthermore, although both states met all the policy requirements as stipulated by the global refugee regime and OAU 1969 Convention and thus could be referred to as operating an open asylum policy, there was an action-word gap. Indeed, as noted above both Ghana and Guinea initially did not have state refugee policies and so they relied extensively on the OAU refugee policy and provided a legal basis for external actors, especially the UNHCR, to provide support and aid to the refugees. This changed with the passing of Ghana's refugee law in 1992 and Guinea's in 2000. However, as revealed by the current study, the respective state refugee policies stated among others the provision of services such as education and skills training, and health care among others, there was a gap between the implemented and the words within the policies. The inability or lack of these services coupled with political instability and the general lack of security especially in Guinea as revealed in this study led to limited opportunities for returnees to replace lost resources and/or to increase their resources during the more than a decade in asylum.

Refugees look for opportunities to improve their lives through their choices and responses to their new environment. Such responses are made not only in terms of their "legal, material and subsistence statuses, but also in relation to their individual and collective subjectivities, identities and all aspects of their existential experience" (Kaiser, 2008:376). Commenting on the implications of forced displacement on the lives of refugees, Martin (2004:13) asserts "for most refugees, the experience of forced migration requires continuing response to change, including the need to cope with traumatic new circumstances. Forced to

leave their 'homes' because of violence, they must often cope with new environments, new language, new social and economic roles, new community structures, new family relationships and new problems". The Liberian refugees in this study are no exception. Resignation for some then is a justifiable course of action under the circumstances. However, the narratives from the returnees reveal that as individuals and members of groups they actively employed a wide range of strategies which as argued in this study does not reflect their passiveness. Their respective strategies were not simply a means for survival, but a means to order their lives even under constraints. These vary from reliance on remittances from family and friends abroad to mutual and individual assistances from other refugees and members of the host community, active involvement in voluntary activities, economic activities such as petty trading, farmhands, housemaids, cultivating the land, involved in various areas of settlement/camp life and searching for opportunities to increase their resources especially skills and education.

The discussion in Chapter 5 illustrates that refugees are not idle, but are people willing to rebuild their livelihoods, given conducive conditions. The evidence from the data contrasts the sustained portrayal of refugees as one of helpless victims pouring across international borders in desperate need of assistance and perpetuates what is referred to as 'myth of dependence' (Kibreab, 1993). Therefore, the current study is an addition and provides empirical evidence to support the growing number of studies which have criticized the ways in which refugees are assigned an image of the eternal victim, forever dependent on whatever aid or assistance made available to them (Harrell-Bond, 1986; Malkki, 1996). The evidence from these two cases points to the fact that more than being helpless, passive victims, the refugees in both countries of asylum demonstrated their agency. Thus, they took advantage of the structures within their new

environment to gain and renew lost resources, negotiated and bargained even those that constrained them to reduce the resource losses. For example, while in Ghana, the refugees without permits and licences to work and with limited industry knowledge, they adopted strategies of partnering with the locals, to trade. In Guinea, when their initial allocated farms lands were taken away from them, they became labourers working for Guineans on the farms and homes to earn income. Others took advantage of loop holes in the monitoring system and continued to fell trees for fuel and sold them, albeit for less than the market value.

Finally, the returnees' resources were transformed. As the data in Chapter 5 revealed, every returnee gained and sometimes restored the lost resources as a result of their flight conditions. However, the resource gains (material and cultural) among the returnees from Ghana were relatively higher than those exiled in Guinea. The lower resource gains among the returnees from Guinea as noted in Hypothesis 2, is attributed to a combination of the less conducive asylum conditions (structural constrains) and the factors associated with the refugee returnee. Moreover some notable personal constraints among the returnees were associated with cultural values such as religious beliefs and language compatibility (language for conducting business). That is as noted by most of the returnees exiled in Guinea, due to the religious differences they either did not permit their children or were not permitted by their parents to attend the Guinean public school. However, some revealed they could easily overcome this constraint by not participating in the religious activities in the school. Therefore, the issue of language compatibility was a major challenge towards their ability to access high school and post-secondary education which were not provided for by the UNHCR. In addition, both groups of returnees noted asylum structural constraints such as control over access to jobs, work permits,

education, and non-recognition of educational and skills qualifications, property ownership, and job training. However, the majority of the returnees in Guinea noted security conditions in and outside the refugee camp/settlement as a major challenge against their livelihoods.

### *Returnees' Reintegration and Participation in Peacebuilding*

The findings in Chapters 6 affirms, the study's third hypothesis which notes that refugees are agents during the return process and that irrespective of the type of repatriation (self/assisted) they are important actors in the decision and process of repatriation. Compared to the IGO (the UNHCR) the state (asylum and home), refugee returnees generally have lesser resources; however; this limitation is no justification for dismissing their involvement in the process. As revealed in this study, the returnees made the final decisions such as when and how to return and what to carry along for their journey. The strength of including refugees as agents within repatriation analysis is in the deliberative nature of their decision-making as opposed to the impulsive and reactive nature assumed by Kunz (1973), Bascom (1996) and Zeager (1998). In other words, if refugees are considered as major actors it will then be possible to better predict who is a potential candidate for return and their choices such as the time, choice of settlements and mode of transportation among others. Among others this procedure will help reduce the structures of constraints, thus limiting the returnee resource losses associated with the return process.

In the data presented, the returnee's decision to return was mostly influenced by a combination of several factors, including assessment of their expectations of the resource losses or gains. Interestingly, in most of the cases as demonstrated in this study, the decision to return

was strongly coupled with a profound processing of personal (refugee) and host state transformation over the period of living in asylum. Living in asylum as reported in the study changed the research participants. Correspondingly the asylum states did not remain static. The refugees considered repatriation as a part of the process of building their lives and improving the prospects for their future. The data and narratives suggest that the returnees deliberated and strategically deployed their resources; they also had access to information which aided in their organization and return to Liberia. In contrast, the data analysis shows that even among self-returnees, the process was thought about and made strategic choices such as returning without family which ensured that their family still benefitted from returnee aid package. These factors and the agency of refugees go unnoticed in refugee repatriation policy and practices and deserve further scrutiny.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that returnees were far from passive or reactionary actors, and demonstrated their agency in various forms and capacities during the process of return. Their choices and decisions did not lead to changes in just their resources but also transformed the policies of repatriation as agreed upon by the UNHCR, the asylum and home states. For example, the refugees in Ghana protested the process, and made demands for things they believed would better meet their needs and interests, and should have formed part of the initial negotiations leading to the peace agreement, as well as the consultations for the tripartite agreement. Through their actions, they were able to push for a bigger returnee aid package that would include an increase in the cash amount from 5 to 100 USD for each returnee. Moreover, they were able to extend the period of repatriation by another two years; thus, the official return exercise ended in 2009, rather than the originally intended date of 2007. In addition, the UNHCR

noted that there were large numbers of refugees not showing up at the airport, although they had signed up to return and attended the information sessions. In the case of returnees from Guinea, they began returning to Liberia earlier than the schedule provided and agreed upon by the three institutions. The returnees decided to arrive earlier, although they knew the consequences, such as not benefiting from the individual returnee aid packages. Once they arrived, however, they requested that they also be given their packages and the UNHCR subsequently changed its policy to reflect the request of the self-returnees.

Often alluded to, but rarely studied in-depth nor practiced, returning refugees as demonstrated in this study have not been idle, waiting for aid or the government to build their lives. Since arriving in their respective communities, they have engaged in activities to improve upon their living conditions and extended their resources towards their society's reconstruction activities. Thus the fourth set of hypotheses which attributed the individual reintegration activities of the returnees as an indication of their participation in the process of peacebuilding was also confirmed. By applying the concept of returnees resources it was demonstrated that the returnees have deployed both their asylum acquired and replenished resources towards their reintegration activities and are engaged in the peacebuilding process in sectors such as the economy, governance, and social cohesion and security reforms. They have acted as agents with new ideas and ideals and availed their skills and techniques to the benefit of their communities and country.

The data collected for analysis of peacebuilding participation of returnees from Ghana as compared to those from Guinea reveal some differences between the two sampled groups. These differences as examined and explained in Chapter 7 are mainly associated with the sector areas

which are correlated with the gains in the returnee resources. That is generally, there were more returnees from Ghana engaged in the formal sectors of the economy compared to their colleagues who came from Guinea. For example, due to the relative gains of the cultural resources (post-secondary education and professional skills) of the returnees from Ghana, it was therefore, not surprising that first most of them chose to settle in the capital Monrovia. Secondly, most of the members of this group of returnees are engaged in economic activities which require such skills. Most of the returnees from Guinea are settled in areas distant from the capital and are engaged in farming which arguably requires less educational qualification. Since every strategy is important in peacebuilding (Ali and Mathews, 2004), the study concludes that Liberia stands to benefit from the diverse resources and experiences of the returnees. What remains important is that the returnees are not idling and waiting for handouts from the institutions of peacebuilding.

## **8.2. Policy Implications and Recommendations**

All the returnees in this study fled because of violence associated with war, the ideal solution to the refugee crisis is to remove political, security and socio-economic related factors that lead to people's decision to move out of their homes and communities to seek asylum. The factors included politics of abuse, exclusion of citizens and high levels of corruption among government officials rooted in a parochial interest of the elites. These factors are easily preventable, however, since the state-building project of the Liberian state lacked that foundation, the ultimate goal of the state and its peacebuilding partners is to construct a state that is democratic and has equality and accountability as its main pillars.

Unlike other civil wars in Africa, the war in Liberia was not based on ideological and religious differences, nor did it result in the expulsion of so called 'unwanted group (s)' and foreign interference. Secondly, since the negative effects of the war seem to have been evenly distributed across the country, no group seem to lay claim to victim and others perpetrators. These somewhat unique dynamics of the Liberian civil war, this study notes, make it relatively easier for peacebuilding activities compared to states such as Rwanda which have to find solutions not just to the war but as a society that has experienced genocide. Thus, the solution for Liberia is not to massively economically reward people as happened in Bosnia-Herzegovina to accept each other; rather those economic incentives should be directed at the rebuilding of the infrastructure and investment in the future of the numerous youth that were either forcibly conscripted or out of necessity joined the rebel groups. These and many other projects should be conducted in the open to avoid falling into the corruption trap that contributed to the war. Infrastructural development ought to be even distributed across the counties and not centered in Monrovia the capital city.

Preventive action is the most important strategy to avoid the flow of refugees. ECOWAS, AU, and the UN expectations on good governance practices for its member states are better instruments to curb state sponsored politics of exclusion, abuse of human rights and corruption. Internally, the citizens' access to their government and their opportunity to interrogate as well as to exercise their civic responsibilities through elections serves as a check on the excessive abuse associated with one party rule of the Americo-Liberians or the military regime under Doe. At times, pre-emptive intervention may be the best solution, in such situations, the intervening party will have to adopt a more vigorous peacekeeping approach and

not to side with one side over the other as was the case of the first ECOWAS intervention in Liberia (Vogt, 1992; Adebajo, 2002).

### *Asylum Policies and Practices*

In this study I have defined conducive asylum conditions as inclusive of asylum policy that is open and progressive asylum practices and without structural constraints; that is, if it recognizes the rights of refugees, with no restrictions on their movements, access to education and health care, and provide secured environment. As noted in Chapter 2, studies of the asylum policies of African countries (that is those who have national refugee policies) points to such ideals, thus making them open, however, in practice very few of them are able and willing to provide for these fundamental needs of refugees. It is important to note that this study does not deny the fact that the majority of the world's largest refugee populations are hosted by states that are themselves saddled with economic, security and political challenges and, sometimes, the arrival of the refugees accentuates or compounds these challenges. While this proposition has merit, the current study suggests that based on the current situation, African states could benefit from the burden sharing idea of the global refugee regime.

Although the evidence supports the claims by developing countries of bearing a higher proportion of the burden compared to the developed countries, the study posits that African states will have to create conditions which are welcoming of external support and open up spaces for external organizations to help. Indeed, very few countries will deny external support for refugees; however, insecurity and unstable political situations in some African countries have limited external assistance from organizations and individuals. While refugees flee from

violence, the majority of them find themselves in host countries that are themselves not secured or sometimes are party to the conflicts, thus limiting external actors' access to those countries. This was a major problem for Liberians and other refugees in Guinea and it was so severe, the UNHCR had to evacuate its foreign nationals working within the country. Moreover, very few external and internal actors trust authoritarian regimes or governments that are or perceived to be corrupt; thus it limits the opportunities of that asylum country's access to aid for their citizens as well as for the refugees they host. These structural constraints as they persisted in Guinea contributed to the lower returnee resource gains as compared to returnees exiled in Ghana. The most remarkable disparities in returnee resources as demonstrated in this study is the higher numbers of Liberian returnees that attained secondary school to post-secondary education and skills training among those that sought asylum in Ghana than those exiled in Guinea. Thus, the states acknowledge a moral responsibility that leads them to adopt and implement open asylum policies, yet the practicality of actually providing them has posed challenges. As demonstrated by this study, the creation of open asylum policies does not necessarily lead to open asylum practices. Refugee -hosting states, therefore, need to reconcile their open door policy with progressive asylum- hosting practices.

As revealed in this study, refugees look for opportunities to better themselves and access to higher education and resource skills training for refugees have the potential to make them productive individuals across boundaries. Thus, in concluding this section of the chapter, I shall attempt to make some policy recommendations that can help with the provision of education in general but most specifically secondary to post-secondary education, for refugees. A main proposal to increase the opportunities for refugees' access to post-secondary education is for

African host states to adopt best practices from their colleagues in the West especially in relation to tuition charges. As noted in Chapter 5, both Ghana and Guinea did not have a policy on tuition and school related charges for refugees. Thus, some institutions categorized them as international students with higher tuition charges. In view of this, the study suggests that states should set charges for the post-secondary education of refugees that are the same as for their own citizens, and creating opportunities and avenues for refugees to access national scholarships and/or loans and school bursaries. The argument that African host states have greater challenges in providing tertiary education for their nationals and are thus unable to give refugees similar opportunities, according to this study, has to be revised, and changes made to achieve equal access. This is especially important when the evidence does not favour claims of citizens objecting to their governments providing for refugees (see Crisp, 2000; Veney, 2006). For example, at the beginning of hosting Liberian refugees, Ghana was in the process of democratization and was implementing Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP), which included the introduction of user payment for social services such as education, healthcare etc. These austerity measures led to citizen protests; however, the ruling party won two consecutive elections, 1992 and 1996. Furthermore, these internal challenges notwithstanding, some post-secondary institutions were able to set the fees for refugees at a reasonable level without reprisals from Ghanaians or the government being punished at the polls. However, this laudable initiative has been discontinued, and was not a national policy, which limited numbers of refugees accessing this opportunity. It is therefore recommended that Ghana and other refugee hosting countries in the Global South need to go further by setting the cost of post-secondary education at the same level as for their citizens, and including it in their refugee laws and policies.

Second, there is a need for committed effort to address the challenges associated with providing post secondary education, by looking for alternative approaches, such as funding through UNHCR existing programs. One such alternative is attaching aid conditions to host countries with the objective of providing services to refugees. Although conditional aid is not a popular approach it still persists and evidence has shown that not all conditions are detrimental to the receiving state (see Rothchild, 1991; Burnell 1994; Baylies, 1995; Lewi, 1996).<sup>134</sup> This is to suggest that conditions of aid to especially countries hosting refugees should include a percentage for refugee education. For example, in 2006 the World Bank funded free meals for primary school children as part of Ghana's "leave no child behind" policy, yet although Ghana was hosting refugees they were not included in the policy as benefactors of this donor driven project. Programs such as these and many others can be extended to refugees at limited cost to the host countries, and the result will be more refugees acquiring skills and training, which will make them productive citizens of the world.

Finally, this thesis suggests that funding of education should not come at the expense of other forms of aid. For example, the UNHCR's withdrawal of food aid to refugees in Ghana in 2000 and 2003 resulted in refugees opting for either continuing their education or finding jobs to feed themselves and their families. As the narrators in this study revealed, when confronted with this challenge, most of them made a choice of quitting school and looking for jobs to provide for themselves and sometimes, their dependents.

---

<sup>134</sup> It is important to note that although these authors do not propose that conditional aid is good, they note that it was a major factor for African states to adopt more democratization processes in the 1990s.

These recommendations are not to suggest all African states should have a single blueprint form of refugee education, which is not possible since there are different contexts. However, good practices such as those identified by this study can be emulated by asylum countries in developing countries. Until refugee hosting states, especially those in Africa, begin to adopt not just open asylum policies but, progressive practices that give priority to provision of lifelong opportunities such as providing education and skills training among others the continent will continue to record lower education levels and skills status of returnees and the result will be more challenges to peacebuilding efforts. Furthermore, asylum countries must also realize that the provision of skills and education for refugees can yield benefits for the host state as well. That is, when citizenship is granted to refugees after years of living in exile, they become assets to be drawn on, and productive citizens of their new countries.

#### *Forced Migration and Peacebuilding Policies*

This study has also demonstrated that returnees were active actors who made considered decisions in their flight, exile, return and (re)integration. The returnees acted as agents capable of making decisions based on their circumstances and most notably their transformational experiences associated with been a refugee or returnee. One of the reasons for the Liberian refugees protest against the UNHCR in Ghana was their exclusion from the decision-making. This managerial procedure has to be avoided to reduce both structural constraints and the returnee resource losses associated with repatriation. Refugee involvement in repatriation, such as setting up the dates, mode of

transportation and existing UNHCR sponsored 'go and see' programs must be expanded because they play important roles in the refugees' decision to return.

As established in this study the UNHCR faces many difficulties in dealing with the contrasting interests of states and that of refugees, and seem to be under immense pressure from the donor community to show results. Allowing flexibility in the schedules and opening up the decision-making process to include refugees, admittedly could increase the organization's expenditure. However, based on the evidence in this study, this seems like a more prudent and effective management for refugee return in particular and the refugee situation in general. For example, the UNHCR noted that one leading challenges of the return process of Liberian refugees from the various West African states, including Ghana and Guinea, was the numerous 'no- shows' of the refugees at the appointed date of travelling. This could be avoided if the refugees are involved in the date selection and given ample time to enable them to decide on, for example, their crops and school activities for their children and sometimes themselves.

Furthermore, the engagement of refugee returnees in peacebuilding should not be limited to achieving a peace agreement requirement of repatriating refugees or to mere numbers of refugees that are repatriated. Rather it should include the forced migration experience of the returnee and how they engage in the process of peacebuilding. As demonstrated by Liberia, an urgently needed resource for its peacebuilding is skilled workforce, however this is lacking. This is not peculiar to Liberia but to most states engaged in peacebuilding since one of the effect of civil war is the flight of professionals and skilled personnel (Black, 2006). The data from this study

has demonstrated that such states could rely on skills and human capital acquired in asylum by returning refugees. In this direction the asylum phase of the refugee experience should be regarded as one of the strategies of peacebuilding where the refugees are aided with the opportunities for resource gains and replenishment of those lost as a result of cause of their flight and the period of flight.

As demonstrated in this study, the returnees have not been a burden on the already challenged Liberian state but have in diverse ways integrated into the community, building their lives and extending their resources towards the community. The returnees' potential to be active participants in peacebuilding depends nevertheless on the home state's capacity to consume the resources of the returnees. However, the Liberian state and its international partners are yet to harness the full potential of the returnees. To Liberia's credit, the LRRRC initiated a program of creating a data on the skills of returnees, however, the collection of data was limited to returnees' whose first point of arrival was Monrovia and secondly, most of the government institutions are not aware of the existence of such data to enable them draw from such pool of resources.

Thus, policy makers responsible for peacebuilding which include integration activities must assign returnees a central role as they are after all, another of the state's principal resources-whether in Africa, Asia, the Middle-East or South and Latin America. To achieve this, the international community, especially the UN as the external lead agent in peacebuilding and the home states need to interrogate their underlying assumptions concerning returnees and their participation in the process. This

has become important especially in an era where returning refugees are on the increase with high numbers of states embarking on peacebuilding activities.

Although the case study has shown that returnees and their integration activities cumulatively represent their participation in peacebuilding activities, this is not to suggest that every resource they returned with has only positive attributes. Neither has it been an objective to advocate for forcibly repatriating refugees for the sake of peacebuilding, nor to suggest that they are the only local actors with resources. The key issue here that is of importance to policymakers concerns the identification of conducive conditions of both home and asylum states that favours the investment of returnees' resources and adapting public policy to cope with changes and fluidity of forced migration.

### **8.3. Agenda for Future Research**

Having deployed social constructivism and the concept of returnee resource towards the transformational experience of Liberian refugees exiled in Ghana and Guinea and their engagement in peacebuilding, this study has contributed to understanding the politics of peacebuilding and forced migration in Africa. As observed in Chapter 3, adoption of the social constructivism analytical framework is not novel in forced migration issues in IR. However, the focus has not been on refugees as agents and capable actors rather it has been on IGOs and states. This study validates its viability in addressing the changes that refugee returnee resources undergo as a result of their displacement to different political, economic and security conditions. Notwithstanding the variations in context, there are indications that provisions and support for

refugee returnees and peacebuilding practices and processes are triggered by lessons-learned from around the world. To a large extent, this study has demonstrated that structures of forced migration enable and/or constrain refugees in Africa, which leads to transformation of both structures and returnees resources. Moreover, the data presented in this research proves the study's hypothesis that through their deployment of resources for their personal reintegration and rebuilding of the communities of return, the returnees are participants of post-conflict peacebuilding and not simply beneficiaries of the process.

It is imperative that scholars and researchers investigate these activities to draw both academic and practical lessons from them to guide future countries. This study points out that applying a social constructivist's account of structure and agency is a useful research tool to conduct such investigation. Perhaps, it may be the lens to contextualize forced migration and post-conflict peacebuilding experience of refugees in Africa. Certainly, a social constructivist's explanation of transformation in returnee's resources and structures of forced migration, as this study has demonstrated, is helpful in understanding the returning refugees' experiences of forced migration and their participation in peacebuilding activities as active and resourceful agents. Not only does such a theoretical and analytical model elucidate the agency of the refugees during their flight, asylum and return experience in Africa, but it also liberates the discourse on forced migration from simply assuming structures as all-constraining and politics of peacebuilding from its institutional bias and the top-down approaches.

The conclusions drawn in this study also require further research and testing of the four sets of hypotheses confirmed here. Particularly, the following are suggestions for future research:

First, it will be useful to investigate returning refugees' engagement and compare it with other local actors especially as IDPs. This study has contributed to a fraction of how local actors' engage in post-conflict peacebuilding in Africa. Further studies using the social constructivists' model to investigate the transformational experience of other local actors will further enhance the participation and collaborative effort of local actors with external actors to rebuild their home country. Evidently, this study demonstrates that it is worth understanding the relationship between the agency of refugees and structures of forced migration and its transformational effect on individuals. Additionally, the study has demonstrated that returning refugees are not necessarily a burden and have potential resources to be used for their lives and harnessed by the community of return.

Furthermore, the theoretical and analytical model has been successfully extended to the case of Liberian returnees from Ghana and Guinea. However, it is not a comprehensive story on the subject in the whole of Africa. To help deepen our understanding of the engagement of returning refugees in peacebuilding and the structures of asylum that enable them to gain new resources as well as replace those lost as a result of their displacement, the model will require further interrogation in other contexts in Africa that are similar and dissimilar to the case investigated in this study. For example, it will be useful to deploy this model to investigate the ongoing peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone which to some degree is similar to the conditions in Liberia and probably to South Sudan and Rwanda which are dissimilar to the case under reviewed. Additionally, the concept of returnee resources and transformational experiences can be useful in analyzing the different categories of refugees such as gender, aged, children, rural and urban refugees as well as camp refugees and non-camp refugees.

Finally, while the cases have involved refugee returnees displaced to other African countries with largely similar political and economic conditions as that of the country they fled from, extending this model to cases of third country resettled refugees in the West could yield additional insights into the usefulness of this alternative model to understanding returning refugees' engagement with peacebuilding. Applying this model to Western resettled refugees who return as expatriates or transnationals will be helpful in deepening the understanding of the role of nationals in the ever growing field of transnational actors and post-conflict peacebuilding. This study views the understanding of the transformation of refugee returnees' resources as critical to conducting the impact and evaluating the role of local actors (i.e. former refugees) in the politics of peacebuilding.

## Appendix A: Copy of Research Ethics Clearance Certificate



**Carleton University Research Office**  
Research Ethics Board  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Tory building  
1125 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6 Canada  
Tel: 613-520-2517  
Fax: 613-520-2521  
[ethics@carleton.ca](mailto:ethics@carleton.ca)

### Ethics Clearance Form

This is to certify that the Carleton University Research Ethics Board has examined the application for ethical clearance. The REB found the research project to meet appropriate ethical standards as outlined in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and, the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research*.

New clearance

Renewal of original clearance

Original date of clearance: 25 May 2009

Date of renewal	27 May 2010
Researcher	Amanda Coffie
Status	Ph.D. student
Department	Department of Political Science
Supervisor	Professor Chris Brown
Title of project	Hidden Resources: The Value of Returnees for Peace Building (A comparative study of Liberian Returnees from Ghana and Guinea)

Ethics approval expires on: 31 May 2011

#### All researchers are governed by the following conditions:

**Annual Status Report:** You are required to submit an Annual Status Report to either renew clearance or close the file. Failure to submit the Annual Status Report will result in the immediate suspension of the project. Funded projects will have accounts suspended until the report is submitted and approved.

**Changes to the project:** Any changes to the project must be submitted to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board for approval. All changes must be approved prior to the continuance of the research.

**Adverse events:** Should any participant suffer adversely from their participation in the project you are required to report the matter to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board. You must submit a written record of the event and indicate what steps you have taken to resolve the situation.

**Suspension or termination of clearance:** Failure to conduct the research in accordance with the principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research* may result in the suspension or termination of the research project.

---

Antonio R. Gualtieri, Chair  
Carleton University Research Ethics Board

**Appendix B: List of Liberian Government Department Participants in the study**

Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Ministry of National Defense

Ministry of Labor

Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (Monrovia and Voinjama)

**Appendix C: List of International and Local NGOs Participants in the study**

United Nations Development Program-Liberia

UNHCR (Monrovia and Voinjama)

Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (Voinjama)

International Red Cross Committee (Voinjama)

Christian Children Fund (Monrovia)

## **Appendix D: Standard Questionnaire Instrument for Returnees**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Gender:                      Age:                      Marital status:

Number of Children under 18 in your household:

Level of Education:    Occupation

### **B: BEFORE FLIGHT AND DURING THE WAR**

Name of Town/City of settlement?

Personal Resources (age, health):

Material Resources (Occupation, financial assets, property):

Social Resources (Marital status, Number of children and other family members under your care):

Were you involved in any formal organization? Political, Religious, NGO's or community base organizations such as trade/professional association and others?

Cultural Resources (Number of languages you spoke, level of education, occupational skills):

What were your main goals and needs in life?

Were there any demands that you thought were going to prevent you from achieving them?

If yes how did you intend to overcome them?

Did you loss any material, personal or social resources during the war and before you left for asylum?

If yes please describe them.

### **C: FLIGHT**

Time of flight:

Mode of flight and period of flight:

If you fled in a group what was the composition? (Family members and/or members from your community)

Did you personally know each member of the group you fled with?

Did you have any resources in your possession at the beginning of flight?

Did you lose any resources during the flight and what were the circumstances that led to the loss?

**D: LIFE in EXILE**

Date/Time of arrival?

Name of country and reception at the border?

Describe the area of settlement? Rural/urban?

What was the mode of settlement: camp or self-settlement?

Describe and name the area of settlement? Close to the boundary lines of Liberia and asylum country?

If you lived in a camp, was it located at the center or periphery of the town or community asylum?

Describe your available resources at arrival in asylum: Material resources (money, property etc) personal resources (health, age,) Social resources (Children, partner and other family members).

**E: RECEPTION/AID and REFUGEE AGENCY during Asylum:**

Did you have any prior relationship with a host family before your arrival?

Have you ever visited that community before your flight?

If yes what was the nature of your trip? Business, tour or family related?

Describe aid received from UNHCR immediately after arriving in asylum:

Describe the Aid and/or Reception from Host State/community:

Describe the reception from host (individuals or groups) upon arrival in the community:

Describe the forms of informal contacts you or your family had with host population (family visitations, market or trading places, school, religious activities, etc):

Did you notice any change in host reception during period of stay?

What was your role in camp administration or

Can you describe how you survive the years of exile?

## **F: CHANGES IN RETURNEE RESOURCES: ASYLUM PHASE**

### ***Material Resources***

Were you permitted to work and what occupational activity did you engage in?

What was the wage and was there any variation in the wage compared to citizens of the host state?

How easy was it to get a job?

### ***Personal Resources***

Describe your access to health care and housing:

### ***Cultural Resources***

Did you learn any new language?

If yes how? Formal or informal communication with people

Describe your access to education and level acquired

Did you have any form of skills training?

### ***Social Resources***

Did you make any new friends among the refugees and host community?

If yes how did these new relationship help in your day to day activities?

Did you ever find any friends or family during your stay in asylum that you had lost?

Can you describe how you made those contacts?

Did you have contacts with friends and family in Liberia while in asylum?

If yes how did you establish these contacts?

Did you have contacts with friends and family outside of Liberia and Guinea?

If yes were they also refugees or were already living abroad before the war?

Did a friend/family benefit from the resettlement program?

What were your goals and needs at this point and how were they affected by the flight and your new status as a refugee and conditions of asylum?

Describe any demands on your goals and needs while in exile and how did you overcome if you did?

To what extent did you feel at home in exile?

#### **G: RETURN and CONDITIONS at HOME**

When did you return to Liberia/ number of years since you returned?

Mode of return, (self-return or through the UNHCR/government repatriation)

Mode of transportation:

Would you describe return as forced or voluntary?

Why did you return?

Who did you discuss your return decision with? Who did you consult?

Did anyone specifically help resolve travel arrangements for returning to Liberia? Any formal organization/government involved?

Describe aid received upon return from UNHCR, UNDP and Liberian government and others:

Were you able to return to the place where you lived before exile?

If no why?

Describe the resources that you had with you immediately after arriving in Liberia?

(Material, personal, cultural and social)

What were your needs and goals upon return?

How did you expect to meet them?

Have you achieved/attained them?

Can you briefly describe your main concern once you arrived back here in Liberia?

Housing?

Financial/Money?

Legal matters/ownership of property left behind?

Emotional matters?

Are there any other demands in your new environment that you think prevent or constraint your efforts to achieving your goals and expectations of returning to Liberia?

If yes how do you intend to deal with these challenges?

### **SOCIAL CONTACT**

Have you made new friends? Are these new friends' stayees or returnees from other asylum countries?

If not why? Is it linguistic or economic related?

Do you feel at home or more like a foreigner?

Do you have a positive or negative opinion of your asylum country?

Briefly explain what informs your opinion about the asylum country?

How does life in Liberia compare to your life in asylum? Political, economic, security and others

### **H: RETURNEE'S REINTEGRATION ACTIVITIES**

Are you aware of the existence of the Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy Document?

Have you seen excerpts or a copy of the LPRS?

Have you, read all or portions of the LPRS?

### **SECURITY/PEACE**

Describe any involvement in the peace process that led to the end of the war?

Did you participate in the process of disarmament?

If yes briefly describe your participation?

Describe any role you have played to help maintain or improve upon security in your community?

### ***ECONOMY***

Form of employment and sector of employment?

Do you feel underemployed?

Have you receive any personal assistance from government/NGO?

Have you benefitted from any group or community assistance program from government/NGO?

### ***GOOD GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT***

What was your role in the 2005 elections?

Are you an opinion leader in your society?

What were your expectations of the government before returning?

Do you think the current government has fulfilled these expectations or do you think they are on course to doing so?

Views about the current system of government as compared to what you had before flight?

General views about the current government?

Are you involved in any volunteering activities in the society and what do you do?

Are you a registered member of any political organization?

Are you registered member of any civil society organization?

What is your source of news? Newspapers, radio/and/or both?

How often do you read the newspapers? Daily, weekly, monthly occasionally or never?

How often do listen to the news on radio?

***JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION: SOCIAL COHESION***

Briefly describe what justice means for you?

Do you prefer the criminal court system or the transitional justice system?

Have you heard about the TRC and how and when did you hear about it?

Did you petition the TRC to seek redress or have you appeared before the commission to give evidence?

Did you ever attend any of the hearing sessions in your community or outside?

Briefly describe your perception of the process of justice and reconciliation in your local community?

Have you retrieved/ in the process of retrieving properties from others since you arrived?

If yes how would you describe the process?

**I: FUTURE**

Do you have any intention of returning to the country of asylum?

If yes why?

Any norm/value from the exile community that you think when applied to Liberia could help in the rebuilding process and change Liberia for the better?

Briefly describe what you perceive to be your role in rebuilding Liberia and how you can achieve that?

Are there any constraints towards your intent to contribute towards the process of peace building?

## Appendix E: Standard Consent Form for Interviews



### Statement of Consent

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

I, the undersigned, agree to participate in the research on the participation of returnees in Liberia's peacebuilding activities conducted by J. Amanda Coffie of Carleton University, Canada.

I acknowledge that I will be asked to respond to a series of interview questions for about 2 hours and that my participation in this research is entirely voluntary. The questions shall include issues related to resource gains/losses during flight, exile and return. I understand that I am under no obligation to agree to participate in the interview, and I can withdraw my participation at any time during the duration of this research assignment and have any information associated with my participation removed from the assignment.

Also, I recognize that the researcher will ensure complete confidentiality and will protect my identity. Indeed, I understand that neither my name nor my specific title will appear in the published study unless my permission is sought. Furthermore, I understand that the original information collected in this research will not be shared with any other person, except the dissertation committee, unless I authorize it. **In addition, I understand that in the event that a quotation and/or a personal story of mine are used in the final report my identity shall be disguised with a false identity. Finally, I appreciate the fact that the researcher will ensure that my identity is protected however, since the research adopts a snowball approach to recruit the participants, it is possible for other participants to know about my participation in this research. This notwithstanding the researcher will endeavor to protect my identity and provide me with the greatest level of confidentiality as possible.**

All audio cassette recordings of this interview will be destroyed when the research is concluded.

Please contact Amanda Coffie of Department of Political Science, Carleton University Canada, at +1613-520-2777, email: Amanda\_coffie@ Carleton.ca

- I agree to permit a tape recorder to be used in this interview YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
  
- I agree that quotations from this interview may be used in written work arising from this study and that they may be attributed directly to me YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
  
- I agree that quotations from this interview may be used in written work arising from this study but may **NOT** be attributed to me or to a title that could be attributed to me. YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Participant s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix F. Standard Letter of Information for Interviews



Dear Honourable Minister,

I am a PhD student at the Department of Political Science, Carleton University, Canada. In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the PhD degree and working with a committee made up of Dr. Chris Brown (Chair) Dr James Milner and Dr Blair Rutherford, I am writing a dissertation on refugees who return to their home country and their contribution towards peace-building. In particular, I am seeking to analyse the effect of exile conditions on the resource pool of returnees and how that affects their contribution towards the process of post conflict reconstruction.

Further to this research, I will be in Monrovia until August 10, 2009. I would be very grateful if the minister or a representative of your ministry would kindly afford me the honour of an audience, at the time of his/her convenience during my stay in Liberia, to discuss this research for about 30 minutes. I am particularly interested in the Liberian government's policies and programs of rebuilding the country and your ministry's mandate/responsibilities in this broad agenda. I will also be very grateful for the minister's or representative's reflection on issues of returnee's as resources for peace-building. You are under no obligation to answer any question and may withdraw from the interview at any moment during the duration of this research and have any information associated with your participation removed from the study.

I will ensure complete confidentiality and will protect your identity. Indeed, neither your name nor your title will appear in the publication unless you specifically grant permission. Besides members of the dissertation committee, the original information collected in this research will not be shared with any other person unless you authorize it. All audio recordings of this interview will be destroyed when the research is concluded.

I will combine the insights gained from the interviews with review of policies and documents related to the issue under study to write the dissertation and a series of academic papers which may be published in scholarly journals. While the results of the research may not benefit you directly, by participating in the research you will be contributing to the production of potentially insightful ideas about the issue. In addition, I hope that a clearer understanding of this case might be useful in efforts to address similar issues in other countries that are struggling to rebuild their states and to overcome the legacies of civil war and antidemocratic political systems. Your participation may also help increase knowledge about returnees and peace-building in general.

Please contact Amanda Coffie of Department of Political Science, Carleton University Canada, at (613) 520 2777 (Canada) and (Liberia), email: [Amanda\\_coffie@Carleton.ca](mailto:Amanda_coffie@Carleton.ca) and/or Dr. Chris Brown Department of Political Science, Carleton, (613) 520-2600 Ext. 8734 email: [Chris\\_Brown@carleton.ca](mailto:Chris_Brown@carleton.ca) with any concerns about this research.

Furthermore, the research project has been reviewed and received ethics clearance by the Carleton University Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or questions about your involvement in the study please contact the ethics committee chair. The chair's name and contact information is as follows:

Professor Antonio Gualtieri, Chair  
Carleton University Research Ethics Committee  
Office of Research Services  
Carleton University  
1125 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6  
Tel: 613-520-2517  
E-mail: [ethics@carleton.ca](mailto:ethics@carleton.ca)

Yours faithfully,

Amanda Coffie

## **Bibliography**

Adamolekun L. (1976) *Sékou Touré's Guinea: An Experiment in Nation Building* (Harper and Row: New York)

Adebajo A., (2002) *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG and Regional Security in West Africa*. (Lynne Rienner: London)

Adebajo, A., (2002) *Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau*, (Lynne Rienner: London)

Adelman, H. and Sorenson (1994). *African Refugees: Development Aid and Repatriation*. (Westview Press: Boulder)

Adelman, H., (1998). 'Why Refugee Warriors are Threats', *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vo.18 No.1 pp 49-69.

Adelman, H., (2002). 'Refugee Repatriation', in Stedman, Rotchild and Cousens, eds, *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*. (Lynne Rienner: Boulder)

Adelman H. (2003) "The Use and Abuse of Refugees in Zaire" in Tanner and Stedman eds. *Refugee Manipulation: War, Politics and Abuse of Human Suffering* (Brookings Institution Press: Washington)

Adepoju, A., (2008) "Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa" A background paper commissioned by the Nordic Africa Institute for the Swedish Government White Paper on Africa

Adler E., (2006) 'Constructivism and International Relations' in Carlsnaes W., Risse T., Simmons B. A. ed. *Handbook of International Relations* (Sage Publications)

Adler E. and Clark R., (1999) *How it's Done: An Invitation to Social Research* (Wadsworth: Belmont)

African Economic Outlook "Ghana Country Report 2010" Accessed April 23, 2011 from, <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/countries/west-africa/ghana/>

African Economic Outlook “Guinea Country Report 2011” Accessed April 23, 2011 from <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/countries/west-africa/guinea/>

Ager A. (1999) *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration* (Continuum: London)

Akol, J. (1987) “Southern Sudanese Refugees: Their Repatriation and Resettlement after the Addis Ababa Agreement” in Rogge, J. ed. *Refugees: A Third World Dilemma* (Rowan and Littlefield: New Jersey)

Allen T. (1996) ed., *In Search of Cool Ground: War, Flight and Homecoming in Northeast Africa* (Africa World Press: Trenton)

Allen T., and Morsink, H., (1994) eds., *When Refugees go Home: African Experiences* (Africa World Press: New Jersey)

Allen T., and Turton, D. (1996) “In Search of Cool Ground” in Allen T. (ed.) *In Search of Cool Ground: War, Flight and Homecoming in Northeast Africa* (World Press: Trenton)

Ammassari S., and Black R., (2001) (ed.) *Harnessing the potential of migration and return to promote development*. Migration Research Series (IOM)

Amnesty International (1997) “Fear of *Refoulement*: Refugees from Liberia on board the *Bulk Challenge* may be denied Right to seek asylum (Amnesty International: West Africa)

Amnesty International (2001a) Refugees must not be forced to choose between death in Sierra Leone or death in Guinea (Amnesty International Press Office: London)

Amnesty International (2001b) Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone: A Human Rights Crisis for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons. (Amnesty International: AFR 05/005/2001)

Anarfi, J., Kwankye, S., Ababio O., and Tiemoko R., (2003) “Migration from and to Ghana” Development Research Center on Migration, Globalization and Poverty Working Paper C4.

Annan, K., (1998), "The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa" Report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Security Council. ([TD/] UNCTAD/NGLS/121): 1-47.

Arhin K. (1994) "The Recommendation of Ghanaian Returnees from Nigeria in 1983 and 1985." in Allen and Morsink, ed. *When Refugees Go Home* (Africa World Press: New Jersey)

Arowolo, O. (2000) 'Return Migration and the Problem of Reintegration' *International Migration* Vol.38 No. 5 pp. 59-82

Awusabo-Asare K. and Anarfi J.K. (2000) "Push and Pull Factors of International Migration. Country Report: Ghana" Eurostat Working Papers 2000/ E(10)

Bach L. (1989) "Third Country Resettlement" in Loescher and Monahan ed. *Refugees and International Relations* (Oxford University Press: New York)

Baldwin D. (1993) ed. *Neorealism and Neoliberalism* (Columbia University Press: New York).

Bakewell O. (2006) Repatriation: Angolan Refugees or Migrating Villagers? in Essed, Frerks and Schrijvers, eds. *Refugees and the Transformation of Societies: Agency, Policies, Ethics and Policies* (Berghahn Books: Oxford)

Bakewell, O (2008) "Research Beyond Categories: The Importance of Policy Irrelevant Research in Foeced Migration" *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 21 No. 4 pp. 432-453

Bariagaber A. (1999) "States, International Organizations and the Refugee: Reflections on the Complexity of Managing Refugee Crisis in the Horn of Africa" *Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 37 No. 4, pp 597-619

Bariagaber A. (2001), "The Refugee Experience: Understanding the Dynamics of Refugee Repatriation in Eritrea" *Journal of Third World Studies* Vol. 18. No. 2, pp 47-70

Bariagerber A. (2006) *Conflict and the Refugee Experience: Flight, Exile and Repatriation in the Horn of Africa* (Ashgate: Hampshire)

Barnett M. and Finnemore M. (1999) "The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations" *International Organization* Vol. 53 pp. 699–732

Barnett M. and Finnemore M. (2004) *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics* (Cornell University Press: New York)

Barnett, M. and Zucher, (2009) "The Peacebuilder's Contract: How External State-building reinforces Weak Statehood" in Paris and Sisks eds. *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Post war Peace operations* (Routledge: London)

Bascom, J., (1994). "The Dynamics of Refugee Repatriation: The Case of Eritreans in Eastern Sudan", in Gould, W. and Findlay, M. eds., *Population Migration and the Changing World Order*. (Wiley and Sons: London)

Bascom (1996) "Reconstituting households and reconstructing home areas: the case of returning Eritreans" in Allen T. ed., *In Search of Cool Ground: War, Flight and Homecoming in Northeast Africa* (World Press: Trenton)

Bascom, J., (1998) *Losing Place: Refugee Populations and Rural Transformations in East Africa* (Berghahn Books: New York)

Bascom J. (2005). "The Long, 'Last Step'? Reintegration of Repatriates in Eritrea" *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 18 No. 2 pp165-180

Bayart, J.F. (1986) "Civil Society in Africa" Chabal P. ed. *Political Domination in Africa* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge)

Bayefsky, A. and Doyle, M. (1999) *Emergency Return: Principle and Guidelines* (Center of International Studies: Princeton)

Baylies C. (1995) "Political Conditionality and Democratization" *Review of Political Economy* Vol. 22 No. 65

BBC (2011) "Liberia Vote: Prince Johnson backs President Sirleaf"  
"<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15347980> .

BBC “Ghana Country Profile” available online at  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country\\_profiles/1023355.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1023355.stm) (June 2010)

BBC “Guinea Country Profile” available online at  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country\\_profiles/1032311.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1032311.stm) (July 2010)

BBC “Timeline: Guinea” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1032515.stm> (July 2010)

BBC “Timeline; Ghana” [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country\\_profiles/1023444.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1023444.stm) (June 25, 2010)

Berdal M., and Malone D., (2000) ed. *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (IDRC: Ottawa)

Betram E. ‘Reinventing Governments: The Promise and Perils of United Nations Peacebuilding’  
*Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 39. No. 3 pp.387-418

Betts and Loescher (2011) *Refugees in International Relations* (Oxford University Press: New York)

Betts, A. (2006). “The Politics, Human Rights and Security Implications of Protracted Refugee Situations”. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 19 No.4, pp.509-14.

Betts, A. And Durieux J. (2007). “Convention Plus as a Norm Setting Exercise”. *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 20 No. 3 pp. 509-35

Betts, A. (2009) *Forced Migration and Global Politics* (Wiley Blackwell: Chichester)

Black R., and Gent S., (2004) Defining, Measuring and Influencing Sustainable Return: The case of the Balkans” working paper No.17, (Development Research Center on migration, Globalization and Poverty: University of Sussex)

Black R., and Koser. K (1999) ed. *The End of the Refugee Cycle: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*, (Berghahn Books: New York)

Black, R and Sassy, M., (1997) "Forced Migration, Land-Use Change and Political Economy in the Forest Region of Guinea" *African Affairs*, Vol. 96, No. 385, pp. 587-605

Black, R., (2006), 'Return of Refugees: Retrospect and Prospect' in Dumper M (ed.) *Palestinian Refugee Repatriation*. (Routledge: New York)

Black, R., Koser K., Munk K., Atfield, G., D'Onofrio, L., and Tiemoko, R. (2004) *Understanding Voluntary Return. Home Office Online Reports* (London Home Office)

Blavo, E. Q., (1999). *The Problem of Refugees in Africa* (Ashgate Publishing: Vermont).

Blitz, B., (2003) "Refugee Returns in Croatia: Contradictions and Reform" *Politics* Vol. 23 No.3, pp.181-91

Blitz, B., Sales R., and Marzano, L., (2005) "Non-Voluntary Return? The Politics of Return to Afghanistan" *Political Studies*: Vol. 53, pp.182-200

Bøås M., (2005) "The Liberian Civil War: New/Old War?" *Global Society*, Vol. 19 No.1 pp.73-88

Bøås M., (2009) "New Nationalism and Autochthony-Tales of Origin as Political Cleavage" *Africa Spectrum* 44(1), 19-38.

Bøas M. and Stig K. (2010) "Security Sector Reform in Liberia: An Uneven Partnership without Local Ownership" *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* Vol 4. No. 3 pp 285-303

Boli J, and Thomas GM, (1998) eds. *Constructing World Culture: International Nongovernmental Organizations Since 1875*. (Stanford University Press: Stanford)

Boutros-Ghali, B., (1992), 'An Agenda for Peace: Report of the Secretary-General', (United Nations).A/47/277: S/24111: 3.

Brady H.E. and Collier D., (2010) *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared standards* (Rowman Littlefield: Lanham)

Brown, R., (1985). From Camp to Village: Preparing to Initiate Development Activities Among Refugees.

Brydon L. 1985 "Ghanaian Responses to the Nigerian Expulsions of 1983" *African Affairs* vol. 84 no.337 pp 561-586

Buell, R., (1965) *Slavery and Peculiar Solution* (Frank Cass: London)

Burnell P. (1994) "Good Government and Democratization: A sideways look at aid and political conditionality" *Democratization* Vol. 1. No.2

Bush, K., (1995), 'Towards a Balanced Approach to Rebuilding War-Torn Societies', *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Vol.3 No.3 pp.49-69.

Caplan R. (2004) "Partner of Patron? International Civil Administration and Local capacity-building" *International Peacekeeping* Vol. 11 No.2. pp.229-247

Chambers, R. (1986). "Hidden Losers: The Impact of Rural Refugees and Refugee Programs on Poor Host" *International Migration Review* Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 245-63

Chambers R. (1996) *Settlement Schemes in Tropical Africa: A study of Organizations and Development* (Routledge: London)

Checkel J. (1998) "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory". *World Politics* Vol. 50 pp. 324-48

Chen, G. (2004). "A Global Campaign to End Refugee Warehousing" *World Refugee Survey, Warehousing Issue* No.7.

Chandler, D. (2004) "The Responsibility to Protect? Imposing the Liberal Peace" *International Peacekeeping* Vol. 11. No. 1 pp.83-101

Chandler, D. (2005) "Introduction: Peace without Politics?" *International Peacekeeping* Vol.12 No. 3

Chesterman, S (2004). *You, the People. The United Nations, Transitional Administration and State-building* (Oxford University Press: Oxford)

Chimni, B.S. (1998) "The Geopolitics of Refugee Studies: A View from the South" *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 11. No. 4, pp. 350-374

Chimni B.S. (1999) "From Resettlement to Repatriation: Towards a Critical History of Durable Solutions" (UNHCR: Geneva)

Chimni B.S. (2002) "Refugees, Return and Reconstruction of Post-Conflict Societies: A critical Perspective" *International PeaceKeeping*, Vol. 9 No. 2 pp. 163-180

Chimni, B. S., (2003). 'Post-conflict Peacebuilding and the Return of Refugees: Concepts, Practices and Institutions', in Newman and Van Selm, eds. *Refugees and Forced Displacement*. (United Nations University Press: Tokyo).

Christensen, H., (1982) "Survival Strategies for and by Camp Refugees: Report on a Six-Week Exploratory Sociology Field Study into the Food and Situation of Refugees in Camps in Somalia". (UNRISD: Geneva)

Clapham, D. (2002) "The Challenge to the State in a Globalized World" *Development and Change* Vol. 33. No.5 pp.775-95

Cockell, J.G. (2000) "Conceptualizing Peacebuilding: Human Security and Sustainable Peace" in Pugh M ed., *Regeneration of War-Torn Societies* (Macmillan: London)

Coffie J.A. (2003) "Impact of Refugees on their Host Community; The case of Liberian Refugees in Ghana" (unpublished essay presented to the department of Political Science: University of Ghana)

Cohen, J. (1985) "Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Research and Social Movements". *Sociological Research* No. 52 pp 663-716.

Cohen J. (1987) "Structuration Theory and Social Praxis" in Giddens A. and Turner J. ed. *Social Theory Today* (Stanford University Press: Stanford)

Cohen, R. (2009). "Humanitarian Imperatives Are Transforming Sovereignty". *The Northwestern Journal of International Affairs* Vol. 10 No.1.

Cohen, R., and Deng F. (1998) *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. (The Brookings Institution: Washington).

Coles G., (1985) "Voluntary Repatriation" (UNHCR: Geneva)

Coles, G., (1989) 'Approaching the Refugee Problem Today', in Loescher, G. and Monahan eds. *Refugees and International Relations* (Oxford University Press: Oxford).

Collier P., and Hoeffler, A., (2004) "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56, pp. 563-595.

Collinson, S. (2011) "Forced Migration in the International political Economy" in Betts and Loescher eds. *Refugees in International Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press)

Colville, R. (1993) "Resettlement: Still Vital After All These Years" *Refugees*, No. 94 pp.4-8.

Constant, A. and Massey, D.S. (2002) 'Return Migration by German Guest workers: Neoclassical versus New Economic Theories' *International Migration*, Vol. 40 No. 4, pp. 5-38

Cornish, F., Peltzer and MacLachlan M. (1999) 'Returning Strangers: "The Children of Malawian Refugees Come Home' *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol.12 No.3 pp 264-83

Cousens E., Kumar C. and Wermester K., (2001) eds., *Peacebuilding as Politics: Cultivating Peace in Fragile Societies* (Lynne Rienner: London)

Crisp, J., (1999) "Who has Counted the Refugees?: UNHCR and the Politics of Numbers", *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 12, (UNHCR: Geneva)

Crisp, J., (2000) "A State of Insecurity: The Political Economy of Violence in Kenya's Refugee Camps". *African Affairs* Vol. 99, pp.610-32.

Crisp J. (2000) "Africa's Refugees: Patterns, Problems and Policy Challenges" *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* Vol. 18. No. 2., pp 157-178

Crisp, J. (2001) "Learning for a Future: Refugee Education in Developing Countries" (UNHCR: Geneva)

Crisp, J. (2003). "Protracted Refugee Situations: Some Frequently Asked Questions" Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit, (UNHCR: Geneva)

Crisp, J (2004) "The Local Integration and Local Settlement of Refugees: A Conceptual and Historical Analysis," Working Paper No. 102, *New Issues in Refugee Research* (UNHCR: Geneva).

Crisp J., (2005) "No Solution in Sight: the Problem of Protracted Refugee Situations in Africa" (Working Paper for Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California: San Diego)

Cuny, F. and Stein B.. (1989). "Prospects and Promotion of Spontaneous Repatriation", in Loescher and Monahana L. ed. *Refugees and International Relations* (Oxford University Press: Oxford)

Daddieh, C. (1999) "Beyond Governance and Democratization in Africa: Toward State Building for Sustainable Human Development" *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* Vol. 1 No. 1 pp. 1-16

DaCosta, R., (2004) "Maintaining the Civilian and Humanitarian Character of Asylum" Legal and Protection Policy Research Series, UNHCR Department of International Protection.

Daley P., (2006) "Challenges to Peace: Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes region of Africa" *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.27 No. 2, pp. 303-19

David C.H, (1999) "Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?: Liberal (Mis)steps in the Peace Process" *Security Dialogue* Vol. 30 No 25 pp 24-41

de Waal, A. (1997). *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa* (Indiana University Press: London).

Diatta M., and Mbow N. (1999) "Releasing the Development Potential of Return Migration: The Case of Senegal" *International Migration* Vol. 37 No. 1.

Dick, S., (2002a) "Liberians in Ghana: Living without Humanitarian Assistance". *New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper* No. 57, (UNHCR: Geneva)

Dick, S., (2002b) "Responding to Protracted Refugee Situations. A case study of Liberian Refugees in Ghana" (UNHCR: Geneva)

Dogbevi E, (2008) "Liberian refugees a threat to Ghana's security – Bartels", <http://news.myjoyonline.com/news/200804/14930.asp> (Accessed on June 20, 2010)

Donna, G., and Berry, J.W., 'Refugee Acculturation and Re-acculturation' in Ager, A. (ed.) (1999) *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration*. (London: Cassell)

Donnelly J. (1982) "International Human Rights: A Regime Analysis" *International Organization*, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 599-642

Doty R. (1997) "A Critical Exploration of the Agent-Structure Problematique in International Relations Theory" *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 3 No. 3 pp 137-139

Dowty, A., and Loescher G. (1996). "Refugee Flows as Grounds for International Action". *International Security* Vol. 21 No.1 pp 43-71.

Duffield M., (2001) *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security*, (Palgrave MacMillan: London)

Eastmond, M and Öjendal, J. (1999). 'Revisiting a 'Repatriation Success': The Case of Cambodia', in Black and Koser, eds., *The End of the Refugee Cycle: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*. (Berghahn Books: New York).

Ellis, S. (1998) "Liberia's Warlord Insurgency." in Clapham ed. *African Guerrillas*, (James Currey: Oxford)

Ellis S (1999) *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and Religious Dimension of an African Civil War*. (New York University Press: New York)

Essed, P., Frerks G., Schrijvers, J., (2006) eds. *Refugees and the Transformation of Societies: Agency, Policies, Ethics and Policies* (Berghahn Books: Oxford)

Essuman-Johnson, A. (1994): Ghana's Response to the Liberian and Sahelian Refugees Influx. Paper prepared for the 4th IRAP Conference on Refugees, Somerville College, Oxford University, 5-9 January, 1994

Essuman-Johnson A., (1996) "Liberian and Sahel Refugees in Ghana" in Nugent P., and Asiwaju A., ed., *African Boundaries: Barriers, Conduits and Opportunities* (A Cassell Imprint: London)

Essuman-Johnson, A. (1996) Refugees and Migrants in West Africa, *FASS Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No.1.

Essuman-Johnson A., (2011) "When Refugees Don't Go Home: The Situation of Liberian Refugees in Ghana" *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies* Vol. 9 No. pp 105-26

Fagen W. P., (2003) "Post-conflict, Reintegration and Reconstruction: Doing it Right Takes A While" in Steiner, N., Gibney M, and Loescher G ed., *Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees and Human Rights*. (Routledge Press: New York)

Fagen W. P. (2009) "Peace Process and IDP Solutions" *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Vol. 28 No. 1 pp. 31-58

Fielden A. (2008) Local Integration: an Under-reported Solution to Protracted Refugee situations." *New Issues in Refugee Research* No. 158 (UNHCR: Geneva)

Fierke K. M., (2007) *Critical Approaches to International Security* ( Polity: Cambridge UK)

Finnemore M. (1993) "International Organizations as Teachers of Norms: the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and Science Policy" *International Organization* Vol. 47 pp. 565-97

Finnemore M. (1996) *National Interests in International Society*. (Cornell University Press: New York)

Finnemore M. (1996). "Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism". *International Organization* Vol. 50 No.2 pp. 325–47

Finnemore, M., and Sikkink, K., (2001) 'Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics'. *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol.4

Florini A. (2000) *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society* (Carnegie Endowment International Peace: Washington DC)

Fosu, A.K. (1992). "Political Instability and Economic Growth: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 40, pp. 829-41.

Foundation for International Dignity (FIND) "Guinea Assessment Report 2003"  
[www.dignityinternational.org](http://www.dignityinternational.org)

Francis D. (2008) ed. *Peace and Conflict in Africa*, (Palgrave Macmillan: New York)

Frelick B. (1992) "Preventive Protection' and the Right to Seek Asylum: A Preliminary Look at Bosnia and Croatia" *International Journal of Refugee Law* Vol. 4 No. 4.

Frelick B. (2007) "Paradigm Shifts in the International Response to Refugees" in White and Marsella ed. *Fear of Persecution: Global Human Rights: International Law and Human Well-being* (Rowman and Littlefield: Boulder)

Furley O., and May R., (2006) eds., *Ending Africa's Wars: Progressing to Peace* (Ashgate Publishing: Hampshire)

Gall M., Borg, W., Gall J. (1996) *Educational Research: An Introduction* (White Plains: New York)

Galtung, J. (1996) "Violence, Peace and Peace Research", *Journal of Peace Research*, pp. 167-191

Gebe, B. (2008) "Ghana's Foreign Policy at Independence and Implications for the 1966 Coup d'état" *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol.2 No.3.

Gerdes F. (2006) "Forced Migration and Armed Conflict an Analytical Framework and A Case Study of Refugee-Warriors in Guinea" (Universität Hamburg – IPW Research Unit of Wars, Armament and Development: Hamburg)

Ghana Ministry of Information, (November 1, 1966) *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa: Documentary evidence of Nkrumah's interference in the affairs of other African States* (State Publishing Corporation: Accra)

Ghana Refugee Board (GRB) and UNHCR-Ghana (no date given) "Help Refugees Help Themselves: The Management of Refugees in Ghana" Accra-Ghana.

Ghosh B. (2000) ed., *Return Migration, Journey of Hope or Despair?* (International Organisation for Migration: Geneva)

Giddens A. (1984). *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. (Polity: Cambridge)

Ghana Statistical Services Annual Report 2010 (Accra, Ghana)

Gold, S. (1993). *Refugee Communities: A Comparative Field Study* (Sage: Newbury Park)

Goodwin-Gill, G. (1989) "Voluntary Repatriation: Legal and Policy Issues" in Loescher G. and Monahan L., ed. *Refugees and International Relations* (Oxford University Press: New York)

Goodwin-Gill, G. (1996), *The Refugee in International Law*, 2nd edition, (Oxford University Press: Oxford).

Goodwin-Gill, G. (1999) "Refugee Identity and Protection's Fading Prospect", in Nicholson, F. and Twomey, P. eds. *Refugee Rights and Realities*, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge).

Goodwin-Gill, Guy (2009) "Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees" (Codification office, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations, New York)

Grace J. and Mooney (2009) "Peacebuilding through the Electoral Participation of Displaced Populations". *Refugee Survey Quarterly* Vol. 28 No. 1 pp. 123-40

Green D. (2002) *Constructivism and Comparative Politics* (M.E. Sharpe: New York)

Hakim C. (1987) *Research Design: Strategies and Choices in the Design of Social Research* (Allen and Unwin: London)

Hall, R. (1997) "The Role of Interests, Institutions and Ideas in the Comparative Political Economy of the Industrialized Nations" in Lichbach M. and Zuckerman A. ed. *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and Structure* (Cambridge University Press: New York)

Hall, R. (1999) *National Collective Identity: Social Construct and International System* (Oxford Press: New York)

Hammond, L., (1999) 'Examining the Discourse of Repatriation: Towards a More Proactive Theory of Return Migration in Black and Koser ed. *The End of the Refugee Cycle: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*, (Berghahn: New York)

Hamrell, S. (1967), ed. *Refugee Problems in Africa* (The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies: Uppsala)

Harrell-Bond, B., (1986) *Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugee*. (Oxford University Press, Oxford)

Harrell-Bond, B., (1989) 'Repatriation: Under What Conditions is it the most Desirable Solution?' *African Review* Vol.32 No.1, pp.41-69

Harrell-Bond, B. (1999) 'Refugees' Experiences as Aid Recipients', in Ager, A. (ed.), *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration*, (London)

Harrell-Bond, B. (2000). "Are Refugee Camps Good for Children?" *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 29. Geneva: UNHCR.

Haver, K. (2009) *Money Matters: An Evaluation of the Use of Cash Grants in UNHCR'S Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Programme in Burundi*. Geneva: UNHCR Policy

Helton A. (2000) "Forced Migration, Humanitarian Assistance: Return in Bosnian and Herzegovina" *SAIS Review* Vo. 20 No. 1 pp. 66-86

Hoffman, M., (1991) "Restructuring, Reconstruction, Reinscription, Rearticulation: Four Voices in Critical International Theory" *Millennium*, Vol.20 No. 2, pp.169-185

Holt, T.R. and Turner, J.E. (1970) *The Methodology of Comparative Research* (The Free Press:) New York

Holzer E. (2012) "A Case Study of Political Failure in a Refugee Camp" *Journal of Refugee Studies* pp1-25

Hopf, T., (1998) "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory" in *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp171-200.

Howard L., (1988) *American Involvement in South of the Sahara: 1800-1860* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc.)

Howard, R., (1995) "Civil Conflict in sub-Saharan Africa: Internally Generated Causes" *International Journal* Vol. L1 No.1, pp 27-53

Howe, H., (1996) "Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Peacekeeping" *International Security* Vol. 21 No.3 pp.145-73

HRW (1996) *Liberia: Human Rights Development*. (HRW: New York)

HRW (2000) "Guinea President Speech Provokes Rape of Refugees" available online at [http://www.afrol.com/News/gui002\\_refugees\\_raped.htm](http://www.afrol.com/News/gui002_refugees_raped.htm)

HRW (2001a). Guinea: "Refugees Still at Risk "Vol. 15. No.5. Available online <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/guinea/>

HRW (2002a) "Liberian Refugees in Guinea: Refoulement, Militarization of Camps, and other Protection Concerns". (HRW: New York)

HRW (2002b) Government incited attacks on Sierra Leonean and Liberian Refugees: UNHCR Must Act. (HRW: Guinea)

HRW (2005), "Backgrounders: Liberia at a Crossroads: Human rights challenges for the new government". (HRW: New York)

Huband, M., (1998). *The Liberian Civil War* (Frank Cass: London)

Hyndman, J. (2000) "Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism", *Borderline* Vol. 16, No. 3

Ihonvbere J.O., (1994) "Are Things Falling Apart? The Military and the Crisis of Democratisation in Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol.34 pp. 193-225

International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), 2001, *The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the ICISS*. (IDRC: Ottawa)

International Crisis Group (14 February 2007) "Guinea: Change or Chaos" Africa Report No. 121

Jackson W., (2003) *Methods: Doing Social Research* (Pearson Education: Toronto)

Jacobsen, J and Wilkinson S., (1993) "Refugee Movement as Security Threat in Sub-Saharan Africa" in Weiner M., (ed.) *International Migration and Security* (Westview Press: Boulder)

Jacobsen, K (1996) "Factors Influencing the Policy Response of Host Governments to Mass Refugee Influxes" *International Migration Review* Vol.30 No. 3 pp. 655-678

Jacobsen, K. (2001) "The Forgotten Solution: Local Integration for Refugees in Developing Countries," *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 45. (UNHCR: Geneva).

Jacobsen, K., (2002) "Can Refugees Benefit the State? Refugee Resources and African Statebuilding" *Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 40 No.40 pp. 577-596

Jacobsen, K (2005). *The Economic Life of Refugees* (Kumarian Press: Boulder)

Jamal, A., (2003). "Camps and Freedoms: Long-Term Refugee Situations in Africa", *Forced Migration Review*, Vol16, pp.4-26.

Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein (1996) "Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security" in Katzenstein P, ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. (Columbia University Press: New York)

Jessop B. (1996) "Interpretive Sociology and the Dialectic of Structure and Agency" *Theory Culture Society* Vol. 13 No. 1 pp. 119-28

Joly, D. (1996) *Haven or Hell? Asylum Policies and Refugees in Europe*, (Macmillan: Basingstoke: London)

Juergensen O. (2002) "Repatriation as Peace building and Reconstruction: A Case Study of Northern Mozambique 1992-1995" *Refugee Survey Quarterly* Vol., 21 No 1.

Kabeer N., (1999), "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women Empowerment" *Development and Change* Vol. 30 pp. 435-64

Kabera J.B., and Muyanja C., (1994) "Home Coming in the Luwero Triangle" in Allen T., and Morsink, H. eds., *When Refugees go Home: African Experiences* (Africa World Press: New Jersey)

Kegan M. (2006) "The Beleaguered Gatekeeper: Protection Challenges Posed by UNHCR Refugee Status Determination" *International Journal of Refugee Law* Vol. 18 No. 1 pp. 1-29

Kaiser, T. (2000) "UNHCR's withdrawal from Kiryandongo: Anatomy of a Handover", *New Issues in Refugee Research*, (UNHCR: Geneva)

Kaiser, T., (2001). "A Beneficiary-based Evaluation of UNHCR's Programme in Guinea, West Africa". (UNHCR: Geneva).

Kamara, T. (2001) "Guinea: Confronting Insecurity in the Midst of Unstable Neighbours" *UNHCR, WRITENET Paper No. 8/2000*

Katzenstein P. (1996) *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (Columbia University Press: New York)

Keating and Knight (2004) ed. *Building Sustainable Peace* (University of Alberta Press: Edmonton)

Keller S., (1975) *Uprooting and Social Change: The Role of Refugees in Development*. (Manohar Book Service: Delhi)

Keohane, R., (1988) "International Institutions: Two Approaches", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No.4

Keohane R.and Nye (1977) *Power and Interdependence* (Little Brown: Boston)

Kibreab G. (1985) *African Refugees: Reflections on African Refugee Problem* (Africa World Press: Trenton)

Kibreab, G., (1987) *Refugees and Development in Africa: The Case of Eritrea* (The Red Sea Press: New Jersey)

Kibreab, G., (1990) "Refugees in Somalia: A Burden, An Opportunity and A Challenge". (IDRC: Nairobi)

Kibreab, G. (1991) "Integration of Refugees in Countries of First Asylum: Past Experiences and Prospects for the 1990s" Paper Commissioned by the program in international and US Refugee Policy Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Medford, MA

Kibreab, G., (1996) 'Eritrean and Ethiopian Refugees in Khartoum: What the Eye Refuses to See', *African Studies Review*. Vol. 39, No.3 pp. 131-78

Kibreab, G., (1999) "Revisiting the Debate on People, Place, Identity and Displacement", *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 12 pp.384-411

Kibreab G. (2000) "Resistance, Displacement and Identity: The Case of Eritrean Refugees in Sudan" *Canadian Journal of African Studies* Vol. 34. No.2 pp. 249-96

Kibreab G. (2002) "When Refugees Come Home: The Relationship between Stayees and Returnees in Post-conflict Eritrea" *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* Vol. 20 No. 1 pp. 53-80

Kibreab, G., (2003) "Citizenship Rights and Repatriation of Refugees", *International Migration Review* Vol. 37 No.1 pp. 24-73

Kibreab, G. (2006) "Refugeehood, Loss and Social Change: Eritrean Refugees and Returnees" in Essed, P., Frerks G., Schrijvers, J., eds. *Refugees and the Transformation of Societies: Agency, Policies, Ethics and Policies* (Berghahn Books: Oxford)

Kieh K.G., (1994) The Obstacles to Peaceful Resolution of the Liberian Civil War" *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol.17 pp.97-108

Kieh K.G., (2008) *The First Liberian Civil War: The Crises of Underdevelopment*. (New York: Peter Lang Publishing)

King, R., (2000) 'Generalizations from the History of Return Migration' in Ghosh ed., *Return Migration, Journey of Hope or Despair?*. (International Organisation for Migration: Geneva)

Klotz A. (1995). *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle against Apartheid*. (Cornell University Press: Ithaca)

Korac, M. (2003) "Integration and How We Facilitate it: A Comparative Study of the Settlement Experiences of Refugees in Italy and the Netherlands" *Sociology* Vol. 37. No.1. pp 51-68

Koser, K (1993) "Repatriation and Information: A Theoretical Model" in Black R. And Robinson, V. ed. *Geography and Refugees: Patterns and Process of Change* (Belhaven Press: London)

Koser K., (1997) 'Repatriation and Information: The Case of Mozambican Refugees in Malawi' *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 10. No.1, pp. 1-18

Koser K. (2009) "Integrating Displacement in Peace Process and Peacebuilding" *Refugee Survey Quarterly* Vol. 28 No.1, pp. 5-12

Krasner S. (1982) "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables" *International Organization* Vol. 36 p.185.

Krever T. (2011) "Mopping-up: UNHCR, Neutrality and *Non-Roulement* since Cold War" *Chinese Journal of International Law* pp.587-608

Kulman T. (1990) *Burden or Boon? : A Study of Eritrean refugees in the Sudan* (VU University Press: Amsterdam)

Kuhlman, T., (2002), "Responding to Protracted Refugee Situations: A case study of Liberian Refugees in Côte d'Ivoire". (UNHCR: Geneva)

Kumar K., (1998) *Post conflict Elections, Democratization and International Assistance* (Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder)

Kunz E.F. (1971) "The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement" *International Migration Review* Vol. 7 No.2, pp. 125-46

Kunz E.F., (1981) 'Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory', *International Migration Review*. Vol.15 pp. 42-51

Lacy B. (2004) "Building Accountability, Legitimacy, and Peace: Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and the Right to Political Participation" (IFES: Washington)

Landau L. (2001) "The Humanitarian Hangover: Transnationalization of Governmental Practice in Tanzania's Refugee-populated Areas" *New Issues in Refugee Research*; UNHCR Working Paper N0.40. (UNHCR: Geneva)

Lapid J. and Kratochwil F. (1996) eds., *The Return of Culture and identity in IR Theory* (Lynne Rienner: Boulder).

LeCompte, M.D. and Goetz, J.P. (1982) "Problems of Reliability and Validity in Ethnographic Research" *Review of Educational Research* Vol.52 No.1 pp. 31-60

LeCompte M.D. and Goetz, J.P. (1984) *Ethnography and Qualitative Design in Educational Research* (Academic Press: Orlando)

Lee, E., (1966) "A Theory of Migration" *Demography* Vol. 3, pp. 47-57

Leechor C., (1994) "Ghana: Frontrunner in Adjustment," in Ishrat Husain and Rashid Faruque eds. *Adjustment in Africa: Lessons from Case Studies* (World Bank: Washington D.C.)

Leedy, P. and Ormrod, M. (2005) *Practical Research: Planning and Design* (Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, N.J.)

Levitt J., (2005) *The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia: from paternalism to state collapse* (Carolina Academic Press: Durham)

Le Vine V., (2004) *Politics in Francophone Africa* (Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder)

Lewis, P. (1996) "Economic Reform and Political Transition in Africa: The Quest for Politics of Development" *World Politics* Vol. 49. No. 2 pp 92-129

Lindley A. (2010) "Leaving Mogadishu: Towards a Sociology of Conflict-Related Mobility" *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 23 No.1 pp.2-22.

Lischer, S.K, (2003) "Collateral Damage: Humanitarian Assistance as a Cause of Conflict" *International Security*, Vol. 28 No.1 pp. 79-109.

Lischer S.K., (2005) *Dangerous Sanctuaries: Refugee camps, Civil war, and the Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid* (Cornell University Press: Ithaca)

Loden, A. (2007) "Civil Society and Security Sector Reform in Post-Conflict Liberia: Painting a Moving Train without Brushes". *The International Journal of Transitional Justice* (1) pp.297-307

Loescher G. and Monahan L., (1989) ed. *Refugees and International Relations* (Oxford University Press: New York)

Loescher, G. (2001). "Protection and Humanitarian Action in the Post-Cold War Era". in Zolberg, and Benda eds., *Global Migrants, Global Refugees: Problems and Solutions* (Berghahn: New York).

Loescher, G. et. al. (2008) *Protracted Refugee Situations: Political, Human Rights and Security Implications* (United Nations University Press: New York)

Loescher, G., (2001) "The UNHCR and World Politics: State Interest versus International Autonomy" *International Migration Review* Vol. 35. No.1: pp 33-56

Loescher, G., (2001) *The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path* (Oxford University Press: New York)

Loescher, G., (2002). "Blaming the Victim: Refugees and Global Security". *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 58 No.6, pp. 46-54.

Loescher G. and Milner J. (2005) *Protracted Refugee Situations: Domestic and International Security Implications* (Routledge: Abingdon)

Loescher, G., Betts, A, and Milner J. (2008) *The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: The Politics and Practice of Refugee Protection into the Twenty-first Century* (Routledge: London)

Long K. (2010) "Voting with their Feet: A Review of Refugee Participation and the Role of UNHCR in the Country of Origin Elections and other Political Processes" (UNHCR: Geneva)

Long, N. (2001) *Development Sociology: Actor Perspective* (Routledge; New York)

Long, N. and Long A. (1992) *Battlefields of Knowledge: Interlocking of Theory and Practice in Social Research and Development*. (Routledge: New York)

Long L.D. and Oxfeld, E., (2004) eds. *Coming Home: Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed Behind*. (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia)

Lopez-Pintor R., (1997) "Reconciliation Elections: A Post-Cold War Experience" in Kumar K. ed. *Rebuilding Societies after Civil War: Critical Roles for International Assistance* (Lynne Rienner: Boulder)

Lubkemann S. (2008) "Involuntary Mobility: On a Theoretical Invisibility in Forced Migration Studies" *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 21 No. 4 pp. 454-74

Lunenburg, F.C., (2008) *Writing a Successful Thesis or Dissertation: Tips and Strategies for Students in the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (Corwin Press: Thousand Oaks)

Lyons, T. (1998) "Peace and Elections in Liberia" in Kumar ed. *Postconflict Elections, Democratization and International Assistance*. (Lynne Rienner: Boulder).

Malkki, L. (1992) "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees", *Cultural Anthropology* vol. 7 No.1 pp 24-44.

Malkki, L., (1995) "Refugees and Exile: From Refugee Studies to National Order of Things", *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 24, pp 495-523

Malkki L. (1996) "Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization" *Cultural Anthropology* Vol. 11. No. 3, pp. 377-404

Malkki, L (1997) "Speechless Emissaries; Refugees, Humanitarianism and De-historicization" in Olwig and Hanstrup, K. eds. *Sitting Culture: The Shifting Anthropological Object*. (Routledge: London)

Marsden, L., (2003) "Afghanistan: The Reconstruction Process" *International Affairs* Vol. 79 No. 1 pp. 91-105

Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (2002) *Theory and Research in Political Science* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York)

Martin, S. (1992) *Refugee Women* (Zed Books: New Jersey)

Martin, S. (2004) *Refugee Women*, 2nd. Ed., (Lexington Books, Lanham: Maryland)

Mason, J., (2002) "Qualitative Interviewing-asking, listening, interpreting" in May, T. ed. *Qualitative Research in Action* (Sage Publications: London)

Matthews, R., and Ali, T., (2004) eds. *Durable Peace: Challenges for Peacebuilding in Africa* (University of Toronto Press: Toronto)

Mazur, R. E. (1988) "Refugees in Africa: The Role of Sociological Analysis and Praxis" *Current Sociology* Vol.36 No. 2. pp 43-60

McGovern, M., (2005) "Rebuilding a Failed State: Liberia", *Development in Practice*, Vol.15 No. 6, pp. 760-766

McSpadden, L.A., (1999) "Contradictions and Control in Repatriation: Negotiations for the Return of 500,000 Eritrean Refugees" in Black and Koser, ed. *The End of the Refugee Cycle: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*, (Berghahn: New York)

Merkx, J. (2000) "Refugee Identities and Relief in an African Borderland: A Study of Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan" *New Issues in Refugee Research*, 19. (UNHCR: Geneva)

Mgbeoji, I., (2003). *Collective Insecurity: The Liberian Crisis, Unilateralism, and Global Order*. (The University of British Columbia Press: Vancouver)

Milliken J and Krause K. (2002) "State failure, State Collapse and State Reconstruction: Concepts, Lessons and Strategies", *Development and Change* Vol. 33 No. 5 pp 753-74

Mills K. and Norton J., (2002) 'Refugees and Security in the Great Lakes Region of Africa', *Civil Wars*, Vol.5, No.1, pp.1-26

Milner J. (2000) "Sharing the Security Burden towards the Convergence of Refugee Protection and State Security". RSC Working Paper No. 4, (Oxford University, Refugee Studies Centre: Oxford).

Milner, J. (2005) The Militarization and Demilitarization of Refugee Camps in Guinea, in: Florquin, Nicolas/Berman, Eric G: *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns, and Human Security in the ECOWAS Region*, Small Arms Survey.

Milner J., (2009) *Refugees, the state and the politics of asylum in Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York)

Milner J. (2011) "Refugees, Peacebuilding, and the Regional Dynamics of Conflict" in Betts and Loescher *Refugees in International Relations* (Oxford University Press: New York)

Moore, D. (2000) "Leveling the Playing Fields and Embedding Illusions: Post-conflict Discourse and Neo-liberal Development in War-torn Africa, *Review of African Political Economy*, 27:83, 11-28

Moran, M. (2008) *Liberia the Violence of Democracy* (University of Pennsylvania: PA)

Muggeridge H. and Dona G., (2006). "Back Home? Refugees' Experiences of their First Visit back to their Country of Origin" *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol.19 No.4 pp.415-32

Murithi, T. (2005) *The African Union: Pan-Africanism, Peacebuilding and Development* (Ashgate: London)

Murray, R. (2005) "Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons and Human Rights: The African System" *Refugee Survey Quarterly* Vol. 24 No. 2: 56-66

Narten J. (2008) "Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Local Ownership: Dynamics of External-Local Interaction in Kosovo under United Nations Administration" *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* Vol. 2. No.3 pp. 369-390

Neuman L. (2004). *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Pearson: Boston)

Neuman L. (2003) *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Allyn and Bacon: Boston)

Newman E. and Schnabel, A. (2002). *Recovering from Civil Conflict: Reconciliation, Peace, and Development* (Frank Cass: London).

North, L., and Simons, A., eds. (2000) *Journeys of Fear: Refugee Return and National Transformation in Guatemala* (Queens University Press: Kingston)

Nyemah S. (2009) State-Building Efforts in Post-Conflict Liberia in Besada H., ed., *From Civil Strife to Peace Building* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press)

O'Neil, W., (2000) "Conflict in West Africa: Dealing with Exclusion and Separation". *International Journal of Refugee Law* No.12 pp.171-194

O'Neill, K. Balsiger J, and VanDeveer S. (2004) "Actors, Norms and Impact: Recent International Cooperation Theory and the Influence of the Agent-Structure Debate" *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol. 7 pp.149-75

Omoden, G. (1972). *Brief History of Liberia* in Vogts M, ed. *Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Peacekeeping*. (Gabumo Publishing: Lagos)

Onuf N. (1989) *World of our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (University of South Carolina Press: Columbia)

Organisation of African Unity (1969). *Convention Governing Specific Aspects of the Problem of Refugees in Africa*. (OAU: Addis Ababa)

Oulare A. and Keita, F., (1992) “Socio-economic Survey on the Situation of Liberian Refugees and Sierra Leone in the Forest Area of Guinea”. (UNHCR: Conakry)

Overå, R., (2001) “Institutions, Mobility and Resilience in the Fante Migratory Fisheries of West Africa” Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) Working Paper 2: Bergen

Owusu, M. (2000) “Reluctant Refugees: Liberians in Ghana”. *Journal of the International Institute*, Vol.7 No. 3

Paris R., (2004) *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict* (Cambridge University Press: New York)

Paris R., (2006) “Bringing the Leviathan Back In: Classical vs. Contemporary Conceptions of the Liberal Peace,” *International Studies Review*, Vol.8 No.3, pp.425–40

Petrin, S. (2002) “Refugee Return and State Reconstruction: A Comparative Analysis”. *New Refugee Issues*; (UNHCR: Geneva)

Phillips J., (2004) “Repatriation and Social Class in Nicaragua” in Long L.D. and Oxfeld, E., eds. (2004) *Coming Home: Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed Behind*. (University of Pennsylvania: PA)

Polzer, T., and Hammond L., (2008). “Invisible Displacement”. *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol.21 No.4 pp 417-431.

Porter G, Hampshire K, Kye P., Adjaloo M, Rapoo G., and Kilpatrick K., (2008) “Linkages between Livelihood Opportunities and Refugee–Host Relations: Learning from the Experiences

of Liberian Camp-based Refugees in Ghana” *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol.21 No. 2 pp 230-252

Posen, B., (1996) “Military Responses to Refugee Disasters”. *International Security* Vol.21 No. 1 pp 72-111.

Preston, R., (1999) ‘Researching Repatriation and Reconstruction: Who is Researching What and Why’, in Black R. and Koser (ed.) (1999) *The End of the Refugee Cycle: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*, (Berghahn: New York)

Prezeworski, A., and Teune, H., (1970) *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*, (Wiley and Sons: London)

Radelet S. (2007) “Liberia’s External Debt: Moving towards Comprehensive Debt Relief” Center for Global Development available on line at [http://www.cgdev.org/files/13500\\_file\\_Liberia\\_s\\_external\\_debt\\_April\\_19\\_2007.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/files/13500_file_Liberia_s_external_debt_April_19_2007.pdf)

Ratner S. (2000) “Does International Law Matter in Preventing Ethnic Conflict”? *Journal of International Law* Vol. 32 pp. 591–698

Reilly, R., (2000) “Crisis over Refugees” *West Africa* Vol.42 No.26

Reno, W. (1996) "The Business of War in Liberia." *Current History*, pp. 211-215.

Republic of Liberia (2008) Poverty Reduction Strategy (GOL Publishers: Monrovia)

Republic of Liberia (2009) “Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report” (GOL Publishers: Monrovia)

Reus-Smit, C., “Constructivism” in Burchill *et al* (2005) *Theories of International Relations*, (Palgrave Macmillan)

Risse, T., (2002) “Constructivism and International Institutions” in Katznelson I and Milner H. (eds.), *Political Science: State of the Discipline*. (W.W. Norton & Company: New York)

Risse-Kappen T, (1995) ed. *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures, and International Institutions* (Cambridge University Press: New York)

Ritchey, N.P., (1976) "Explanations of Migration. *Annual Review of Sociology*" 1976 pp. 363-404

Rogge J., (1994) "Repatriation of Refugees: A not so Simple Optimum Solution" in Allen T., and Morsink, H., eds. *When Refugees go Home: African Experiences* (Africa World Press: New Jersey)

Rogge, J. (1987) *Refugees: A Third World Dilemma* (Rowan and Littlefield: New Jersey)

Rothchild, D. (1991) *Ghana: The Political Economy of Recovery* (Lynne Rienner: Boulder)

Rouch, J. (1959) "The Study of Migration" *West Africa* Vol.29, pp.417-19

Ruggie J. (1998) "What makes the world hang together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge. *International Organization*. Vol. 52 pp. 855–87

Rutinwa B. (1999) "The End of Asylum? The Changing Nature of Refugee Policies in Africa" *Refugee Survey Quarterly* Vol. 21 No. 2, pp. 12-41

Rutinwa B. (2002) "Prima Facie Status and Refugee Protection" *New Issues in Refugee Research* Working Paper No. 69 (UNHCR:Geneva)

Ryan et al. (2007) "Forced Migration and Psychological Stress" in Fanning B. ed. *Immigration and Social Change in the Republic of Ireland* (Manchester University Press: Manchester).

Ryan D., Dooley B., and Benson C., (2008) 'Theoretical Perspective on Post-Migration Adaptation and Psychological Well Being among Refugees: Towards a Resource-Base Model' *Journal of Refugee Studies*. Vol. 21 No.1 pp. 1-18

Salehyan,I, and Gleditsch, K., (2006). "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War". *International Organization* Vol.60 No.02 pp.335-66.

Sawyer A., (1992) *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia: Tragedy and Challenge* (Institute for Contemporary Studies Press: California)

Sawyer A., (2005) *Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia*. (London: Lynn Rienner Publishers)

Schroder, G and Seibel D., (1974) "Ethnographic Survey of Southeastern Liberia: The Krahn and the Sapo" *Liberian Studies Association in America Monograph Series No. 3*, .Newark: NJ.

Searle J. (1995) *The Construction of Social Reality*. (Free: New York)

Sewell W.H. (1992) "A Theory of Structure, Duality Agency and Transformation" *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 98 No.1 pp 1-29

Seyon, P., (1988) "The Results of the 1985 Liberian Elections". *Liberian Studies Journal*, Vol.13 No.2, pp 220-239

Sinclair, M. (2001): "Learning for a Future: Refugee Education in Developing Countries" EPAU, Health and Community Development Section (UNHCR: Geneva).

Smith, M., (2004). "Warehousing Refugee: A Denial of Rights, a Waste of Humanity". *U.S Committee for World Refugee Survey*, 38-56.

Sørensen, N. Van Hear, N and Engberg-Pedersen, P. (2003) *Migration Development and Conflict: state of the art overview* in Sørensen, N. and Van Hear, N (ed) *The Migration–Development Nexus Evidence and Policy Options State–of–the–Art Overview* (IOM: Geneva)

Sowell E.. and Casey, R.. (1982) *Research Methods in Education* (Wadsworth: Belmont)

Steadman S.J., (1997) "Spoiler Problems in Peace Process" *International Security* Vol., 22. No.2 pp. 3-53

Stedman S., Rothchild D., and Cousens E., eds. (2002) *Ending Civil Wars: the Implementation of Peace Agreements* (Lynne Rienner: Boulder)

Stein, B., (1990) 'Prospects for and Promotion of Voluntary Repatriation' in Adelman, H. ed. *Refuge or Asylum: A Choice for Canada*, (York Press: Toronto)

Stein B., (1994) "Ad hoc Assistance to Return Movements and Long Term Development Programs" in Allen T., and Morsink H., eds., *When Refugees Go Home African Experiences* (Africa World Press: New Jersey)

Stemma S., (2006) Social Networks Among Return Migrants to Post-War Lebanon *CIS Working Paper No.9* (Center for Comparative and International Studies: Zurich)

Stepputat, F., (1999) 'Repatriation and Everyday Forms of State Formation in Guatemala' in Black and Koser ed., *The End of the Refugee Cycle: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*, (Berghahn Books: New York)

Stølen, K. N., (2007) *Guatemalans in the Aftermath of Violence: The Refugees Return* (University of Pennsylvania Press: PA)

Sudarkasa, N. (1975) "Commercial Migration in West Africa with Special Reference to the Yoruba in Ghana" *African Urban Note Series B Vol. 1* pp. 61-103

Tanner V. (1998) "Liberia: Railroading Peace" *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 25, No. 75, pp. 133-147

Tanner, F and Stedman, S. (2003) eds. *Refugee Manipulation: War, Politics, and the Abuse of Human Suffering*. (Brookings Institution Press: Washington DC)

Tapscott T., (1994) "A Tale of Two Homecomings: Influences of the economy and state on the reintegration of repatriated Namibian exiles, 1989-1991" in Allen T., and Morsink, H., (1994) eds., *When Refugees go Home: African Experiences* (Africa World Press: New Jersey)

Tarrow S. (1996) "States and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements" in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald eds. *Comparative Perspective on Social Movements*. (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge)

Tarrow S. (2001) "Transnational Politics: Contention and Institutions in International Politics". *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol. 4 pp.1–20

Thomas-Hope E. (1999) "Return Migration to Jamaica and its Development Potential" *International Migration* Vol. 37, No.1

Tieku T. and Powel K. (July, 2005) "The African Union and the Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Protectionist Regime for Africa" *International Insights*.

Tschirgi, N., (1996), 'Review Article: Transitions from War to Peace: Issues, Challenges and Policy Lessons', *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*

U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR) Country Report: Guinea, 1999-2008, [www.uscr.org](http://www.uscr.org)

U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR). Country Report: Ghana, 1999-2008, [www.uscr.org](http://www.uscr.org)

UNHCR – Ghana (2004): A Profile, UNHCR, Accra, April 2004

UNHCR-Guinea Notes (February, 2007) "Guinea: Refugee Operations Continue - just <http://www.unhcr.org/45dad8fd2.html>

UNHCR (1993-2010) Statistical Year Books.

UNHCR, (1995) *The State of the World's Refugees: In Search of Solutions* (Oxford University Press)

UNHCR/F.Fontanin (2004) <http://www.unhcr.org/4198cba74.html>

UNHCR, (2010) "Contributions to UNHCR Programmes for Budget Year 2009" [www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3636c1\\_a.html](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3636c1_a.html)

UNHCR, (November 2009) “Universal Periodic Review for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Compilation Report” The Republic of Guinea (Protection Policy and Legal Advice Section, Division of International Protection Services: Geneva)

UNHCR, “Note on Determination of Refugee Status under International Instruments”, 24 August 1977, EC/SCP/5, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae68cc04.html>

UNIMIL (2005) “UNIMIL Humanitarian Situation Report” Number 3, 3–18 (UNIMIL: Monrovia)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) “Human Development Report” <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/GIN.html>

UN GA, 1950: Res 428, V, Annex: Statute of the Office of the UNHCR, UN Doc. A/1115: December 14, 1950

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (2004) *Guinea 2004: Consolidated Appeal Process*. (OCHA: Geneva)

United Nations Treaty Series 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 28 July 1951. *Treaties and International Agreements Registered or Filed or Reported with the Secretariat of the United Nations 189, no. 2545*.

IRIN (March 20, 2008) “Ghana-Liberia: Cessation clause invoked over refugee demos” <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2008/03/mil-080320-irin08.htm>

Utas M. (2005) “Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering: Tactic Agency in a Young Woman's Social Navigation of the Liberian War Zone” *Anthropological Quarterly* Vol.78 No.2 pp. 403-430

Van Damme W. (1999) “How Liberian and Sierra Leone Refugees Settled in the Forest Region of Guinea 1990-96” *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 12 No. 1

Van Hear N. (1992) "Consequences of the Forced Mass Repatriation of Migrant Communities: Recent Cases from West Africa and the Middle East" (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development: Geneva)

Van Hear N. (1998). *New Diasporas: The Mass Exodus, Dispersal and Regrouping of Migrant Communities* (University of Washington Press: Seattle)

Veney, C. (2007) *Forced Migration in Eastern Africa: Democratization, Structural Adjustment and Refugees* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York)

Vincent M. and Sørensen M (2001) *Caught Between Borders: Response Strategies of Internally Displaced* (Pluto: Oslo)

Vogler, J. (1999) "The European Union as an Actor in International Environmental Politics". *Environmental Politics*. Vol.8 No.3 pp. 24–48

Vogt M, (1992). *Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Peacekeeping*. (Gabumo: Lagos)

Waltz K.N, (1979) *Theory of International Politics* (Addison-Wesley: Reading MA).

Warner, D., (1994) Voluntary Repatriation and the Meaning of Returning Home, A Critique of Liberal Mathematics', *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol.7 No.2, pp.160-74

Weiner, M. (1992). "Security, Stability, and International Migration". *International Security* Vol.17 No. 3 pp. 91-126.

Weiner, M., (1996). "Bad Neighbors, Bad Neighborhoods: An Inquiry into the Causes of Refugee Flows". *International Security* Vol. 21 No.1 pp.5-42.

Wendt A., (1987) "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory". *International Organization* Vol.41 pp. 335–70

Wendt, A. (1992), "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics" in *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 391-425.

Wendt, A., (1995) "Constructing International Politics" *International Security*, Vol. 20 No.1

Wendt, A., (1999) *Social Theory of International Politics*. (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge)

Westin, C. (1999) 'Regional Analysis of Refugee Movements: Origin and Response,' in Ager, A. *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration* (Continuum:London).

Whitaker, B. E., (2002) "Changing Priorities in Refugee Protection: The Rwandan Repatriation from Tanzania" *New Issues in Refugee Research*, (UNHCR: Geneva)

Wilson K., (1989) "Food provisioning amongst Mozambican Refugees in Malawi; A study of Aid, Livelihood and Development". Report prepared for the World Food program.

World Bank (2003) "The Role of the World Bank in Conflict and Development: An Evolving Agenda" (World Bank: Washington)

World Bank, Statistical Appendices.  
[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/GDFINT/Resources/334952-1257197866375/stati\\_appendix.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/GDFINT/Resources/334952-1257197866375/stati_appendix.pdf)

Yin R. (2009) *Case study Research: Design and Methods* (Sage Publications: Los Angeles)

Zaum D. (2011) 'Post-Conflict Statebuilding and Forced Migration in Betts and Loescher ed. *Refugees in International Relations* (Oxford University Press: New York)

Zeager, L. and Bascom J. (1996) "Strategic Behavior in Refugee Repatriation: A Game-Theoretic Analysis" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 40. pp 460-85

Zeager, L., (1998) "Negotiations for Refugee Repatriation or Local Settlement: A Game-Theoretical Analysis" *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 42 pp. 367-84

Zetter, R. (1999) 'International Perspectives on Refugee Assistance,' in Ager, A. (1999) *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration*, (Continuum: London).

Zolberg *et al* (1989) *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crises in the Developing World* (Oxford University Press: New York)