

A Burden or a Resource?

Conditions for Returnee (Re)integration in Juba, South Sudan

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Abstract

Repatriation has since the 1990s been the international community's preferred solution to conflict-induced migration. However, scholars continue to debate the question of whether returnees have positive or negative contributions – are they a burden or a resource to the return areas? As a response, this thesis focuses on returnees' potential to contribute to reconstruction and development in post-conflict societies. Do returning refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) bring with them resources of any kind? If yes, how can these resources be utilized in order to contribute to reconstruction and development on a macro level? Through analyzing the experiences of South Sudanese returnees who have returned from Khartoum to Juba, these are the main questions this study seeks to answer.

The study derives from qualitative research conducted in Juba during June 2013, and includes the voices of both returnees, community members, power-holders, and external actors. By drawing on the theoretical concepts of returnee (re)integration and returnee capital, the study seeks to explore returnees' (potential) contributions to their return areas. The results suggest that returnees possess various forms of capital (material, human, social, cultural) acquired either pre-flight or during exile. The case study showed a particularly high level of education and work experience among the returnees, as well as social changes in lifestyles, attitudes and values. However, the utilization of the returnee capital depends on the prevailing conditions of the return areas. This study shows that there are several aspects of the South Sudanese society that hinder an efficient utilization of returnee capital, with lack of employment opportunities, limited access to land, poor service delivery, and social discrimination being the most prominent. As a result, this study concludes that return migration theoretically represents a transfer of resources to the returnees' countries and/or areas of origin, however, the returnees are often unable to translate their capital into either micro or macro contributions.

Key words: *agency, development, durable solutions, human capital, Juba, post-conflict, reconstruction, (re)integration, repatriation, returnee, South Sudan.*

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List of Abbreviations

CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DFID	Department for International Development
ECA	Employment Conditions Abroad
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoS	Government of Sudan
GoSS	Government of South Sudan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NSD	Norwegian Social Science Data Services
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM/A	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
SSLC	South Sudan Land Commission
SSP	South Sudanese Pound
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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1 Introduction

Regardless of reasons for fleeing, displaced people remove themselves from their home communities, change territory and resettle in new locations within or across state boundaries. The recent decades have seen a growing body of literature on conflict-induced migration, with special focus on patterns and reasons for flight, the need for humanitarian efforts, and the rights of refugees under international law. Simultaneously, the world has witnessed the growth of repatriation – the return of displacees – as the most preferable solution to the international refugee problem. As conflicts come to an end, displaced people are generally expected to return to their places of origin and “return to normality, peace and stability” (Chimni, 2002: 163). Many people do return, either spontaneously or through organized programs, but to what?

A major challenge of this development is the feasibility and sustainability of repatriation as a durable solution for the world's displaced people. Are the returnees able to (re)integrate into society and sustain themselves within their new environments? Are the conditions they return to enabling or preventing their (re)integration and utilization of resources? As the number of displaced people increases, there is a growing demand for an in-depth examination of the long-term effects of return migration to post-conflict states. As argued by Arowolo (2000: 65); “repatriation is perhaps the most challenging problem faced by many African countries that have been plagued by civil wars, ethnic hostilities or secessionist struggles during the past three decades or so”.

In response to this, two diverging paradigms have emerged in an attempt to explain the effects of return migration. One highlights the problems of (re)integration in post-conflict societies and the potential negative impacts on the return communities¹. Conflict-torn states have often had their developmental achievements reversed by years or even decades, and are in no condition to absorb a large number of, often aid-dependent, returnees. More specifically, returnees need food, housing and social services that the government may not be able to provide them. Contrastingly, the second approach seeks to illuminate the positive potential of returnees to act as agents of development and reconstruction in their countries of origin². These scholars argue that returnees, by bringing with them material and non-material resources, can contribute to transforming society into

¹ See e.g. Chimni (1999; 2003), De Wit & Hatcher (2009), and Nilsson (2000). Much of the literature on the challenges of refugee populations can be transferred to returnee contexts as well (e.g. Jacobsen, 2002).

² See e.g. Ajak et.al. (2012), Helling (2007), Petrin (2002), Rogge (1994) and UNHCR (2006).

an increasingly more stable entity both developmentally and socio-economically. Helling (2007: 9) goes as far as to argue that the sustainable (re)integration of returnees is “crucial to increase regional stability and global security”.

As an attempt to bridge this gap within forced migration studies, this thesis will attempt to search for a feasible way of approaching the returnee (re)integration issue. By building on theoretical ideas from social science, development studies and refugee studies, this study will consider returnees as social actors and search for ways of approaching a more theorized strategy for such analysis. Furthermore, a central concern will be the analysis' basis in historical and contextual understandings – in this case, exploring the perceptions of returnee (re)integration in post-conflict South Sudan. More specifically, by examining the perspectives of various micro and macro actors in the capital Juba, this study seeks to gain insight into the current challenges of returnee (re)integration and the utilization of returnee capital in the post-conflict environment. It is in the researcher's belief that such an approach will provide a solid basis from which to explain the realities faced by returnees during the post-return period; assess the returnees' possession of and potential to utilize material and non-material resources in the return areas; identify enabling and preventing factors for a possible future returnee (re)integration framework; and illuminate the potential dangers of the current international refugee regime.

This chapter seeks to briefly introduce the study, its background and aims. More specifically, the fundamental concepts – returnee (re)integration and returnee capital – that forms the basis of the analysis will be introduced, as well as the study's problem statement, subsequent research questions, and place within the field of peace studies. Furthermore, the researcher's motivation for this particular study will be explained, highlighting the pressing situation in South Sudan. Finally, a basic structural outline of the thesis will be provided for the reader's convenience.

1.1 Conceptual Terminology

This study primarily builds on Dominik Helling's concept of 'returnee capital', which has derived out of ideas from several different disciplines. In order to give the reader a general introduction to the analysis' theoretical framework, this section will briefly present the study's most central concepts, returnee (re)integration and returnee capital. These concepts will be further expanded upon in chapter 4.

1.1.1 Returnee (Re)integration

When people repatriate – return to their areas of origin – they are usually referred to as

'returnees'. Although some understand returnees solely as former refugees, this study also includes internally displaced people (IDPs) within the labeling. Based on Helling's definition (2007), this implies that returnees are individuals who have been displaced either within or outside the borders of their country and who have now returned to their original areas in order to settle down and reestablish sustainable livelihoods. This process – after the actual physical return – is within forced migration studies referred to as the process of returnee reintegration.

In line with Helling (*ibid*), this analysis has decided to apply brackets to the concept – returnee (re)integration. This derives from one of the major disagreements within forced migration studies, namely the debate concerning the relationship between people, place and identity. This is usually referred to as the sedentarist-nomadic debate; two main approaches that disagree on whether human identity is rooted in certain physical places or if identity is separated from space³. The sedentary approach argues that displaced people are 'out of place', and that the most natural solution is to return 'home' (Brun, 2001). This implies a static spatial perspective, in which the area of origin is expected to be in an identical state as when it was left behind. When taking the duration of displacement – which in this empirical case can be several decades – and the effects of war and conflict into consideration, it is doubtful that no changes have taken place. In other words, the environment the displacees left behind may have changed considerably during their absence, and it may even be impossible to return to the exact same place as one originally came from. In this regard, this study has decided to use the term '(re)integration', in which the brackets imply that integration can take place in significantly changed or even new environments.

Overall, (re)integration implies much more than simply transporting people back 'home'. It involves a long-term, complex process of social, economic, political, cultural and civil (re)integration, in which the returnees resettle and adapt to a different environment. Thus, in one way one might claim that the aim of returnee (re)integration is to secure developmental and reconstruction goals. This analysis will use the concept of returnee (re)integration as its research focus in order to investigate returnees' potential to contribute to post-conflict reconstruction and development.

1.1.2 Returnee Capital

The key framework for investigating this is Dominik Helling's proposed concept 'returnee capital'. Building on ideas of both sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and forced migration scholar Karen Jacobsen, Helling (2007) argues that displacement does not rob people of their ability to maintain and develop capital. Capital, as he sees it, consists of a pool of material and non-material resources,

³ See e.g. Brun (2001), Cresswell (2006), Kibreab (1999), and Malkki (1992).

including both physical capital (money and property), human capital (education, work experience and social knowledge) and social/cultural capital (social networks, attitudes, ideas, etc.). Moreover, Helling argues that returnees can act as stimuli for increased attention and assistance from macro actors, such as governments, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The concept of returnee capital, he argues, can be used to examine a society's benefits of return migration; can returnees contribute to society in a fruitful and productive way, and if yes, how does it manifest?

Although this study bases itself on Helling's idea, it also takes opposing voices into consideration. Several scholars argue that returnees can be a potential burden on already scarce resources, and therefore threaten local and regional stability and security⁴. The criticisms focus mainly but not exclusively on the challenges of weak state management, unwanted urbanization, access to land and property, access to employment, and social challenges. These issues will be further investigated in chapter 4, yet it should already be stated that they are argued to prevent returnees from utilizing their returnee capital. As an attempt to acknowledge such criticism and to illuminate the importance of contextual factors, this study has decided to make use of an equation introduced by Ajak, Biar and Larson (2012: 14):

$$\textit{returnee integration} = \textit{returnee capital} + \textit{prevailing conditions}$$

By incorporating Helling's concept of returnee capital, and simultaneously attempting to identify the prevailing (contextual) conditions that enable or hinder returnees to utilize their resources, this study hopes to gain a comprehensive and realistic understanding of the effects of return migration.

1.2 Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of return migration on post-conflict reconstruction and development. Through qualitative analysis, this thesis seeks to demonstrate how the concept of returnee capital can be used to understand returnees' abilities to act as agents of development and reconstruction in post-conflict societies. As we have seen above, the main focus of analysis is the process of (re)integration, which is expected to provide us with comprehensive knowledge of the factors that promote and prevent the returnees' abilities to utilize their resources. By bringing focus to this post-return process, the study aims to highlight an often forgotten phase of displacement.

This study acknowledges that, in order to truly understand returnee (re)integration, it is

⁴ See e.g. Bascom (1998), Chimni (2002), Kibreab (2002), King (2000), and Petrin (2002).

necessary to recognize all parties involved in the process. Migration impacts both the migrants and the wider society as a whole (Valtonen, 2008). Therefore, the study attempts to shed light on voices from both micro and macro levels of society. The individual returnee is the center of attention, yet the perceptions of both other grassroots actors, power-holders, and external actors will be included in the analysis. In doing so, this study seeks not only to give a thorough and rich understanding of the issue, but to highlight the complexity of each individual's situation.

1.2.1 Hypothesis and Assumptions

This study builds on the assumption that *all human beings are social agents*. Displaced people are often understood as a relatively homogeneous group of vulnerable and victimized individuals unable to do anything to change their situation. The sole focus on their physical displacement “robs the displaced of their voice and belittles the substantial contributions they make in shaping their own lives” (Vincent, 2001: 1). While displacement removes the individuals from their physical space and social networks, it does not however remove their potential as human beings. Thus, this study hypothesizes that returnees bring agency, in form of returnee capital, with them to the return areas. In doing so, we are able to examine how returnees respond to their physical, structural and social environments.

1.2.2 Research Questions

Based on this background, the primary question raised is: What are the effects of return migration to post-conflict environments? In order to thoroughly investigate this issue, the following questions will be addressed:

- 1 What is the potential of returnees to participate in the post-conflict reconstruction and development of their communities?
- 2 Which factors promote or hinder the use of returnee capital?
- 3 Which challenges or benefits does return migration produce for the return areas and the country as a whole?
- 4 Can repatriation be seen as a source of local development – or alternatively as a source of conflict?

1.2.3 Delimitations and Considerations

Taking the complex situation of South Sudan into consideration, this study sees it as necessary to make a certain delimitation, namely the avoidance of a specific focus on ethnic identity. As the next chapter will point out, ethnicity and clan affiliation have historically been

extremely important elements in the South Sudanese context. History shows that ethnicity continues to be a crucial factor in South Sudanese social structures, development and mobility, yet the focus of this analysis will not be directed to ethnic identity and its role within conflict-induced migration and returnee (re)integration. This decision mainly derives from two reasons; the scope of this research project and ethical considerations. Concerning the former, the available time scale and financial frames of this Master's project made the acquisition of such information infeasible. Furthermore, ethical considerations would make it difficult to get a thorough understanding of the ethnic demographics of Juba through the utilized research methods. The researcher's limited previous knowledge of the study area further complicated this. However, the significance of ethnicity in South Sudan has made it impossible to avoid completely. The analysis will thus for example touch upon the connection between employment opportunities and ethnic identity, but only when mentioned by informants themselves. The researcher has avoided being the impetus for such discussions. A larger study on the role of ethnic identity within returnee (re)integration is needed for more comprehensive knowledge on the subject.

1.3 Relevance to Peace Studies

When considering how this project relates to the field of peace studies we must consider the recent decades' shift from international to intra-state conflicts. Today's trend of internal warfare is considered significantly less deadly, yet it produces large-scale displacement both within and outside state borders (Mack, 2007). The end of conflicts have thus, as stated by Chimni (2002: 163), “come to be associated with the return home of refugees and internally displaced persons, and a return to normality, peace and stability”. In the midst of this we find the relevant concepts of repatriation and returnee (re)integration.

To have its returning population successfully (re)integrated into both economic, political and social life is crucial for any post-conflict society. It contributes to sustaining a more stable environment and prevents human beings from becoming potential spoilers. Failure to (re)integrate returnees can lead to new displacement cycles or, according to Arowolo (2000: 66), “lead again to internal strife, political agitation and civil war, with its predictable negative consequences on the economy and society”. This clearly demonstrates the connection between (re)integration and peace; adequate (re)integration is linked to stability and security, as well as developmental issues. It can therefore be argued that studies on returnee (re)integration are linked to the achievement of both negative and positive peace. As argued by the presidents of the Central American countries (in Kibreab, 2002: 53); “there can be no lasting peace (...) without initiatives to solve the problems of

refugees, returnees, and displaced persons”.

With millions of people being displaced from the Sudanese civil wars – and various conflicts in the region in general – this statement can arguably be the case for this analysis as well. As the renewed conflict (2013-14) in South Sudan illuminates, the level of integration in society is highly crucial; people's ability to relate peacefully to individuals from other groups, their identity being based on either returnee status, ethnicity or religion, is determinative for the future of any country. As Jok (2011: 15) claims; “[c]oexistence in South Sudan is not just a nice thing to say or a rhetoric of political correctness. It is a matter of the survival of the whole”. In these terms, returnee (re)integration should be seen in connection to the concept of peace, in that it has a large-scale potential to contribute to the underlying conditions for positive peace. In other words, returnee (re)integration and positive peace mutually reinforce each other.

1.4 Motivation for Research

At the time of writing this thesis, there are more than 45 million forcibly displaced people around the world⁵. This means a new refugee or IDP every 4,1 seconds (UNHCR, 2013b). It is in the researcher's belief that these vulnerable people deserve to have their voices heard. Yet, as the situation currently is, this is not always the reality.

Return migration is a neglected field within forced migration studies. King (2000: 7) claims it is “the great unwritten chapter in the history of migration”, and Helling (2007: 21) refers to it as a “virgin area of empirical research”. Despite the 20th (and now the 21st) century's enormous focus on repatriation, little research has been done on the issue. There is a growing body of literature on displacement itself; the causes of forced migration, patterns of flight, the international rights of refugees and asylum seekers, and the management of refugee populations within host states⁶. Some research also shed light on repatriation and the process of actually returning people to their countries of origin. However, there has been done remarkably little research on returnees and their experiences *after return*. The actual available literature tends to be empirical in nature, and there have been few attempts of developing a theoretical framework (Ghosh, 2000; Helling, 2007; King, 2000).

It is within this context that this study positions itself. By linking the theory presented in chapter 4 to the empirical case of South Sudan, the thesis seeks to contribute to filling this gap

⁵ UNHCR (2013b) estimates that there were 45,2 forcibly displaced worldwide at the end of 2012. This does therefore not include the most recent displacement crises, such as Syria and the Central African Republic.

⁶ This list is by no means complete, but it highlights some of the most prominent topics within forced migration literature (Bascom, 1998; Shanmugaratnam et.al., 2003).

within forced migration studies. Through thorough and theoretically based analysis, the study aims to better understand the experiences of returnees themselves. The choice of South Sudan as the focus of study was due to its major scope and contemporary nature. The Sudans went through one of Africa's longest standing conflicts, resulting in approximately 4 million IDPs and about half a million refugees (De Wit & Hatcher, 2009). With the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 and the independence of the Republic of South Sudan in July 2011, many IDPs and refugees have decided to return to their ancestral country.

Today, South Sudan is a new and developing state in the process of recovering decades of warfare. It is important that every facet of the post-conflict return migration are examined in order to facilitate greater (re)integration, and to understand the potential challenges and benefits of the process of return migration. The researcher fully agrees with Manger (2004), who argues that the peace agreements between Sudan and South Sudan were not only the end of decades of war, but also the beginning of something new – the (re)building of the independent state of South Sudan. In this crucial moment, it is therefore vital to have a clear overview of the available resources to be able to facilitate an efficient and sustainable development of the country.

In a wider perspective, this study should also be of interest to scholars and policy makers alike, in regards to the durable solutions to refugee issues;

“Western countries have increasingly closed their borders for immigrants (...) Thus, setting 'state (re)construction' up with 'returnee (re)integration' is obviously in the interest of, if not even explicitly driven by the Western dominated refugee regime in order to save international peace and stability.”

Helling (2007: 44)

If repatriation is to continue to be perceived by the international community as the most natural and preferred solution to the world's refugee problem, then its potential to be integrated into the development discourse should be evaluated sooner rather than later. When large proportions of a population are displaced, the process of returnee (re)integration becomes a 'make or break' situation (Kibreab, 2002: 56). In other words, it seems impossible to treat repatriation and development as two separate discourses. If we are to agree with Petrin (2002: 5), “[t]he well-being of returnee populations serve as an indication of how transitional states manage development goals [in] the post-conflict period”. South Sudan is not a singular case. Currently we are facing massive conflict-induced displacement from for instance Syria and the Central African Republic – people who will potentially return in the future. By studying the effects of return migration on post-conflict reconstruction and development, we may be able to contribute to a richer discourse on the subject and a better future for the people involved.

1.5 Structure of Thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 2 presents the case study of this analysis, namely South Sudan. It takes the reader through the history of the country, from pre-colonial times, through colonialism and the great north-south divide, to the 20th century's two civil wars. The chapter ends by reflecting upon the contemporary situation and its implications for this study. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework. It highlights the decisions made throughout this project, including the choices of study area, research methodology, data collection methods, and informant selection. Furthermore, the chapter presents a retrospective discussion on practicalities, safety and ethical challenges in the field. Chapter 4 presents the conceptual and theoretical framework applied in this study. The concepts returnee, (re)integration, and returnee capital introduced above will be further elaborated, as well as a more detailed discussion on the use of returnee capital as a theoretical tool. This theoretical framework forms the basis of chapter 5, which presents the findings and analysis of the study. Chapter 5 is divided into four separate, yet intertwined sections; 1) data on the displacement and return, 2) the possession of returnee capital in Juba, 3) the prevailing conditions, and 4) returnees' overall potential to contribute in society. Finally, chapter 6 will summarize the findings, reflect upon the contemporary developments in South Sudan, and suggest some concluding remarks.

2 Understanding South Sudan's History

“Any struggle must be anchored in history.”

John Garang (2002, in Johnson, 2003: xvi)

South Sudan is today experiencing a large-scale transformation. With one of the largest numbers of IDPs in the world and a constant history of conflict and migration, the country currently faces a crucial period of its survival and development as an independent state. According to Jok (2011: 2), South Sudan came into existence “...inheriting poor infrastructure, a volatile political climate, limited capacity for governance, weak state institutions, a financial crisis, violent ethnic divisions, and an uncertain regional and international political atmosphere”. This challenging infancy has proven to be problematic for the country, and can arguably have an impact on the (re)integration of returnees in the current environment.

When attempting to understand the contemporary processes in South Sudan, it is therefore essential to examine historic events; to carefully investigate the relevant history of the South Sudanese people and the major historical events which have determined their path. This contextual background is crucial for obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the challenges the returnees face in today's South Sudan. This chapter hence seeks to shed light on the situation in South Sudan, through a general historical overview as well as a more specific review of certain issues related to this study's focus. The chapter takes us through the South Sudanese history – from clan-based acephalous societies and precolonial regimes, through almost six decades of colonial rule under the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, and two prolonged civil wars in the 20th century – with a focus on the sharp north-south division and conflict-induced displacement. Finally, the recent peace negotiations and the current situation in South Sudan will be examined.

2.1 Pre-Colonial Sudan: Centralization, Slavery and Religion

Bilad al-Sudan – Arabic for 'the land of the Blacks' – has a long history of states emerging and disappearing from prehistoric times until colonialism in the late 19th century. A mixture of states and kingdoms have thus defined the economic, political, and social relations within the vast land of Sudan (Johnson, 2003). From the early kingdom of Kush (1070 BC – 350 AD), through numerous

states, to the 19th-century's Turco-Egyptian (1821-83) and Mahdist (1883-98) rules, what was to become Africa's largest country began to develop (Holt & Daly, 2011; Manger, 2004; Young, 2012)⁷. The roots of the Sudanese wars are often drawn back to the colonial times, however, we should not ignore the importance of earlier developments in the region.

Various states have existed along the Nile river and across the northern Sudan – Nubia, Funj, and Fur being some of the most prominent. Although there were local nuances, the region was in general characterized by nomadic, clan-based societies often referred to as acephalous societies – decentralized and segmented social systems (Hylland Eriksen, 2010; Simensen, 2004). The scope of the segmentary organization depended on the context and the need for political integration⁸. At various times, these clan-based societies were controlled by different centralized states and kingdoms; the center of the states held the power, while the hinterlands provided manpower, food and wealth (Johnson, 2003). Both state power and trade agreements were based on slavery, which were upheld by slave-raiding among other acephalous societies or neighboring states' populations. During this period, merchants began arriving from the Arabic world, bringing Islamic traditions to the region (ibid; Manger, 2004). As a result of commercial relations, some power-holders gradually began embracing such Islamic traditions, which also opened up for the introduction of Arabic linguistics⁹. This created a cultural divide between the centralized states and their peripheries.

The southern part of Sudan was mostly outside of the states' reach until the 19th century. However, this was to change with the Turco-Egyptian conquest in 1821. As a result of both greater resources and demands, the regime reached into the south for slave-raiding and commercial exploitation (Johnson, 2003). The majority of the slaves were taken from the south, and 'slaves' and 'blacks' were soon to be synonymous. Furthermore, a new form of taxation was established, which left impoverished farmers with no choice but to work for commercial companies in the south. This reinforced the scope of slavery by increasing the number of slaves considerably. According to Johnson (ibid), these two developments represent the beginning of the north-south divide in Sudan; the developed and powerful center (north) versus the exploited and oppressed periphery (south).

When Muhammad Ahmad – or 'Mahdi' – overthrew the Turco-Egyptian regime in the early 1880s, the south again became ignored by the central powers (ibid; Sharkey, 2012). It was not until

⁷ This refers to Sudan pre-2011, when Sudan and South Sudan together constituted the continent's largest country.

⁸ Such segmentary social systems are roughly built up of lineages, sub-clans, clans and tribes, and alliances can be made on different levels. The Nuer, for instance, have historically been united on the tribe level against the Dinka tribe. According to Hylland Eriksen (2010), this segmentary organization was also evident in the civil wars, when the 'Africans' in the Southern Sudan stood united against the 'Arabs' in the north.

⁹ It is important to note the variety of Islamic traditions in the early Sudanese states – as well as in the modern Sudan (Johnson, 2003). In addition to following different Islamic traditions, many Sudanese rulers combined Islamic and indigenous beliefs. The introduction of Islamic legal texts was also mixed with customary laws. Thus, it would be a mistake to understand the introduction of Islam in Sudan as a unified development.

the British colonization from 1898 that the south should once again become relevant. As we will see below, the colonial period represented a new time for Sudan – yet the historical process of unequal development and stratification in the north and south were only to be adjusted to the colonial interests.

2.2 Colonialism in Sudan (1898-1956)

With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the British interest in Sudan and the river Nile emerged, and in 1898 the British took control over Sudan as a part of their “gateway to India” (Young, 2012: 2). A year later, the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was established as a joint agreement between Britain and Egypt, although the condominium was to be administered mainly in a British tradition (Bassil, 2009; Sharkey, 2012). From the very outset of colonial rule, the northern and southern parts of Sudan were treated very differently. In the north the British feared a renewed Mahdist opposition, and resources were put into creating alliances with northern Sudanese groups (Johnson, 2003). In the south, however, there were no such threats, and the region continued as the periphery of a northern center. As a consequence, the north and the south were literally divided into two distinct parts of Sudan, differing in both administration, development, religion and language.

2.2.1 *The North-South Divide*

The north of Sudan was the center of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. The colonial administration was situated there, the northern Sudanese received more benefits and opportunities, and they held more power positions (Johnson, 2003; Young, 2012). Developmental efforts were almost exclusively reserved for the areas surrounding Khartoum, and a new class of northern Sudanese tenant farmers, industrial workers and urban professionals emerged. Arabic was the official language in both government and education, and Islam and Islamic institutions were promoted, while Christian missionaries were discouraged (Holt & Daly, 2011; Sharkey, 2012).

The south, however, stood in sharp contrast. The region was literally cut off from the rest of the colony and left to manage itself. The British gave extremely little attention to education and development in the south, and rather encouraged Christian missionaries to do the work (ibid; Young, 2012). Instead, Britain's focus in the south was solely one of security. Out of a growing fear for Egyptian and Arabic influence, the British decided to close the south off completely in 1929. From now on “the South was classified as 'closed districts', in order to keep *jallaba*¹⁰ (...) out and

¹⁰ The word 'jallaba' originally meant a peddler or a petty merchant, however, the South Sudanese now use it to describe anyone from the northern Sudan. Today, the term is also closely connected to Arab identity (Holt & Daly, 2011; Johnson, 2003).

keep Southerners in” (Holt & Daly, 2011: 96). Most Northerners were denied entry, and only foreign missionaries were given unhindered access (Ahmad, 2010). English was the official language, compared to the Arabic in the north. In some southern states even costumes and names related to Islam or Arabic were banned, as well as the Muslim call for prayers.

Unlike the emerging political system in the north, the Southerners were discouraged “from engagement in politics, political debate and action” (Nyaba, 1997, in *ibid*: 4). Any resistance were to be punished. The lack of political and educational opportunities for Southerners were to be evident upon decolonization, when in 1954-55 only 8 out of 800 government posts were granted the south (Ahmad, 2010). In general, the south was from the late 1920s “administered as virtually a separate state”, in order to later merge with other similar ethnic groups in the British East African colonies (Young, 2012: 3). How history would have looked if this had been allowed to happen, is another story in itself and unfortunately outside of this thesis' focus.

2.2.2 *The Imperial Logic behind the 'Southern Policy'*

Scholars disagree on the causes of the sharp division between the north and the south under British rule. Young (*ibid*: 3) argues that the Southern policy was “one of *benign neglect*”¹¹. During colonial times the British had a general policy aimed at preserving local cultures. In colonies like India, Ceylon and Nigeria, the natives were according to the policy differentiated based on ethnic, religious or linguistic lines (Salih, 1990). With this differentiation, however, followed often a negative categorization and segregation. The differences between people were emphasized, and people were treated differently according to their group affiliation. This was the case also in Sudan. The population was roughly divided into 'the north' and 'the south' – Arabs in opposition to blacks, Muslims in opposition to non-Muslims.

Bassil (2009), however, explains the division in slightly different terms; as a colonial 'civilizing mission'. Due to historical developments, Arabs were seen as more civilized than non-Arabs, while black Africans – synonymous with slaves – were seen as primitive and backwards. Thus, the British believed that the Arabs were more likely to reach a higher level of progress, while indigenous institutions “would be more appropriate for [the blacks] at the stage of development they had reached” (*ibid*: 214).

Regardless of explanation, the British sought to strengthen the identification within each group opposed to the 'other'. Consequently, the north and the south developed independently of each other and laid the basis for a profound disintegration. Scholars believe that this have had long-term effects on the Sudanese people. Ahmad (2010: 3) argues that “isolating the southern part of the

¹¹ *Italic added.*

country from the north (...) curtail[ed] any cultural or social move that could have led to future integration and unity”. Salih (1990: 418) goes as far as to argue that “British policy must be held responsible for fostering the conditions which later contributed to the eruption of inter-group conflict”. The 'Southern policy' has arguably had a tremendous impact on the Sudanese – and now South Sudanese – history. The racial stratification created strong, opposing identities between the Southerners and Northerners, nurturing mutual prejudices, dissatisfaction and disintegration (Ahmad, 2010; Bassil, 2009; Salih, 1990).

2.2.3 Towards Independence

As the 1940s came to an end, a process of 'Sudanizing' the colonial administration was fully underway. However, power positions were reserved only for an elite of educated, Muslim, Arabic-speaking, northern Sudanese (Sharkey, 2012). In 1949 the first northern Sudanese was appointed to lead the Ministry of Education, which led to large-scale changes in language politics in the south. From the early 1950s, Arabic was introduced as the official language of education in the south, marking the beginning of a period of increased Arabization of the region. Otherwise, very few changes were made in order to prepare for the departure of the British.

Sudan became an independent state 1 January 1956. With no constitution, widespread social and economic difficulties, and a largely disunited and resentful population, the following decades would prove to be problematic. With six different governments between 1956-2011, Sudan “has not experienced stability since it got its independence from Britain in 1956” (Assal, 2011: 2). Instead, the country has experienced severe conflicts and large-scale population displacement.

2.3 Reasons for Displacement: A Brief History of Conflict

The Sudanese have a long history of migration. Despite forced migration being a more modern phenomenon, the population is historically known for being highly mobile; “on average 40 percent of the total population in Sudan is believed to be on the move every year for different motives and durations” (Hamid, 1996, in Assal, 2011: 1). Nomadic movements, rural-to-urban migration, and famine related displacement are some of the diverse types of migration Sudan has experienced.

The conflict-induced displacement also has historical roots. During the Mahdist rule, for instance, internal and external wars, combined with a strict policy of military conscription and forced migration to the capital, resulted in massive population displacement (Assal, 2011). The displaced earned labels from the central Sudanese – depending on which region they came from. This created a divide between people, having important implications for the contemporary nation-

building and integration (ibid).

By 2005, two Sudanese civil wars had led to more than four million IDPs and about half a million refugees (Shanmugaratnam, 2010). Since then, the numbers have varied widely, due to continued unrest and occasional violence in the south. According to Assal (2011: 2), “[the] contemporary conflict-induced migration is a continuation of previous regimes of forced population movements that took place during different periods but for similar structural causes”. We will now look further into the modern displacement, its causes and effects.

2.3.1 The First Civil War (1955-72)

The first Sudanese civil war began already before independence, in 1955. Dissatisfied Southerners mutinied in Torit, attacking both militant and civilian Northerners (Johnson, 2003; Sharkey, 2012). The government in Khartoum soon hit back, and villages were burnt, civilians killed, arrested and tortured, women raped, and many fled their homes. In 1964 it was estimated 60,000 Sudanese refugees in Uganda alone (Holt & Daly, 2011). According to Mills (1977, in Akol, 1987), more than 25 percent of the Southern population were displaced during this war. However, the exact number of internally displaced is unknown.

There were many factors behind the beginning of the first Sudanese civil war, yet the heritage from the colonial times should be highlighted (Rolandsen, 2010; Sharkey, 2012). As we have seen, the south was virtually blocked off from the north during colonial times, hindering both equal development, integration, and a natural spread of Islam and Arabic culture. In contrast, the 'Southern problem' was dealt with in a completely opposite manner during the first civil war. In order to repair the colonial 'damage', the Northerners initiated an intense spread of Islam and Arabic in the south. Christians were marginalized and in 1962 all foreign missionaries were expelled from Sudan (Sharkey, 2012). The government spent a large amount of resources on Islamic propagation, attempting to pressure Southerners to convert. As argued by Sharkey (ibid: 436), “the politics of religion, language, and education became inextricably tangled”.

Nonetheless, the policies did not give the results the Northerners were hoping for. Conversion to Christianity ironically increased as the missionaries were expelled and the churches attacked (Johnson, 2003). The Arabization and Islamization of the south did not create a feeling of unification – as expected – but rather one of cultural colonialism (Sharkey, 2012). The Southerners felt discriminated, and the dissatisfaction and resentment contributed to the seventeen years' long civil war. The fighting lasted until the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972.

2.3.2 *The Second Civil War (1983-2005)*

The signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement promised the Southerners greater autonomy, and English was accepted as the administrative language in the south (Ahmad, 2010; Sharkey, 2012). However, the interwar years were characterized by broken promises, northern interference in the south, and, in 1983, the introduction of Islamic Sharia law for the entire country (Johnson, 2011; Sharkey, 2012). Thus, the relative stability came to an end and the second civil war broke out.

In 1983 a number of discontent South Sudanese soldiers in the Sudanese Army mutinied and formed the guerrilla movement the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). They were later joined by Anyanya rebels who had fought against the north in the first civil war. Led by John Garang, a Dinka Lieutenant Colonel, the movement took up the fighting against the central Sudanese government. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the political wing of SPLA, was soon established as well. Contrary to its predecessor, Anyanya I, during the first civil war and their secessionist demand, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) fought for a unified Sudan (Johnson, 1991). In Garang's words, the SPLM/A called for a 'New Sudan' – a united Sudan for all Sudanese regardless of ethnicity, religion or language. The central Sudanese government, on the other hand, fought for control of the south and its vast reserves of natural resources (ibid). Thus, the second civil war was mainly fought about the balance of power in Sudan as a whole.

According to Johnson (2011), the second civil war was much more deadly than the first. Both sides built up local militias, who more frequently attacked the civilian population. Villages were attacked if they supported the other side, people were killed, crops destroyed, and families split. Estimates claim that more than two million were killed (IOM, 2011). The fighting, the systematic targeting of civilians, and a chronic food shortage, also led to mass-displacement of both Northerners and Southerners¹².

However, fleeing the war zones did not necessarily grant people security. As argued by Johnson (2003: 155), the population displacement in Sudan became:

“...a major feature of the war. It is not an incidental outcome of the fighting but is one of its objectives; it involves not just the removal of whole groups and individuals from their home areas, but the incorporation of those populations either into competing armies, or into a captive labour force.”

In other words, people became an integral part of the fight for resources. Impoverishment created incentives to join the armies, something both parties took advantage of. Slavery was revived and

¹² People fled to more secure neighboring villages, some entire groups moved out of war zones, some took refuge in government-held towns in the south, some fled north, and some fled to other countries (Johnson, 2011).

used as a policy of terror against the Southerners. Displaced people around Khartoum enjoyed no rights, their shelters were systematically demolished, and they were often forcibly resettled into 'production sites'. Hundreds of thousands were removed from the outskirts of Khartoum and forcibly put to work on various projects across the north.

Additionally, the fall of the Ethiopian president Mengistu in 1991 led to the evacuation of thousands of Southern refugees back to Sudan. Despite the urgent need for humanitarian assistance, the lack of infrastructure and poor cooperation with Khartoum restricted the access of relief agencies. All in all, the second civil war hit the civilian population severely, and created scars for decades to come.

2.3.3 The Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the 2011 Referendum

After almost half a century of fighting, a decade of attempted dialogue, and large-scale international attention, the Government of Sudan (GoS) and SPLM signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. The CPA has been referred to as a political milestone in Sudanese history, including agreements on power sharing, wealth sharing, and security issues (Ahmad, 2010; Johnson, 2011; Manger, 2008). Of more importance for the south, however, was their approved right to self-determination. The parties agreed on a six-year interim period, followed by a southern referendum; should the south stay a part of Sudan or should it become a separate state? The Southerners spoke, and the Republic of South Sudan became an independent state on 9 July 2011 with 98,3 percent votes (Young, 2012).

It would be natural to think that the signing of CPA and the subsequent referendum would lead to broad changes for the displaced populations, yet, it has proven difficult. The two civil wars produced an estimated 4 million IDPs and about half a million refugees. As one of the world's largest displaced populations, as much as 17 percent of the total population was estimated internally displaced prior to the CPA (Assal, 2011). The majority of these IDPs fled to Khartoum, as a result of government policies to concentrate services in urban areas. People fleeing the south constituted the largest group. Life in Khartoum was harsh (see Chapter 5.1). Limited access to both land and employment made it difficult for displaced households to be sustainable. Many hence depended on food aid. This, however, dried out from 2002 when relief efforts were directed elsewhere.

Despite the hard life of displacement, many people were reluctant to return home. The CPA did not lead to an immediate state of security everywhere, and many southern areas were not considered safe to return to. This is stated by Assal (ibid: 9):

“When the peace agreement was signed, there was general euphoria that peace had come, and there was the possibility that IDPs would voluntarily return to their original areas. But

that euphoria was premature: not only did very few IDPs return, but some returnees fled back to Khartoum; owing to the deteriorating security conditions in their home areas.”

Thus, many IDPs chose to remain in displacement – especially in Khartoum.

However, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2011: 33), repatriation has been seen as “a priority aspect of the national recovery and peace-building policies and the international support to Sudan”. Between the CPA and independence, approximately 116,000 IDPs returned through organized programs (ibid). However, the majority of returns have been spontaneous, and IOM estimates that a total of 2 million IDPs successfully returned during the period of 2005-2009 (ibid).

After the 2011 referendum, the situation for Southerners in the north became more pressing. The government of Sudan (GoS) declared that all Southerners soon would become 'foreign nationals' in Sudan, giving them the choice of either leaving Sudan or apply for residence or work permits as other foreigners (Assal, 2011). Since then, 328,800, 160,400, and 93,900 returnees have arrived in South Sudan in respectively 2011, 2012 and 2013 (IOM, 2013a). The overall large-scale return migration has been followed by high demands of resettlement, (re)integration and livelihood opportunities in the south. A brief overview of the current political, economic, social, and developmental situation awaiting the returnees in South Sudan follows.

2.4 The New South Sudan: Returning to What?

“A peace agreement (...) is not only the end of a period of civil war; it is also the beginning of something. And this beginning is the potential building of 'a new Sudan'.”

Manger (2004: 117)

As argued by Manger, the last decade has seen the end of a long-lasting conflictual history in the Sudans. Agreements have been made, and a new state has emerged. Although Garang's vision of a 'New Sudan' never became realized, the world is currently witnessing the build-up of South Sudan as a new state and nation. Despite the euphoria following the referendum, the country is now facing severe challenges – security being one of the most acute.

When South Sudan became a separate state in 2011, many raised their worry about the political stability of the country (Jok, 2011). This has been legitimate when looking at the various episodes of inter-communal violence, armed rebellions, and local resource conflicts that have taken place in South Sudan the last couple of years. Local conflicts in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states in the south, Abyei, South Kordofan and Blue Nile states in the north, and Darfur to the west, have led to widespread displacement and a state of insecurity in the region (UNHCR, 2013a). South

Sudan has also experienced an inflow of people fleeing the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. The continued disagreements with the government of Sudan (GoS) regarding border demarcation, oil transportation and revenues, and citizenship have further complicated the situation.

The escalating violence in South Sudan from late 2013 has put additional pressure on the population. The fighting between the factions of President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar began in Juba in December 2013, and has since spread to six of the country's ten states. According to the UN (OCHA, 2014a), thousands have been killed and almost 900,000 people have fled their homes – the majority (738,000 people) being internally displaced. This clearly shows the vulnerability of the present South Sudan, and the state of insecurity and violence many South Sudanese are still faced with.

2.4.1 The Current State of Development

The long-lasting history of conflict meant that South Sudan practically had to start from scratch. As stated by President Salva Kiir in November 2010 (in Maxwell et.al., 2012: 20); “There has been no development in South Sudan. We have no roads, no bridges, no water, no power, nothing at all, no hospitals, and no schools – everything is at zero”. The two civil wars hit the country hard; it disrupted livelihoods, reduced health and education standards, and prevented economic and social development. The absence of efficient administrative institutions pre-CPA have also had its toll on the overall developmental level.

Overall, South Sudan is one of the most underdeveloped countries in the world. Its main revenue is the oil industry, accounting for around 80 percent of the GDP and 98 percent of the fiscal revenue (World Bank, 2013). This makes South Sudan the most oil-export dependent country in the world – which has been evident during the disagreements with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and the repeated closing of pipelines. Despite the oil wealth, the South Sudanese population is living under harsh conditions. Over half the population of 10,8 million live below the poverty line, more than 80 percent depend on agriculture or livestock for their survival, and only 27 percent are literate (ibid). Although South Sudan has very fertile land, only 4 percent of its arable land is cultivated (Maxwell et.al., 2012). Poor or non-existing infrastructure and a subsequent lack of access to markets hinder efficient farming, combined with disrupted harvests during periods of fighting.

Today, South Sudan is undergoing a rapid process of urbanization. Despite the government's policy of 'taking the towns to the people', the major urban areas are growing with high speed. A combination of conflict-induced migration to urban areas, economic prospects, and poor service

delivery in rural areas, are believed to be the main causes (ibid).

However, even the cities lack employment opportunities. The job market is limited and the majority of people are doing semi-skilled or unskilled work in the informal sector, including both residents, returnees and IDPs (Martin & Mosel, 2011). Only 10 percent of the South Sudanese workforce is believed to have formal employment, and foreign workers take up increasingly more of the jobs available (ibid). Both skilled and unskilled workers arrive from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, who are estimated to constitute 85 % of the skilled labor in Juba (Maxwell et.al, 2012). The high unemployment rates have been reported to force women to take on more responsibilities, as their husbands are unemployed or receive irregular salaries as civil servants or soldiers (Martin & Mosel, 2011).

For the majority it is thus challenging to secure livelihoods in South Sudan. However, employment is but one of many current challenges in South Sudan. Sufficient provision of clean water, sanitation and electricity are also lacking. In the capital Juba only 30 percent of the population have access to safe water (Maxwell et.al, 2012).

2.4.2 South Sudanese Identity

Another important issue in today's South Sudan is identity. As stated by Jok (2011: 4); “[n]ow that South Sudan has become a state, it also needs to become a nation”. With its multi-cultural and multi-ethnic population, it has proved challenging to find common grounds in the new state. As this chapter has shown, the south has historically had one common enemy – the north. From the colonial marginalization to the fight for self-determination, the north has functioned as a unifier “against foreign occupation and domination” (ibid: 7). Within this picture, the South Sudanese identity has developed based on its differences from the Sudanese.

Today this unifier is generally gone, and the main question for South Sudan is “how to turn its ethnic and cultural diversity into a useful asset, forming the colorful and unified country that everyone had yearned for” (ibid: 3). The civil wars constitute a part of people's collective memory, yet it is questionable if this is enough. Jok (ibid) refers to the north-south divide as merely a source of 'negative unity'. Now that this source is no longer relevant, many scholars look with worry on South Sudan's viability as a nation (ibid). Ethnicity is a strong factor, and can potentially be a source of disintegration. Political power is perceived to be closely related to ethnicity, and ethnic tensions have occurred several times¹³. The historical segmentary organization has left people with strong clan and tribe affiliation, while the loyalty to a centralized state is limited. As a result of the

¹³ The conflict between former Vice President Riek Machar (Nuer) and President Salva Kiir (Dinka) since December 2013 is a recent example of this.

weak South Sudanese state, people's loyalty rather lies within lower segmentary levels such as clan and tribe.

Returnees particularly can be affected by an identity crisis. For instance, there have been reports on resentment towards those who fled during the war (Macdonald, 2010). The situation is particularly difficult for people who have been displaced in Sudan and who have developed proficiency in Arabic (Sharkey, 2012). Due to the protracted conflict, many South Sudanese have been born in exile, and are therefore only fluent in Arabic. Upon return they naturally bring their language with them – to a context where the official language is English. These 'children of Arabization' – as Sharkey (ibid) refers to them – are therefore facing challenges in the south, both when it comes to opportunities and their sense of belonging. Although they have adopted the Arabic language, it is, however, important to note that this does not necessarily mean the adoption of Arabic culture and identity. Residents, however, may make certain assumptions about the cultural identity of others that may not necessarily reflect the returnees' perception of themselves.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has examined the historical background of South Sudan, through an overview of precolonial societies, colonialism and war history. It has demonstrated that social organization, marginalization and identity have had a major impact on the development of a modern South Sudan. Moreover, the historical causes and effects of migration and conflict-induced displacement have been explored, with special emphasis on the 20th century's two civil wars between Sudan and South Sudan. Lastly, a brief overview of the post-conflict situation in South Sudan has been presented. Such an historical overview is highly relevant in order to understand the historical and contemporary displacement in the region, as well as the current situation of politics, economy, security, and social issues. Chapter 4 will later demonstrate the importance of this contextual environment for sustainable returnee (re)integration, yet we will first turn to the methodological aspects of this study.

3 Methodological Framework

The objective of this project is to examine returnees' ability to contribute to reconstruction and development in post-conflict South Sudan. In order to address these issues, this study has sought to gain qualitative data through triangulations of both research methods and informant selection. This was expected to provide us with comprehensive knowledge of the factors that promote and prevent the returnees' abilities to utilize their resources. In order to give thorough explanations and justifications for the methodological choices made throughout this project, this chapter will give an overall overview of the methodological framework utilized. The chapter first presents an overview of the study area and the logic behind the choice of a qualitative approach, as well as the three research methods utilized, namely semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis. Furthermore, the process of selecting informants will be explored, including both sample methods and an overview of informants. Finally, the chapter will reflect upon the challenges encountered during the research period, with special emphasis on ethical and security considerations. Overall, with this chapter the researcher seeks to provide a reliable basis for the further analysis.

3.1 Study Area

The capital Juba is one of the few larger cities in South Sudan. Situated along the White Nile, Juba served as a garrison town for the government of Sudan during the civil wars (Pantuliano et.al., 2008). However, with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, Juba became the interim capital of Southern Sudan. Since then, the city has experienced tremendous changes, both demographically and developmentally. In 2005, it was estimated that Juba had approximately 250,000 inhabitants – 163,000 residents and 87,000 IDPs (Martin & Mosel, 2011). In 2010 the population had doubled to an estimated 500,000¹⁴, and Juba is today characterized by widespread informal settlements, squatting, and land conflicts.

Juba was chosen as the study area for this analysis due to its long-term and large-scale

¹⁴ No exact population figures exist for Juba, and the estimates vary from 500,000 to 1 million. Some news reports claim there are as many as 1 million inhabitants (2007), the USAID's estimate lies around 500,000, while Southern Sudanese government sources suggest between 500,000 and 600,000 (Martin & Mosel, 2011; Pantuliano et.al., 2008).

experiences with forced displacement and return migration. During wartime Juba was considered to be the safest town in the area, and many people, both from Southern Sudan and from neighboring countries, fled there (ibid). These people were allowed to settle temporarily on abandoned land within Juba. Since the signing of CPA it has been estimated that more than 2,3 million displaced people have returned to South Sudan, many of which have decided to settle down in the capital (ibid). Hence, Juba has experienced a large influx of people in search of security and better livelihood opportunities; returnees, IDPs, work migrants from neighboring countries, and other foreigners. Additionally, many returnees arrive in Juba as a transit point on their way home, which often takes a much longer time than expected. The International Rescue Committee (2009, in ibid) estimates that only approximately 10 percent of the returnees originate from Juba, yet many view Juba as a better opportunity than continuing on to the rural areas.

This dynamic has posed large challenges for the capital. Despite Juba's current position as the country's political and economic center, the government has not been able to keep pace with the contemporary developments. As argued by Pantuliano and colleagues (2008: 7), “progress has been remarkable in some areas, but the challenges of rebuilding Juba to address the multiple and often conflicting needs of different interest groups remain considerable”. Issues of land and property conflicts, unemployment, high living costs, and poor access to social services – especially water and electricity – are some of the contemporary challenges for Juba's population. Also, Juba's position as an increasingly multiethnic city with large-scale international presence may pose additional challenges.

Thus, Juba is an extremely interesting – and contemporary – study area for the issue of returnee (re)integration. Its position in one of the world's most unstable regions further highlights this. Of course, any large city tells a different story than the country as a whole, and generalizations to the rest of South Sudan will be unavailable. However, several respondents in this research shared their experiences from other and more rural areas of the country. Therefore, return migration to the region in general will be reflected upon, and some comparisons will be suggested.

3.2 Research Methodology

For collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, this research project could have been built on either quantitative or qualitative methodological approaches – or a combination of the two. The different approaches can be useful in their own ways, through determining and directing the research in various directions. As argued by Holliday (2002: 5), “quantitative and qualitative research do represent very different ways of thinking about the world”. It is hence crucial to be

aware of this when deciding which approach to make use of.

After careful consideration a qualitative approach has been chosen for this project, due to its specific understanding of social life. While quantitative research seeks concrete answers through a hypothetical-deductive approach, qualitative methodology aims to uncover deeper aspects of social life through an inductive reasoning (Bryman, 2001; Holliday, 2002). The qualitative approach has further been argued to “celebrate richness, depth, nuance, context, multi-dimensionality and complexity” (Mason, 2002: 1). As this project seeks to thoroughly investigate the individual experiences of returnees in South Sudan, it is exactly this kind of richness and complexity we are looking for. Applying a quantitative methodology to this project could have limited the worldviews of the people studied, and was therefore deemed unsuitable. Additionally, due to the broad nature of the research topic, this project also required an open methodological approach to allow for adaptability and sensitivity to the local context. This became evident during the fieldwork, as geographical and security dimensions put restrictions on the mobility of the researcher¹⁵.

Thus, a qualitative methodology has been used to study the particular case of return migration to South Sudan. The case study design was chosen due to its unique function as a bridge between the theoretical approach and the specific 'real-life' context of the study area (Miller & Brewer, 2003). The social variables derived from the research are particular to that social setting of Juba, and should be investigated in accordance with this reality¹⁶.

Unfortunately, all methodological choices have their disadvantages. As a result of an often small sample and a subjective researcher, it is argued that qualitative findings can be very difficult to generalize to other settings (ibid). However, generalizability is not the main objective of this project. As researchers, we must acknowledge that the specific cases we study usually are parts of on-going social processes. This is also the situation for this analysis, in which the (re)integration process will continue long after the closure of this project. Thus, the research setting and the people the researcher encounter can only give contemporary, interpretive results. As stated by Holliday (2002: 1), “qualitative research presents a statement about reality and social life that has to be continually argued and reaffirmed”.

This challenge can be a drawback in some regards, yet it does not mean that the research findings are of no value. Although this analysis may not be suitable for broad generalization, it will contribute to a greater understanding of the possible effects of return migration. Currently, we know surprisingly little about the dynamics of repatriation and its effects on both the returnees and their

¹⁵ While poor infrastructure made the main fieldwork restricted to the center of Juba, security demands (made by both the research institution and local sources) restricted the movement of the solo researcher. Adding the limited time frame of a Master's project, a larger collection of quantitative data would thus not have been feasible.

¹⁶ Based on the theoretical approach presented in chapter 4, the specific context of the study area has a vital impact on the data obtained and the results deriving from the research.

communities, and it is therefore vital to acquire empirical evidence on the issue. In this regard, an in-depth qualitative study of the lived experiences of returnees in South Sudan has the potential to contribute to the wider discourse of forced migration studies.

3.3 Triangulation of Methods

As a means to overcome the challenges of qualitative methodology, a triangulation of methods have been developed for this study. According to several scholars, the use of multiple methods can contribute to answer the research questions from different angles, to cross-check and confirm findings, and to analyze the topic in a more comprehensive manner (see e.g. Bryman, 2001; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003; Mason, 2002). This may subsequently increase the robustness and validity of the conclusions drawn from the research.

In this regard, three methods have been utilized in this study; qualitative interviews, observation and document analysis. Although these methods have been used to differing degrees, it is in the researcher's opinion that the methods support, complement and reflect upon each other. This is also an attempt to provide a holistic understanding of the issue through 'thick descriptions'¹⁷ of the variables, and thus making transferability more feasible.

3.3.1 Qualitative Interviews

In order to gain relevant and rich knowledge, this study has utilized qualitative interviews as its main method for accessing data. Based on the project's aim, it may be argued that an in-depth understanding of the issue would not be feasibly available through other methods alone¹⁸. Interviews allow us to acquire in-depth knowledge about the social world based on individual perspectives; the informants can express their thoughts about and experiences from the specific phenomenon – returnee (re)integration – in their own words (Bryman, 2001; Legard et.al., 2003).

A semi-structured interview format was chosen in order to celebrate the flexibility and spontaneity of qualitative interviewing, combined with a certain level of structure. In this regard, a thematic interview guide was developed (see Appendix 2). While this guide was by no means a complete set of topics, it is reflective of the issues this project seeks to highlight. Furthermore, the interview process was customized to be flexible based on the responses and experiences obtained in the field. Such an approach contributed to avoiding inappropriate research frames, which could

¹⁷ 'Thick descriptions', a concept introduced by Clifford Geertz, provide additional information about the context in which the data derives from, allowing the reader to assess the findings in a comprehensive perspective (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003: 268).

¹⁸ There are very few studies conducted on the micro level, making it challenging to find similar data from other sources – especially from the returnees' own perspectives.

have imposed certain conversational directions on the interviews or prevented the development of trust relationships between researcher and informants.

During the fieldwork 23 interviews were conducted with 28 informants¹⁹. The interviews took place at locations of the informants' convenience and lasted between 30 minutes and 2 hours, depending on the time schedules of the informants and their willingness to share. Informed consent was given, either in written or oral form, according to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The initial plan was to audio-record all interviews, in order to allow a thorough analysis of the real-world narratives. However, most interviews with returnees were conducted with an interpreter, in which there was no inherent value in capturing the exact audio. Thus, 8 out of the 23 interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed by the researcher. Handwritten notes were taken during all interviews, also in complement to the recorded data. This later proved particularly useful, since many of the recordings included disturbing elements such as traffic or heavy rain.

3.3.2 Observation

As a complementary method, personal/informal observation was also utilized during this project. Due to the importance of contextual factors, observation has been a crucial tool in order to understand the situation in Juba and the environment faced by the returnees. Additionally, the method has proved useful in discovering patterns of behavior, rhetoric and relationships in the field (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Observation was also utilized during the interviews, from which the informants' body language, emotions, and tone of voice added additional dimensions to the interview data.

Through four weeks of observation in Juba, the researcher has thus “engag[ed] with the field (...) both intellectual[ly] and physical[ly]” (Coffey, 1999, in Mason, 2002: 87). By attending and observing various events and organizational cluster meetings, by observing informants' behavior, and by simply spending time in Juba, it can be argued that the researcher has gained a richer and more in-depth understanding of the field. A vast amount of field notes were taken during this period, and later processed as research data in triangulation with qualitative interviews and document analysis.

3.3.3 Document Analysis

The final data collection method chosen for this project is document analysis. In accordance with the research questions, this exploratory method has been used to search for underlying and

¹⁹ Due to practical considerations and the wishes of the informants, one interview was conducted as a focus group discussion with four returnees. Additionally, one INGO interview was carried out with three informants simultaneously.

recurring themes in various documents (Bryman, 2012). Through document analysis the researcher has sought to acquire background information prior to the fieldwork, but also to obtain empirical and evaluative knowledge throughout the research project. This process has been carried out until theoretical saturation was achieved, and appropriate categories for the analysis were well developed.

A variety of texts and documents have been included in the analysis, including both public and non-public documents. Official documents such as annual reports, evaluations, statistical documents, and policy documents have been collected from authorities, international organizations, and local-level organizations both online and in the field. In addition, non-public documents, such as meeting minutes, strategic plans, and internal communication acquired in the field have also been included in the data. Altogether, the researcher believes that these sources have provided an important platform for an in-depth analysis.

3.4 Informant Selection

This study has utilized non-probability sampling to both gain access to and select informants. As a first-time, lone researcher in South Sudan, it was important to find productive ways of identifying informants believed to have the richest and most relevant information for this research project. Therefore, purposive sampling methods have been used to select informants²⁰.

Prior to the fieldwork, snowball sampling was selected as the main technique for finding relevant informants for the qualitative interviews. Due to practical matters and difficulties of accessing the field, this sampling method proved to be essential. Based on relevance, various organizational actors, academics and researchers in South Sudan were sought out and contacted through email or telephone. This allowed for initial contact with several of the to-be-informants, as well as contacts and assistance when it comes to the practical planning of the fieldwork. Through snowball sampling, these contacts also introduced the researcher to their networks and to possible informants, and gave recommendations on the path forward.

However, relying solely on the networks of these organizations for informant recruitment could have been problematic. In regards to the sampling of returnees, this might exclude more isolated or marginalized individuals or households not connected to any organizational network (Ritchie et.al., 2003). In addition, most of the NGOs working with returnees only had projects outside of the capital, meaning they had no returnee networks to introduce to the researcher.

²⁰ Lack of usable official registers and communication infrastructure in parts of the study area, would have made it unfeasible to utilize a probability sampling method.

Therefore, an additional sampling method was utilized, namely opportunistic sampling. It became evident that the researcher needed to be extremely adaptable and take advantage of any unforeseen opportunity within the field²¹. Therefore, it proved necessary to make minor adjustments in the sampling approach in order to ensure the inclusion of informants with the most relevant experiences.

Overall, snowballing combined with opportunistic sampling were seen as the most feasible recruitment alternatives. This further compensated for the potential power the gatekeepers could have exercised through utilizing snowballing alone (Bryman, 2012). Although the use of snowballing showed possible roles of returnee networks and social organization, it could have hindered the analysis' identification of other important factors. Thus, by making use of more than one sampling method, the researcher also sought to ensure the diversity of the sample.

3.5 Informants

In addition to the multiple-methods approach, this project has sought to access a triangulation of perspectives as well. In order to gain a broader and more holistic understanding of the topic, the sample included the following groups of informants:

Table 1: List of informants for interviews, fieldwork June 2013

<i>Type of informants</i>	<i>Criteria for selection</i>	<i>Number of informants for interviews</i>
Returnees	Age 18+. Displaced due to conflict. Displaced to today's Sudan. Returned to South Sudan (preferably Juba).	11
Residents	Age 18+. Not displaced. Living in return areas.	1
Other actors (INGOs, NGOs, academics etc.)	Local/international. Office in Juba. Projects involving returnees (directly/indirectly).	13
South Sudanese authorities	Formerly or currently employed by the authorities.	3

²¹ For example, the researcher's guesthouse accommodation was coincidentally housing a number of female returnees who were attending a women's conference. Even though the primary objective was to recruit informants living in Juba, this provided an opportunity impossible to dismiss. Some of these informants further introduced the researcher to other returnees in Juba.

As table 1 suggests, the researcher attempted to collect information from four groups of informants. The aim of this triangulation was to obtain a macro level view from the perspective of the state and external actors, while at the same time supplement the data analysis with the empirical experiences and narratives of the returnees and residents on a micro level. Together, these perspectives were expected to provide a comprehensive and realistic impression of the returnees' (re)integration process. By comparing findings from the different groups, we could also seek for irregularities or incompatibilities in the data.

Since the aim of this project is to investigate the returnees' ability to contribute to post-conflict reconstruction, it has been natural to emphasize the returnees themselves as sources of information. In order to narrow down the research scope, as well as strengthening the validity of the findings, the researcher has chosen to focus solely on people who have been displaced to the north – today's Sudan²². These individuals have unique experiences, having been displaced within 'the enemy's territory'. This may imply that they face different challenges upon return than returnees from other areas.

The majority of the returnee informants were happy to participate in the research project. They were generally eager to share their experiences – especially their difficulties. The returnees interviewed were between 18 and 55 years old, and were both students, part-time and full-time employees.²³ Unfortunately, the majority of the informants were female. This was probably partly a result of the sampling methods used, and partly due to the researcher's own gender as well. As a female in a male-dominated society, it was easier – and more accepted – to make contact with other women. Women were easily accessible, as they worked in the venues the researcher stayed (housekeeping, tea selling, etc.), and it was hence more natural to approach them with conversation. It also seemed easier to gain trust and sincerity in conversations with women. Subsequently, when these women assisted in meeting more informants through snowballing, it was natural for them to introduce the researcher to other women; women in their neighborhoods, in their workplace, etc. Additionally, the opportunistic sampling also included female participants at the women's conference at the guesthouse (see footnote 23). This gender imbalance can be a weakness for the project, yet most of the respondents spoke on behalf of their households and shared narratives from other family members as well – also male.

Unfortunately, the researcher only interviewed one resident formally. This was due to the fact that almost every person the researcher encountered was a returnee/migrant of some sort.

²² If time and resources had allowed it, a comparison between the experiences of returnees from different countries/regions (e.g. East Africa, Israel, US) would have been of interest.

²³ See Appendix 1 for further information about the informants. All informants have been given a pseudonym in order to protect their identity.

Consequently, accessing returnees and macro level actors for the interviews became the main priority. However, informal conversations with various residents of Juba took place during the observation period, shedding light on the issue.

3.6 Further Reflections: The Role of the Researcher

Throughout this project the researcher has been especially concerned with the various factors that may impact the conduction of research in an unfamiliar, post-conflict setting. It has been obvious that the researcher herself has been a major influencing factor when it comes to both determining the directions of the research and limiting the available choices. As argued by Eaves and Kahn (2000: 42), “the researcher both influences and is influenced by the phenomena and people she or he studies”. Therefore, this section highlights the researcher's role in the fieldwork, both when it comes to ethical, practical, and security considerations.

3.6.1 Safety in the Field

When conducting research in politically volatile contexts, it is crucial to consider the various sources of insecurity which may affect the researcher or the informants involved. The risk assessment started as soon as this project began; with an initial acquisition of knowledge about the study area and its potential threats. In this regard, the researcher drew on experiences and advice from academic colleagues who had been in similar situations. As an additional security measure, Norwegian NGO employees and independent researchers within the study area were contacted for further enquiries regarding the security situation. Thus, through thorough preparations the researcher sought to acquire a holistic understanding of the field context, develop notions of best practices, and subsequently become better able to protect both self and the informants from dangerous situations.

However, not all dangers can be anticipated and prepared for (Gokah, 2006). Therefore, it was crucial for the researcher to start out with a broad and flexible research design. As Polsky argued in 1967 (in Meyer, 2007: 77), the “final rule [of research] is to have few unbreakable rules”. Prior to the fieldwork, the researcher was therefore prepared to make adjustments if necessary. This proved essential, since the researcher upon arrival in South Sudan was advised not to travel solo to the planned neighborhood of study – a suburban area of Juba made up of solely returnees from the north. Consequently, the research plan was adjusted and an area of Juba perceived more secure and easily accessible was chosen. This may have influenced the type of data collected, yet the

researcher chose to listen to more experienced colleagues²⁴.

The field experiences show the significance of having a well-prepared, yet flexible research plan. The fragile post-conflict context posed some challenges, which could have been potentially difficult for a lone researcher. However, the prior knowledge acquisition and the adjustable research design made the data collection both safer and more feasible to conduct.

3.6.2 A Complete Outsider?

In addition to safety measures, the role of the researcher as an outsider can also have an impact on the research and the people involved in it. This dynamic can affect the informants' behavior, well-being and willingness to accommodate the researcher. Thus, if this is not adequately acknowledged, it may lead to misinterpretations and misperceptions of data.

For this study, the researcher therefore recognized her perceived role as a practically complete outsider. According to scholars, a researcher can be identified as an outsider based on various social identifiers, such as culture, ethnicity, or gender (Eaves & Kahn, 2000). As a Caucasian from a developed country, there were few similarities between the researcher and the researched. In a few cases, age and gender were the only identifiers which could have made the researcher a partly insider. These factors were of no crucial significance for the research topic, and could therefore only have a limited impact on the findings. However, as has been discussed already, gender arguably influenced both the access to informants and the building of trust relationships. Age can also have had a similar effect, especially regarding trust building and the level of understanding across generations. This was particularly felt during meetings with the government representatives – meetings which would most likely never have taken place without gatekeepers' organization. The age and power gaps experienced were challenging, yet careful and respectful conversation and the search for some kind of common ground proved relatively successful.

All in all, the researcher was perceived as a relative outsider, often understood as a wealthy foreigner – with its advantages and disadvantages. Rumors spoke about the negative attitudes towards foreigners in Juba. International organizations and NGOs have for years done large-scale development work in South Sudan, and it is clear that expatriates are perceived to 'take up much

²⁴ In another instance, the researcher found the opportunity to travel to a returnee camp in the periphery of Juba. A local NGO provided transportation and an interpreter familiar with the returnees. The camp was characterized as a 'special and difficult case', and seemed to be a unique case for this project. A NGO employee had informed the community chiefs of the researcher's arrival the previous day. However, upon arrival the researcher met a group of suspicious community chiefs – especially one woman was very loud, shouting and aggressive. Despite continuous explanations and persuasions by the local interpreter, the female chief refused to allow even the presence of the researcher, let alone conversations with returnees. It is the researcher's belief that there was no physical danger involved, yet the aggressive behavior created a psychologically hostile and threatening atmosphere. Unfortunately, it was necessary to leave the returnee camp, despite its potential as an adequate case study.

space' in the capital. On the other hand, Norwegians are often perceived remarkably positively, due to the historically long and persistent relationship between Norway and the South Sudanese people²⁵. This clearly became an advantage for the researcher, who in most cases was met by friendly and welcoming people. The close working relationship with well-established Norwegian NGOs in the area also served as a door opener to friendly relations.

Another important aspect of being an outsider is the researcher's level of cultural understanding in the field (Harrison, 2006; Kenyon & Hawker, 1999). Therefore, as an attempt to reduce the significance of the outsider status, it was also important to acquire knowledge of the social situation in Juba, as well as to become familiar with local cultural norms and behavior patterns. The researcher was thus constantly observing the local context and subsequently seeking appropriate advice from local contacts. This was particularly significant when it came to cultural dress codes, patterns of greetings etc. However, it is important to note that the cultural and ethnic diversity of South Sudan – and especially Juba – made it challenging to anticipate when or when not to follow cultural norms²⁶. Thus, the researcher's main rules were to avoid unnecessary attention, to act politely, and to pay attention to people's contexts and body language.

3.6.3 Power Dynamics between Researcher and Researched

Social research is often associated with power dynamics; researchers can shape the research agenda and presentation in ways most beneficial for themselves, yet the researched also have their own expectations and the power over their own knowledge (Gallaher, 2009; Mitchell, 2013). These power relations are often unequal, and must therefore be taken into serious consideration throughout the process. Within this project there are several such power dynamics which potentially could influence the research results. These will now be assessed in turn.

Firstly, the gatekeepers and the respondents from the macro level all hold certain power positions within the South Sudanese society. These dynamics may have created incentives for leading the research in certain directions, or to amplify certain aspects of the (re)integration process and downplay others. However, this only became a significant challenge during the interviews with the representatives from the authorities. These respondents clearly had their own political agendas

²⁵ For decades, Norway has shown a strong interest and involvement in South Sudan. Norwegian NGOs, such as Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), have been engaged in South Sudan since the 1970s and 1980s (parts of the state Eastern Equatoria have even gone by the nickname 'Little Norway'). Since the 1990s, Norway has played an important role in the peace negotiations between the government in Khartoum and SPLM, and today South Sudan is among the countries that receive the most aid from Norway. See e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013), Mumbata (2013) and Sæbø (2010).

²⁶ South Sudan is a very diverse country with more than 200 ethnic groups, which implies a highly diverse mixture of social values and norms (World Bank, n.d.). Additionally, returning exiles from the West have also brought with them Western behavioral patterns and norms, adding complexity and, for the researcher, confusion.

to consider, and at times appeared defensive regarding South Sudanese (re)integration policies. The researcher became particularly aware of this, when some answers contradicted with similar answers from the other respondent groups. Thus, in stead of being a weakness, this power exercise rather became evidence for certain research findings regarding the power dynamics involved in the (re)integration process.

Additionally, by accessing respondents among returnees the researcher put herself in a powerful outsider position. Mitchell (2013: 1256) argues that research concerning “the ‘experiences’ (...) of some of the world’s most vulnerable people” should preferably not be included in educational fieldworks, due to its exploitative nature. However, this project highly desired to emphasize the perspectives of the returnees themselves, rather than viewing it solely from a macro perspective. Therefore, it has been extremely important to carefully consider the possible impacts of this research on the returnees involved, and the returnees' own sentiments towards the project. Thus, as far as possible, the returnees involved have been allowed to establish the framework for the interviews – both when it comes to content and practical matters.

All interviews with returnees were carried out in a open and more unstructured fashion than with the other respondent groups. The returnees themselves decided the main focuses of conversation, by freely reflecting upon their own experiences and the issues they found more important. The researcher was very cautious about putting any pressure or directions on the conversations, and rather allowed the returnees to choose the way forward. When certain topics were avoided by the respondents, the researcher usually decided not to pursue such paths.

Furthermore, some of the returnees requested something in return for their participation. This is often the case in social research; respondents sometimes expect some kind of benefit from sharing their knowledge with the researcher (Gallaher, 2009). Within this project, requests for money grants happened frequently, perhaps due to the researcher's outsider status. One returnee further wanted assistance in finding her lost luggage from Khartoum, while another sought financial help for her daughter's education. These demands were politely turned down for several reasons. Firstly, the researcher did not wish 'to buy data' from the respondents. It contradicts with personal values, as well as creating a risk of compromising a neutral relationship between the researcher and the respondent. Secondly, the researcher did not have the financial means to fulfill such requests for all respondents. The study area, Juba, is one of the most expensive places in the world, and the high prices put additional constraints on an already limited budget²⁷. In this context, the researcher

²⁷ Since the signing of CPA in 2005, Juba has experienced a massive influx of expatriates. The lack of accommodation led to extremely high prices, in which people had to pay hundreds of US dollars for renting a tent. Despite the rapid construction of housing during recent years, the prices remain very high. Additionally, Juba is ranked by ECA International (2013) as the 4th most expensive city in the world for expatriates when it comes to the costs of living (not including accommodation). Virtually every commodity is imported, including food, which gives high import

sought other possible ways of showing appreciation to the respondents, and hence drinks and/or meals were provided during the interviews.

3.7 Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodological choices made throughout this project. It has presented the adopted qualitative approach and the triangulation of methods used for data collection, namely qualitative interviews, observation and document analysis. It has further presented the methods used for gaining access to the study area, Juba, and the subsequent techniques utilized for recruitment of informants from both micro and macro levels. These triangulations of both methods and perspectives arguably give a higher degree of reliability and robustness of the findings and seeks to make up for the general weaknesses of the qualitative approach and the more specific flaws of using a non-probability sampling method. Furthermore, this chapter also reflected upon some of the challenges encountered and their potential impact on both the informants, the researcher, and the quality of this research. The next chapter will outline the theoretical framework utilized in the following analysis.

and transportation costs. Unfortunately, the high prices and the researcher's limited budget had a definite impact on the chosen paths of the research process, for instance the length of the fieldwork and the geographical scope of the study area.

4 Theoretical Framework

“There are few issues that are of such significance to civilisation, or so consistently present on international, state and local political agendas, as migration.”

Spencer (2003: 1)

Forced migration scholars have for several decades seen return migration as the preferred solution for conflict-induced migrants. Various reasons are given for this, yet the main argument claims that people should return home as conflicts come to an end. In this regard, several scholars argue that returnees are potential sources of development and reconstruction in their countries of origin (see e.g. Ajak et.al., 2012; Helling, 2007; Petrin, 2002). By bringing with them various kinds of resources, returnees may contribute to transforming society into an increasingly more stable entity both developmentally and socio-economically. Helling (2007: 9) goes as far as to argue that the sustainable (re)integration of returnees is “crucial to increase regional stability and global security”. With this in mind, this chapter seeks to explore the contemporary discourse regarding returnee (re)integration and the use of 'returnee capital' for development and reconstruction of conflict-affected societies. How can returnees participate in post-conflict reconstruction of their local communities?

The chapter starts out by giving an overview of the relevant conceptual framework, with emphasis on the concepts 'returnee' and '(re)integration'. Secondly, repatriation's place in forced migration literature is examined, with emphasis on the lack of research on the post-return period. Then, this study's main theoretical framework is presented, resting on the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu, Karen Jacobsen, and Dominik Helling. These scholars take us from the more general concept of social capital (Bourdieu), to the ideas of refugee resources (Jacobsen) and returnee capital (Helling). Together, the concepts represent the basis of the theoretical framework used in this study. Lastly, criticism to such a framework is presented and a more comprehensive and context-specific framework is suggested for the final analysis.

4.1 A Conceptual Framework of Return Migration

4.1.1 The Historical Development of Repatriation

Since repatriation came to the top of the agenda in the 1990s, millions of people have

returned to their places of origin (Bascom, 1998). Yet, return has not always been on the agenda of either politicians or researchers. This section will present the emergence of repatriation as a preferred solution, and briefly reflect upon its implications.

Despite the long-term existence of migration, the 20th century experienced a broader international recognition of people fleeing conflict-torn societies. As a result of the two World Wars and the later shifting trend from inter-state to intra-state conflicts, a correspondingly growing body of international institutions and agreements concerning forced migration has emerged. The main purpose of this body is to facilitate and justify the protection and assistance of people fleeing from war and conflict – or in other words, to find solutions to what is often called 'the global refugee problem'.

In this regard, UNHCR formally adopted what is referred to as the three *durable solutions* for displaced people; 1) granting asylum, 2) third-country resettlement, and 3) voluntary repatriation. The latter – voluntary repatriation – has been considered to be the most suitable and sustainable solution since the 1980s, and implies the voluntary return of displaced people to their places of origin (Chimni, 2003; UNHCR, 2004). This derives from the general assumption that refugees wish to return home, as well as the belief that repatriation can provide relief for host states and “opportunities for returnees to rebuild their home states” (Abuya, 2010: 155). Based on this, voluntary repatriation soon became the preferred solution to displacement, and has continued to be so today.

This development has, however, led to the rise of several critical voices within the discourse, questioning the almost exclusive focus on ensuring early return and the subsequent lack of attention to the period after return (see e.g. Arowolo, 2000; Chimni, 2002; 2003; Helling, 2007). What do actually happen to the returnees in the post-return period? What kind of conditions are they returning to? How do they overcome potential (re)integration challenges and prevent new displacement cycles? Or do they?

4.1.2 Understanding the Term 'Returnee'

Before moving further, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the group of people referred to, namely returnees. A 'returnee' is by the international community often understood as “a person who was a refugee, but who has recently returned to his/her country of origin” (OHCHR, 2001: 205). This definition requires a person to have crossed an international border in order to be a returnee, and thus excludes millions of people displaced within their own state.

In order to maintain a more inclusive approach, this project therefore bases its reflections on Helling's definition of a 'returnee':

“a formerly internally or externally displaced person that relocates its centre of livelihood among a society within the borders of his/her country of nationality or habitual residence, aiming at establishing a viable environment in order to pursue a sustainable livelihood”.

(Helling, 2007: 17)

This definition includes both former refugees and IDPs, as well as demonstrates the importance of understanding repatriation as involving more than solely the process of return. It involves (re)integrating the returnee into society and establishing a sustainable livelihood in the returnee's new environment.

4.1.3 Understanding the Term '(Re)integration'

When returnees reach their final destinations, they enter into the so-called (re)integration phase. As with the concept of returnee, complexity is also evident in the various available definitions of this process. In 2004 UNHCR defined (re)integration as “supporting those who have returned/resettled or integrated to secure the political, economic, legal and social conditions needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity” (in Pantuliano et.al., 2008: 2). According to this understanding, (re)integration is a process of (re)establishing people's lives in the social return environments, in which the returnees should have the same access to political participation, productive resources, legal processes, and social services as the wider population. In 2008, the wording was slightly changed to the following:

“the progressive establishment of conditions which enable returnees and their communities to exercise their social, economic, civil, political and cultural rights, and on that basis to enjoy peaceful, productive and dignified lives”.

(UNHCR, 2008, in Shanmugaratnam, 2010: 4)

This definition can be seen as more dynamic than the former, by diminishing the divide between returnees and the resident population in the return areas. Migration impacts both the returnee and the rest of his/her community, and it is therefore crucial to consider both groups in relation to the (re)integration process. In this regard, the latter definition of (re)integration does not separate the returnees from their membership in the community. Furthermore, the definition also emphasizes the need for peaceful relations between the two groups for (re)integration to be successful.

As this section explains, repatriation has come to stay on the political agenda, with all its implications. The focus of this analysis, the process of (re)integration, is a major factor when determining the successfulness of return; are the returnees able to cope and to what extent are they able to contribute to society? Despite this crucial position, the next section will suggest the lack of attention to (re)integration within both academia and political environments.

4.2 Return Migration in the Literature

“[L]argely because return migration is a neglected area in migration research, the development of a viable framework for addressing the complex issue of reintegration is still at infancy.”

(Arowolo, 2000: 60)

As has already been hinted towards, there is a general lack of research on repatriation and its effects. Chimni (2002: 164) claims that “...little information is available about what has happened to those refugees [and IDPs] who have returned home...few authors have attempted to investigate the experiences of the returnees themselves”. According to King (2000: 27), “studies of migration made little or no reference to return” until the 1960s. Since then, the literature has followed the return currents themselves, with particular emphasis on the returns from Western countries during the 1980s and 1990s. However, the majority of studies have been purely empirical or descriptive in nature, with only one book published with a global overview of return migration by 2000 (Ghosh, 2000; King, 2000). According to King (ibid: 40), “[t]he tendency has been to examine each return migration group as a distinct entity and to make little attempt at cross-national comparison or theoretical synthesis.” Instead, pressure from host states have led scholars to focus on ensuring early returns and on the actual return process. Whatever happens to the returnees after they have reached their destinations is rarely the center of attention, and adequate theoretical or policy-oriented frameworks have subsequently not been developed (Arowolo, 2000; Ghosh, 2000). In other words, there is no internationally recognized framework for the assistance and (re)integration of returnees, and returnee projects are often implemented in an ad hoc manner.

Thus, we may suggest that the discourse is largely lacking research on the effects of return and that more attention should be given to the durable solutions, and more specifically to the effects of repatriation. As a response, in 2003 UNHCR introduced the *'Framework for Durable Solutions for Refugees and Persons of Concern'*. This was an attempt to expand the 1951 Refugee Convention in order “to make the international response more reliable and effective” (UNHCR, 2003: 3). With this framework UNHCR acknowledges that the agency of refugees and returnees is often overlooked, and highlights the need for comprehensive integration and (re)integration plans to ensure stability and sustainability.

One part of the Framework focuses particularly on the process of returns to post-conflict settings, namely the '4Rs Framework'. The 4Rs stand for Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (see Table 2), and is an attempt to link the two phases of 'during return' and 'post-return' together. Thus, UNHCR (ibid) argues that repatriation should include more than just

transporting returnees back to their countries of origin. It should be expanded to also include post-conflict rebuilding of the home communities. Through linking the relief and development phases together, the 4Rs aim to “contribut[e] to national recovery, and the consolidation of peace, stability and the foundation for longer-term development” (ibid: 19).

Table 2: The 4Rs Framework

THE 4Rs
Repatriation: the return of refugees to their countries of origin. Voluntary repatriation requires free and voluntary return in safety and dignity.
Reintegration: the ability to secure the necessary political, economical, legal and social conditions to maintain the lives, livelihoods and safety of refugees.
Rehabilitation: the restoration of social and economic infrastructure destroyed during conflict in order to enable sustainable livelihoods.
Reconstruction: the (re)establishment of political order, institutions and productive capacity to create a base for sustainable development.

Accessed and adapted from UNHCR's *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities* (2004)

These issues have been further emphasized by the UN Secretary-General's report on *'Peace-Building in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict'* and the following decision No.2011/20, calling for an increased focus on “reintegration of returnees” (UNSG, 2011). These documents state that the durable solutions – including repatriation – should address both human rights, humanitarian, development, reconstruction, and peace-building challenges. The lack of finding sustainable solutions to displacement can, according to the Secretary-General (ibid), be “critical to the recovery and to sustainable development of post-conflict countries”.

These arguments demonstrate how the concepts of repatriation and post-conflict recovery should go hand-in-hand. The UNHCR assumes that returnees, if within the right environment or framework promoting self-reliance and empowerment, can act as productive members of society and potentially contribute to peace-building and reconstruction. This idea is the very core argument of this study, and will now be further investigated.

4.3 Post-Conflict Reconstruction and the Contributions of Returnees

Up till now we have seen the growing belief in returnees' contributions to development and post-conflict reconstruction. However, the question of 'how' still remains to be answered. How can returnees contribute to developmental changes in their return communities? Which factors enable these contributions and which create obstacles for the returnees? We will now turn to these questions.

4.3.1 (Re)integration on Micro and Macro Levels

It is evident, from what we have seen above, that the process of (re)integration is a complex one and that it involves many different aspects on several levels. With this in mind, how can we then understand the process and attempt to measure its results?

Ghosh (2000) argues that (re)integration of returnees can be understood on either the micro or macro levels. The former refers to the personal success of (re)integration, “entailing social and economic security and welfare of the [returnee] as an individual (...) in the local community of the country of origin” (ibid: 184). Thus, this relates to how the returnee personally manage to (re)integrate into his or her new community, for instance through employment. This also includes the translation of the returnee's success into the rest of the household's integration. The latter, successful (re)integration on the macro level, refers to the returnee's contribution to the economic and social development of his or her local community and the country of origin as a whole (ibid).

Clearly, these levels of success are closely intertwined. Success on the micro level is usually a prerequisite for success on the macro level, particularly concerning employment and economic development. When we are looking at the post-conflict reconstruction, it mainly focuses on the macro (re)integration. However, throughout this project it became evident that the majority of returnees in South Sudan are struggling to meet their own and their families' needs on the micro level of the (re)integration process. Therefore, this study understands returnees' achievements on the micro level as indicators for their further contributions on the macro level.

4.3.2 Displaced People: Passive Victims or Acting Agents?

In order to overcome the research gap on (re)integration, some scholars have attempted to investigate the post-return period. As a result, a main argument has emerged saying that migrants are solely separated from their current livelihoods, *not* from their human capacities for thought, action and innovation (Marfleet, 2006). Thus, the main focus in this study is the various capital returnees possess and how these resources can be utilized to create development. This section highlights the work of Dominik Helling, his suggested concept *returnee capital*, and how it was developed. Other scholars before him have expressed similar opinions, yet this analysis has not succeeded in finding other so clearly defined theoretical ideas.

Helling (2007) argues that displaced populations contain large – and often unused – sources of capital. These resources have the potential to be a vital contribution to national development and post-conflict reconstruction. However, he argues, displaced people are often presented negatively in the literature, carrying “a negative stigma” (ibid: 10). They are often presented as passive victims who place demands on the host community, rather than contributions. The returnees' potential is

therefore often overlooked, and instead they are seen as a resource-poor group – a burden. This perception is exactly what Helling aims to challenge.

Helling builds on discourse drawn from general sociology and refugee research. In this regard, his argument is closely related to the work of the French philosopher and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and his model of *social capital*. Placed within the classical sociological debate of structure/agency, Bourdieu suggests the existence of non-physical types of capital, namely social capital (ibid). In addition to materialistic capital, he argues, capital also derives from the resources people draw from the social, cultural and symbolic spheres of life. He defines social capital as:

“the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.”

(Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 119)

This kind of social, cultural and symbolic capital is different from material forms of capital – money and property – yet the two fields are interrelated and transfers across fields can take place. Bourdieu claims that each individual in a society enters certain fields or social spaces (structures), for instance ones workplace or neighborhood, by bringing with his or hers individual capital (agency). This pool of resources is defined by the amount and types of capital held, and includes both the material capital you have, in form of money and assets, and the non-material capital; your networks, educational experience, knowledge of cultural codes, etc.

Bourdieu's approach acknowledges people's agency – agency that exists independently of the social setting. In other words, he recognizes that all individuals have certain resources, varying in form and amount, which they can utilize within their social environments. Yet, the use of the capital will be readjusted to every new field a person enters into. As Bourdieu (1989, in Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 23) states; “[o]ne does not have to choose between structure and agents, between the field, which makes the meaning and value of the properties objectified in things or embodied in persons, and the agents who play with their properties in the space of play thus defined”. This implies that the structure and people's agency – or resources – are interrelated, but the agency is not dependent on any particular structure to exist per se. Thus, a person's agency will exist independently of the social setting he finds himself in, yet he might be able to utilize only a limited part of the resources within that specific context.

Karen Jacobsen, a forced migration scholar, has attempted to apply a similar approach to the field of displacement. By coining the term *refugee resources*, Jacobsen (2002) argues that displacement does not rob a person of all of his or her capital. Instead, refugees bring with them

their resources into the host communities and adapt it to their current social field. Based on this model, Jacobsen (ibid: 578) argues that an individual's resources can be used to create developmental changes on both the micro and macro levels:

“These material, social and political resources, potentially represent an important statebuilding contribution to the host state. Refugee resources may help develop areas of the country, increase the welfare of citizens, and extend the bureaucratic reach of the state.”

Refugees bring with them social capital, through education, work skills and social skills as well as connections, that can be utilized in the refugees' new environments; firstly in order to survive themselves (micro level) and eventually to benefit the wider community in one way or another (macro level). Thus, “[b]y embracing refugees and treating them as a potential asset, host governments could find that they are less of a burden than widely perceived” (ibid: 593).

Jacobsen's approach takes a large step away from the widespread perception of displaced people as passive victims. She rather argues for their ability to be “active agents of change”, stimulating both economic and social development within their present environments (Helling, 2007: 23).

4.3.3 The Concept of 'Returnee Capital'

To take this further, Helling (ibid) argues that Jacobsen's approach can be extended to the field of return migration and returnee (re)integration. Building on the concepts of 'social capital' and 'refugee resources', Helling argues that the resources returnees bring with them can be utilized to create developmental change in the same sense as in the refugee context. Following from this reasoning, he suggests the term *returnee capital*:

“the sum of characteristics, resources and stimuli unified in a formerly displaced person that derives from his/her life experience prior to flight as well as during exile, and are of value for the larger community's livelihood (re)construction.”

(ibid: 24)

This is an expansive definition in need of further elaboration.

Helling argues that returnees, in the nature of being human beings, possess capital in various forms and amounts. This includes both material capital (money, property), human capital (education, work skills) and social/cultural capital (values, attitudes, ideas). This capital is in itself not linked to a geographical area, but will follow the returnees back to their places of origin and can be readapted to the new social settings. Furthermore, the returnee capital can, if utilized efficiently, benefit the return communities and contribute to the post-conflict reconstruction. Let us now turn to

some of the examples Helling suggests to verify this argument.

Firstly, Helling claims that returnee capital can contribute to the economic development of return areas (ibid). First of all, returnees participate in the national economy simply by being consumers. By injecting their physical capital into the economy, the returnees contribute to the overall economic system. Although their economic contributions may vary widely in both size and frequency, this can be of crucial importance to weak economic systems.

Furthermore, Helling also suggests that returnees' human capital can contribute to economic development. The inflow of educational experience, work skills and other forms of non-material capital that returnees hold, can contribute to boosting the local economies of the return areas (ibid; UNHCR, 1995). This is closely related to the idea of brain drain and loss of human capital from migration. Collier (2013) claims that:

“When educated people emigrate and settle in a richer country, the poorer country suffers a direct loss. (...) If, in addition, their economies are in trouble, they suffer an educational hemorrhage. The top rankings for skilled emigration are a roll call of the bottom billion. Haiti loses around 85 percent of its educated youth, a rate that is debilitating. Emigrants send money back, but it is palliative rather than transformative.”

If we follow Helling's argument, this trend can be reversed with return migration, and we may talk about a phenomenon of brain gain instead of brain drain. Educated returnees bring with them their human capital, and raise the overall skill level in their home communities. Non-educated returnees also bring with them their experiences from work and social life in exile, which adds to the total level of human resources.

To demonstrate this, Helling (2007) uses the example of agricultural development. With the support of other scholars²⁸, he argues that some returnees who have been displaced in rural areas have acquired agricultural skills that are different from those used in the return areas. By utilizing these skills upon return, the returnees may contribute to agricultural improvements and increased production in their local communities. This is supported by findings of Akol (1994, in ibid: 28) in the case of Southern Sudan:

“In the Equatoria Provinces, the most southern sections of the Southern Sudan, parts of the population had been exposed [during exile] to the cash crop economies of Zaire and Uganda, and to a wide variety of farming techniques. On their return some families eagerly experimented with imported methods, and tried out a range of new crop varieties (...). Where this occurred it seems to have contributed to increased agricultural productivity and to a general improvement in living conditions”.

²⁸ Several scholars (e.g. Jacobsen, 2002; Kibreab, 1985) have argued that refugees often bring with them new or different agricultural methods to their new environments (Helling, 2007: 28).

This example shows how returnees' skills can be very useful. On the micro level, the new farming techniques improved the returnees' own living conditions in Southern Sudan. On the macro level, however, such skills may lead to the “creation of economic conditions superior to those existing prior to their flight into exile or to those prevailing among local residents who did not go into exile” (Rogge, 1989, in *ibid*: 29). This can arguably also be the case with other types of skills as well.

Furthermore, Helling's second argument is that returnees can act as stimuli for state capacity-building and aid distribution. He, with others, argue that returnees increase the attention to the areas where they settle down, from both national governments, international actors and other humanitarian actors (Helling, 2007; Petrin, 2002; UNHCR, 1995). This builds on empirical findings from refugee populations; “[a]lthough host governments in Africa have born the heavy burden of refugees for many years, they have nevertheless benefited from numerous rural development projects established by the various international agencies for refugees” (Akol, 1987: 150). This statement concerns the context of refugees, yet Helling (2007) argues that this can be applied to returnee settings as well.

Such an argument can essentially be explained in two ways. Firstly, some returnees settle in decentralized areas that have historically enjoyed limited access to economic and social opportunities. A sudden presence of a number of returnees, however, may attract attention to these areas, including benefits for both the returnees and the resident population in the areas. Secondly, macro actors sometimes tend to perceive displaced people – in this case returnees – as a threat to local stability due to competition for scarce resources (Jacobsen, 2002). This negative attention may, however, lead to an increased state-presence in the area. Benefits, like improved infrastructure or increased access to social services, can be provided to the return areas in order to avoid tensions between returnees and the rest of society.

Finally, Helling (2007: 30) claims that returnees “‘return home’ not only with newly acquired skills and qualifications (...), but also import a variety of new attitudes, values and idea(l)s”. During displacement, people face a wide range of new social values and practices, and they may gradually adopt these new lifestyles, partly or completely. Away from traditional views and cultural obligations, people can gain skills and knowledge through both education, new livelihood strategies, political awareness, awareness of new forms of community organization as well as patterns of social interaction. According to Rogge (1994), this is dependent on the length of displacement and is hence particularly evident for second-generation displacees, who are born and integrated into an alien society, and are therefore more likely to adopt the local culture.

Upon return, some returnees are unable or unwilling to return to their old practices. Instead, they bring their learnt attitudes and social practices into the return communities, with the potential

of creating changes. As Collier (2013) puts it, “[b]right, young, enterprising people are catalysts of economic and political progress. They are like fairy godmothers, providing benefits, whether intended or inadvertent, to the rest of a society.” By bringing new impulses, whether economic, social, cultural or political, returnees can contribute to changes in social values and practices, and create a more multi-cultural environment.

4.3.4 Returnee Capital and the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

To summarize, Helling argues that returnees have resources, acquired either prior to the displacement or during exile, which can lead to changes in the return communities. By utilizing their material resources (money, property) and non-material resources (education, work experience, social networks, cultural features, stimuli), returnees can provide economic, political, social and cultural contributions to both the micro and macro levels of society. In other words, returnees can act as active agents of change.

Helling's approach is indirectly supported by the 'Sustainable Livelihoods Framework'²⁹ (SLF). This is a people-centered framework that “seeks to gain an accurate and realistic understanding of people's strengths (...) and how they endeavour to convert these into positive livelihood outcomes” (DFID, 1999). People have a range of assets – human, social, natural, physical, and financial – which they can use to create positive livelihood outcomes. This directly correlates with Helling's claim that returnees have capital that can be used to society's benefit. In line with Helling's argument, the SLF states that people have various skills and knowledge (human capital), connections (social capital), and material capital (natural, physical and financial capital) that they can utilize to improve their environments.

Based on this correlation, it is reasonable to argue for its support of the idea of 'returnee capital'. Although the SLF focuses on the household's personal success, the framework can arguably support the idea of improved conditions on a macro level; people have the ability to use their resources/capital/assets to work as active agents for themselves and others. This further demonstrates that discourse on general development also can be feasibly applied to return migration and returnee issues.

²⁹ The 'Sustainable Livelihoods Framework' is a tool to understand livelihoods in a comprehensive and integrated manner. It presents the various factors which can affect people's livelihoods, as well as the households' livelihood assets and strategies to achieve improved livelihood outcomes (see DFID, 1999). The entire depth of this framework will not be explored here, due to its main focus on success on the micro level. However, certain elements of the framework can be useful to gain a holistic understanding of the idea of 'returnee capital' and its functions.

4.4 Obstacles to the Utilization of Returnee Capital

Several scholars have argued along similar lines as Helling, however, within the field of forced migration there are plenty of opposing voices as well. The idea that displaced people generally are a cause of burden is a widely established perception. The argument is essentially that both refugees, IDPs, and returnees are burdens to already scarce resources and services, subsequently threatening local and regional stability (see e.g. Chimni, 2002; Jacobsen, 2002). We will therefore now look into some of the counterarguments to the returnee capital framework.

4.4.1 *Weak State Management*

Many argue that one of the key challenges to successful returnee (re)integration in post-conflict environments is weak states:

“In the post-conflict period, (...) [t]he state may be barely capable of functioning and can accurately be described as a weak state. Weak states have poor capabilities to penetrate society, regulate social relationships, extract resources and appropriate or use resources in determined ways.”

(Migdal, 1998, in Petrin, 2002: 2³⁰)

Weak states often lack both the necessary resources to maintain a certain level of service provision, the capacity to secure stability in decentralized areas, and the ability to provide assistance to vulnerable people. In such a context, the state can be unable to absorb and manage a large number of newcomers. The arrival of returnees will pose an increased demand on the state, both regarding resource management, service delivery and security. If the state is unable to respond accordingly, it can have unfortunate consequences for both the returnees and their communities. Petrin (ibid:7) explains this well when stating that “[i]t may be impossible to fully reintegrate returnees in an environment where the infrastructure has been destroyed and instability continues due to persisting conflict”. The additional economic stress of facilitating (re)integration of returnees can thus create a basis for political tension and conflict (Bascom, 1998).

One can argue that this is exactly the case in South Sudan. Scholars claim that the South Sudanese government (GoSS) lacks the capacity to absorb a large number of returnees (Macdonald, 2010; Shanmugaratnam, 2010). As chapter 2 has shown, South Sudan is characterized by extremely low levels of development and correspondingly high levels of human insecurity. Extreme poverty, continuing internal conflicts, lack of service provision, and poor infrastructure make the population extremely vulnerable to minor changes. As argued by Macdonald (2010: 3), within such a context,

³⁰ See also Bascom (1998) and Chimni (1999) for similar arguments.

“...mass displacement can (and do) easily tip communities from survival to crisis”.

4.4.2 *Unwanted Urbanization*

Furthermore, Macdonald (ibid) argues that the lack of state capacity in return areas can lead to an unwanted process of urbanization. When returnees are unable to economically and socially integrate into their rural communities, migration to urban areas can be anticipated. This especially applies to capital cities, where power and resources are concentrated and where state reconstruction is expected to begin. In other words, when the state's presence in rural areas is poor, people are often attracted to areas where they expect a higher level of state capacity and activity. Additionally, people might have been displaced in more urban settings and therefore wish to continue their lives in an urban area. A study from Sudan in 1990 showed that the amount of Eritrean refugees engaged in agricultural activities had dropped from 85 to 65 percent (Bascom, 1998). Upon return, it would be natural to anticipate a similar trend and subsequent movements to urban spaces.

If such a process of urbanization takes place without coinciding regulating policies, this can lead to unwanted consequences, like overcrowding of urban areas and lack of housing, and have a general destructive impact on the economy. Empirical cases demonstrate this; when Cambodian returnees were unable to purchase land in their rural return areas, a large number migrated to the capital Phnom Penh, which quickly became overcrowded by returnees lacking both housing and resources (Helton, 2002, in ibid). This example demonstrates the complexity regarding the return environment in many cases. As the analysis in the next chapter will show, a process of unwanted and rapid urbanization is also taking place in contemporary South Sudan.

4.4.3 *Lack of Property and Housing*

Furthermore, Chimni (2002) claims that access to housing and property is a key problem in many post-conflict situations, leaving many returnees with no place to stay. In 1998 the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted Resolution 1998/26, which states that “the right of refugees and internally displaced persons to return freely to their homes and places of habitual residence in safety and security forms an indispensable element of national reconciliation and reconstruction” (OHCHR, 1998). This places the responsibility upon the state of origin to protect the property rights of returnees.

However, many returnees have troubles recovering their land and properties when they return. This is often due to occupation by other residents as well as other displaced people, who may not be willing to give up the houses. Lack of documentation, laws and enforcement mechanisms make it very difficult to regain occupied properties, and in some cases it can create

conflicts between the opposing parties. Compensation is also rare. Studies from Eritrea show that access to cultivable land has been a continuous source of tension between returnees and the communities (Kibreab, 2002: 58):

“The two major causes of disputes were housing and land, especially horticultural land. The conflicts were more evident in situations such as restitution of housing in urban and peri-urban centres and irrigated horticultural farms, especially those with perennial fruit trees. These issues were further complicated by the fact that during the absence of the rightful owners, the occupants had made substantial investments to expand or improve the property. Others had caused substantial damage to the property taken over after the owners fled the country. In many cases, returnees found their residential premises being turned into hotels, drinking houses or even brothels serving the Ethiopian army.”

If unsolved, such situations can leave many returnees homeless. Some stay temporarily with relatives or friends, while others are forced to live on the street or pushed into new displacement cycles. This can be a major obstacle to the utilization of returnee capital. In rural areas the lack of land will hinder both subsistence and commercial agriculture, while in urban areas it stands in the way of settling down permanently and earning a livelihood. In other words, returnees without housing or property are usually not able to utilize their resources, and a large proportion of the returnee capital remain unused.

4.4.4 Lack of Employment

Another constraint for returnees in post-conflict societies can be the lack of employment. Arowolo (2000) claims that the ability to secure wage employment is the single most important step towards full (re)integration. At the same time, many post-conflict societies have poor job markets, in which the returnees face tough competition from the resident population. This can hinder the use of their returnee capital.

Various factors may influence the returnees' abilities to find employment in their local communities. Some, who were previously farmers, have acquired education and new skills abroad and are unwilling to return to manual labour. Other returnees might have acquired skills during displacement which are incompatible with the existing job opportunities in their home community (ibid). Some also experience language difficulties, especially if they have been displaced for a considerable period of time or if even born in exile – as chapter 5 will show. In the case of Namibian returnees, Preston (1994, in Kibreab, 2002: 54) argues that “many of those returning found it difficult to resume or assume (in the case of the young) productive and social roles in their communities of origin. They did not identify with community culture, particularly in subsistence-producing areas”. This is closely related to the rural-urban dichotomy, and the changes in livelihood

during exile. When returning, it can therefore be a huge challenge for returnees to find livelihood opportunities. This will be further elaborated in the next chapter.

4.4.5 Social (Re)integration

Lastly, the social (re)integration can also pose challenges for the returnees. As argued by Helling above, returnees often acquire new values, attitudes and lifestyles in exile. However, some scholars argue that this can rather have negative consequences (see e.g. Arowolo, 2000; King, 2000). Upon return, these new acquisitions can either be kept or dropped. Yet, reality is not that black and white. Returnees who have changed their behavior often meet resentment and skepticism from society, from both relatives, friends, and potential employers (Arowolo, 2000). However, when returnees seek to return to their old lifestyles, they may have to relearn this upon return. Whatever approach, returnees often face a difficult process of adapting into society.

Again, studies from Namibia can be used to demonstrate this. Preston (1994, in Kibreab, 2002) argues that Namibian women in exile had developed new leadership positions. This was, however, very different from their original community structure. Therefore, when they returned to their communities of origin, these women had to suppress their leadership skills in order to be accepted by the community. In Helling's terminology, this would arguably be a loss of returnee capital. Similarly, Tapscott (1994, in *ibid*: 54) states challenges for the social (re)integration of Namibian returnees:

“[T]he behaviour of many young returnees has been a source of consternation to older members of the community. To some community elders, the manners and liberal attitudes of young returnees are symptomatic of the loss of respect for local culture. More seriously, in a community in which religious influences are strong, the disinterest of some returnees in attending church services, or, in certain instances, their professed atheism is severely frowned upon. The independent attitude of repatriated women, too, has annoyed more traditionally minded members of the community, who view their behaviour as a challenge to local culture.”

This demonstrates the complexity of social (re)integration, and the findings challenge the returnee capital approach. Moreover, it is also questionable whether returnees can ever be completely rid of the returnee identity. King (2000: 20) argues that returnees often are continuously viewed as different – “as people who have 'been away’” – which can create difficulties of adapting into society.

Such resentment from the communities can be reinforced by the general competition for land, property, resources and employment described above. Harsh competition for scarce resources is believed to create fertile grounds for negative perceptions of returnees. In post-conflict societies

like South Sudan, skilled returnees might also meet jealousy from a population who had limited or no access to education or work experience during the time of war (Macdonald, 2010).

4.4.6 Obstacles Reflected in the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

The main point of these arguments is that returnees can experience various contextual obstacles to their (re)integration process. This is also strongly acknowledged in the SLF, which argues that people's livelihood strategies are influenced by both the context in which they live in, and the prevailing structures and processes within that context. The SLF defines the context as the trends, shocks and seasonality within the household's environment, over which the individuals have little control³¹ (DFID, 1999). These factors have a direct impact on the household's ability to make use of their available capital; a household's ability to earn financial capital from their agricultural production will depend on the seasonality of prices, while an individual's ability to secure wage employment depends on the employment opportunities the environment offers.

Whether or not the context works in favor of the household, the SLF suggests that the current structures and processes also will impact people's access to livelihood strategies (ibid). Structures are here understood as private and public organizations, who make processes – policies, legislation, institutions, culture and power relations – function. The structures and processes affect individuals and households in various ways; they determine the access to land, capital, and decision-making, they set the terms of exchange for different types of capital, and they influence people's abilities to be socially included in society (ibid). Thus, the absence of a structure can hinder the use of certain processes, and subsequently limit people's livelihood choices.

4.5 Acknowledging Reality and Attempting to Theorize

Overall, this thesis aims to acknowledge the criticism of the returnee capital framework presented above, and hence seeks to find a more comprehensive framework for its analysis. Thus, it is the belief of the researcher that we can gain a better understanding of the returnees' abilities to utilize their capital, by recognizing the context, structures, and processes surrounding the returnees. In this regard, the scholars Ajak, Biar and Larson (2012: 14) have suggested the following equation:

$$\textit{returnee integration} = \textit{returnee capital} + \textit{prevailing conditions}$$

By building on Helling's concept of returnee capital and adding the diversity of each case's

³¹ Trends: population, resource, economic, political, technological. Shocks: health, natural, economic, conflict, livestock health. Seasonality: prices, production, health, employment opportunities. (See DFID, 1999)

prevailing conditions, they highlight the complexity of the process of (re)integration. Ajak, Biar and Larson (ibid) claim that the prevailing conditions in any given community – may it be security issues, economic opportunities, government regulations, or service delivery – influence the returnees' abilities to make use of the capital they bring with them. In other words:

“...the ability of a returnee to obtain a job, to put up permanent settlement, and to receive social services is determined by their returnee capital and the prevailing conditions in their particular host community.”

(ibid: 15)

This clearly relates to the holistic perspective of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework and takes much of the criticism presented above into consideration. We may therefore argue that the possession of returnee capital alone is insufficient for successful (re)integration – both on micro and macro levels.

According to these views, the returnee capital framework may face unexpected challenges. It is thus clear that the case of South Sudan must be thoroughly investigated according to both historical and contemporary developments in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the specific context. Local conditions are arguably crucial for the (re)integration process, and can therefore not be emphasized enough. This is put well by Ghosh (2000: 206), who claims that:

“...if return (...) is to be durable, conditions must be created so that the individual (and the family) can play a useful and productive role as a member of the community in the country of return, and may not be induced or forced to leave again. In the absence of such conditions, even if the migrant does return, sustained reintegration will be difficult to achieve and he/she is likely to leave again.”

Thus, this study has decided to utilize Ajak, Biar and Larson's equation as the main tool for the following analysis.

4.6 Summary

Based on the assumption that human beings have agency, it is clear that there is a solid argument to be made that returnees hold resources that can be used for developmental purposes in post-conflict societies. The international focus on voluntary repatriation as the preferred durable solution to forced migration can be argued to ignore the post-return (re)integration process and the needs of both returnees and return communities. This has the potential of neglecting returnees as productive actors and contributors to their surroundings. Moreover, this ignorance also limits the understanding of the challenges of post-return (re)integration and the potential of new displacement

cycles. Without more emphasis and research on this crucial aspect of forced migration, it is reasonable to believe that the potential of returnees and their resources will go unrecognized, leaving them with the negative stigma of being a burdensome group.

As an attempt to reduce this gap, this study will apply the theoretical framework of returnee capital to the return area of Juba, South Sudan. This chapter has demonstrated how a combination of discourse from both sociology, development studies and forced migration studies can be a theorized alternative to the contemporary single-case empirical evaluations. By evaluating the concept of returnee capital through the (re)integration of South Sudanese returnees from Khartoum, the analysis will explore the idea of returnees as active agents within post-conflict reconstruction and development. Furthermore, this study also wishes to contribute to the wider process of theorizing forced migration studies. By combining the use of the theoretical framework presented in this chapter and the contextual understanding presented in chapter 2, the next chapter will provide the analysis and discussions on (re)integration of returnees in South Sudan.

5 Data Presentation and Analysis

This thesis attempts to explain the process of post-conflict returnee (re)integration through the examination of possession and use of returnee capital in South Sudan. With the use of methodological and theoretical concepts and methods, this study has developed its aim and scope, and resulted in the collection of qualitative data in Juba, South Sudan. This chapter seeks to bring together the theoretical framework and the empirical data collected during the fieldwork, in order to address the idea of returnee capital as a potential resource for post-conflict development and reconstruction. The discoveries will be presented and analyzed in four main parts.

The first section presents a brief, but important contextual overview of the displacement. The returnees' experiences from Khartoum are described, mainly focusing on economic and social issues, as well as the returnees' reasons for returning to South Sudan. Furthermore, the possible impact of these experiences on the post-return period in South Sudan will be reflected upon.

Next, the data will be addressed according to the equation presented in chapter 4:

$$\textit{returnee integration} = \textit{returnee capital} + \textit{prevailing conditions}$$

Hence, the second section of this chapter will take the concept of *returnee capital* into account. More specifically, it will examine whether or not the South Sudanese returnees are perceived to hold returnee capital. The findings include material capital, education and work skills, social and cultural capital, and assistance stimuli.

The third section deals with the *prevailing conditions*; conditions that influence the returnees' abilities to make use of the capital they bring with them. Through highlighting the various contextual factors that may enable or disable the utilization of returnee capital, this section attempts to obtain a realistic understanding of the use of returnee capital.

Finally, the last section addresses the overall *returnee (re)integration* process. By linking the returnee capital and the prevailing conditions, the aim is to reflect upon the situation on the ground in South Sudan and the returnees' role within it. Are the returnees perceived positively by the society? Are they able to contribute with their returnee capital? Or are they, as some scholars phrase it, solely straining scarce resources?

Section 5.1: Understanding the Displacement in Khartoum

Although the actual displacement is not the main focus here, it is vital to have an understanding of where the group in focus is coming from. According to the definition, returnee capital can be acquired both prior to displacement and during exile. Knowledge of the context in Khartoum is therefore vital for a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities people had to gain returnee capital during their displacement. Also, due to protracted displacement, it is reasonable to argue that the returnees' experiences in Khartoum have an impact on their choice of returning and their perceptions of their new environment in South Sudan.

As we know, the individuals in focus of this study are returnees who have been displaced in Khartoum, and who have now come to live in South Sudan. Many also fled to other countries, like the East African neighboring states, Egypt, Israel and Western countries, yet the group of people displaced in Sudan represents by far the majority of displacees. The time in exile varies widely. Some spent years or even decades in Khartoum, some were born there, and some have moved around to different places. Eight of the returnee respondents of this study spent from 9 to 22 years in Khartoum, while three were born in Khartoum after their parents' flight from the south. These long durations in exile are not surprising when considering the length of the two civil wars; respectively 17 and 23 years.

5.1.1 Life in Khartoum

Life in Khartoum was in many ways very different from the life left behind in South Sudan. Many people came from rural areas and were experiencing an urban lifestyle for the first time. For all the southern IDPs Khartoum represented a very different life, both economically, politically and socially. For many, Khartoum represented opportunities. The respondents spoke of easier access to better services and more job opportunities. Mary, who spent 22 years in Khartoum, said: *“People were very comfortable in Khartoum, they had electricity 24 hours, clean tap water, and many jobs...”*³². Electricity and access to clean water were repeatedly mentioned during the interviews, as well as access to free education and health care. Especially the young returnees mentioned the access to free education in Sudan as a major issue. Alicia eagerly expressed her contentment of life in Khartoum: *“We had a stable life in Khartoum, my family had a piece of land and we even had a concrete house there!”*³³.

³² Mary (informant #1), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

³³ Alicia (informant #10), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

The respondents spoke of the variety of livelihood opportunities in Khartoum as well. Small-scale business opportunities and domestic work were common among IDPs from the south. Returnee Mary talked about a wide range of industries with employment opportunities that you could not find in the south, and she also added: “...and the wage would cover much more than it does here in South Sudan!”³⁴. This implies that the IDPs in Khartoum had access to both a wider range of job opportunities and a larger amount of material capital than they had been used to in the south.

However, the conversations also showed signs of a different life in Khartoum. Tony, a South Sudanese who spent 20 years in Khartoum without his family, said that in Khartoum “...you can have access to electricity, clean water, even a cooler in your house...but if you don't have the money to do this, life in Khartoum is very difficult...”³⁵. According to a report by the Norwegian Refugee Council (Macdonald, 2010), the majority of the southern IDPs resided in the poorer shanty town areas or in IDP camps outside of the city. People in these areas were often living in very poor conditions, with no access to the electricity, clean water and free services mentioned by the informants. Sebit, a South Sudanese employed by an INGO in Juba, supported this; “the life in the north was really...they were working hard...like slaves...”³⁶.

Another issue also became clear during the interviews, namely the social discrimination of Southerners. The respondents talked about mistreatment, pressure to convert to Islam, and even killings of people from South Sudan:

“The rule of law [in Khartoum] is good...I mean, in my understanding it is good, in your understanding it may not be good...I mean, rule of law for their own people, not for the foreigners...especially for the South Sudanese and the South Kordofan people...and the Blue Nile people...they are very harsh on them...”³⁷

“...when South Sudan became independent, the north did not want to see the Blacks anymore...they were banned...even killed...the security in Khartoum disturbed us so much...after Garang died [in 2005], the Arabs started coming into people's houses and killing them...”³⁸

Such discrimination of Southerners is not very surprising if one is familiar with the history of Sudan. As explored in chapter 2, historically there has been a sharp division between people from the southern region and people from the central north of Sudan. What is interesting here is the fact that several of the returnees talked about mistreatment only *after* either the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 or the independence in 2011. When recalling his time in Khartoum, Tony

³⁴ Mary, interview.

³⁵ Tony (informant #9), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

³⁶ Sebit (informant #16), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

³⁷ Richard (informant #15), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

³⁸ Anna (informant #2), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

claimed; *“it was very nice at the time, but at the CPA time things became different”*³⁹. The acceptance of war-displaced Southerners disappeared, and people became challenged in new ways. As INGO-worker Jack expressed it; *“there was not a good divorce, no, it was a bad divorce...so of course they mistreat them there, and I mean nothing physical or whatever, but they are seen as 'okay, now get to your country, you didn't want us, so get out'...”*⁴⁰. This leads us the choice of returning back to South Sudan.

5.1.2 The Motivation for Returning to South Sudan

Although this study does not focus on the factors behind repatriation, a few relevant issues should be mentioned. The reasons behind people's return migration can explain their motivation to or lack of motivation to contribute to the rebuilding and development of their country. As Rogge (1994: 35) argues, “[r]eluctant migrants seldom make successful settlers, even if it means 'going home’”.

In this study, the most commonly heard motivation for returning to South Sudan was patriotism. Hope, a returnee in her late 20s, said the reason for her return was *“...because this is my country!”*⁴¹. Mary expressed herself similarly; *“we are feeling at home in South Sudan, it is our land. It is not like Khartoum, that is not our land...”*⁴². This feeling of nationalism and affiliation with South Sudan can arguably have an effect on the returnees' desire to contribute to their country. A study done by Pantuliano and colleagues (2008: 1), claims that “[i]n Southern Sudan there is a strong sense of people 'returning home', often driven by a desire not only to rebuild their own livelihoods and futures, but also to contribute to the building of a viable and peaceful Southern Sudan”. This is clearly expressed by university student Vincent, who said that; *“South Sudan needs its people to improve its country, so I returned to help my family and to help my country”*⁴³.

However, the respondents also mentioned the referendum and the following independence in 2011 as reasons for returning. Both returnees and INGO respondents claimed that the South Sudanese government encouraged people to return in time to cast their votes in the referendum. Simultaneously, the mistreatment of Southerners in the north and the alienation after the referendum result was disclosed, many felt they had no choice but to move to the south. Charles, a South Sudanese academic, claimed that; *“...overnight they became foreigners, they lost their rights, they*

³⁹ Tony, interview.

⁴⁰ Jack (informant #13), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

⁴¹ Hope (informant #4), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

⁴² Mary, interview.

⁴³ Vincent (informant #8), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

could not work – the only option was to go back home...”⁴⁴. This raises questions of the voluntariness of the return. It may seem like some returnees were directly or indirectly pressured to leave Khartoum, and might therefore have no real desire to either return or contribute to South Sudan.

* * *

Section 5.2: Returnee Capital: What are the Returnees Bringing?

In order to analyze the returnees' potential to contribute, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of what they can actually contribute with. In this regard, we will now turn to the first section of the equation:

$$\textit{returnee integration} = \textit{returnee capital} + \textit{prevailing conditions}$$

As we saw in chapter 4, returnee capital is the material and non-material resources returnees have acquired either before the flight or during exile, which they bring with them upon return. In this case this implies the capital people obtained in South Sudan before the flight and in Khartoum during the displacement. This section will therefore present the returnee capital discovered in this study. Through data collection, information regarding people's levels of capital (material, education, work experience, social capital, etc.) have been obtained and discussed. This was essential not only to acquire an overview of the relevant returnee capital available in Juba, but also to illuminate the capital left behind in Khartoum. The utilization of these resources will be discussed in the following sections.

5.2.1 Material Capital

According to the findings, the amount of material capital brought by returnees varies greatly. The informants told very diverse stories about access to both money, land and goods. When it comes to property, five of the eleven returnee informants claimed that they already had a plot or a house upon the return, either in Juba or outside the city. The remaining six returnees said they were staying with relatives or temporarily renting a place. However, when it comes to money the message was clear; returnees from Sudan bring overall very little money back to South Sudan.

According to the informants, this has several reasons. Firstly, the introduction of a new

⁴⁴ Charles (informant #24), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

currency, the South Sudanese pound (SSP), in July 2011, caused a loss of value for the Sudanese pounds the returnees possessed. A small-scale business woman, Anna, understood this and decided to spend her money on goods in Khartoum⁴⁵. She bought fabrics and clothes in Khartoum, and brought them to Juba where she sold them. In addition to being a form of social capital in itself, this economic insight made her able to indirectly bring her material capital to the south. However, the majority of the informants followed a pattern of having at least some money in Khartoum, but not being able to benefit from it or transfer it to South Sudan. A similar pattern was discovered regarding belongings;

“...it is like sort of in the whole returns pattern, it is completely forgetting how little money people have, like how little financial independence...they have a monetary system, a lot of people left Khartoum with a reasonable number of assets...and of course you cannot carry a bed frame all the way back to South Sudan, and they had to sell it...people knew that they had to sell it...and there is a point when people in Khartoum had to sell things at a fifth of its value...”⁴⁶

Another reason for the lack of material capital, which was expressed clearly by both returnees and other informants, is the often arduous journey from Khartoum to the south. Despite Sudan being the neighboring country, the return can offer numerous challenges. First of all, the returnees are not always able to bring all their belonging with them. An INGO-worker said that “*many returnees converted their money into goods, because they were less likely to be stolen on the way to South Sudan*”⁴⁷. This created a massive challenge for the actors involved in the assisted returns, who had to transport not only thousands of people back to the south, but also an enormous amount of goods. Another respondent further explained; “*they try to bring all their belongings, all their furniture...fridge, sofa sets...everything under open sky...burning in the sun...soaking in the rain....getting spoiled...but they came with all these things...*”⁴⁸. Furthermore, the respondents also spoke of difficulties at the border check points, where both money and belongings were forcibly taken from them. In addition, the barges transporting both returnees and goods down the river Nile are regularly reported stranded, due to either taxation issues or the shifting rainy/dry seasons. Consequently, people's belongings are delayed. Grace told that all her family's belongings had been stranded in Kosti, a border town, for two years now⁴⁹.

One crucial aspect of the return process which must be mentioned is its long duration. This is often overlooked, despite its potential impact on the returnees' material capital. According to Gabriella, a NGO-employee, the time from you leave Khartoum until you reach your final

⁴⁵ Anna, interview.

⁴⁶ Gabriella (informant #20), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

⁴⁷ John (informant #12), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

⁴⁸ Jack, interview.

⁴⁹ Grace (informant #11), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

destination and manage to settle down – may it be in Juba or somewhere else – can take from a few months and up to several years⁵⁰. During this period, the returnees have to survive of the capital they have:

“They don't have money...I mean, the only money they have in a lot of cases is the one they bring with them in terms of material things...you know, their cargo...so they sell it a little by little...and in this way they survive until they can reintegrate up to a point, but it is not easy...”⁵¹

A NGO-worker told a similar story of a young returnee mother in Warrap state:

“Some of them were really...hmm...in a terrible situation, because I remember in 2012, early 2012, we visited some of the returnees, and there was a young woman that had four children...and she said her husband had been killed in the war some time ago...and she had come from Khartoum with her household belongings, because the IOM assisted them to carry everything...but by 2012, and she had come in 2011, she had sold most of her household things to be able to buy food, because the World Food Program provides food for six months, but in this case they provided actually for one year...but they said 'we cannot provide for longer'...so she had to sell most of her household items...and she had almost nothing, and these four children were with her and she did not know what to do...she was actually in a desperate situation...”⁵²

This story represents similar experiences heard from other respondents. Overall, it thus seems reasonable to argue that only a limited amount of material capital is brought from Khartoum to South Sudan. When arriving in Juba, and if their material capital have not been lost, stolen, destroyed or used along the way, many returnees find themselves with very little capital left. We should of course be aware that there are exceptions to the rule, like stated by John;

“If looking at Juba, you will be dealing with a different level of diaspora...like some nurses and business people who are bringing substantial wealth and connections from Sudan, and...you know...there is to be seen in Juba, yeah...in Juba...it is hard to say what's behind it, but like obvious displace of wealth, like fancy new cars and mansions and things like that...”⁵³

However, the largest part of the data shows a clear underrepresentation of material capital among the returnees.

5.2.2 Human Capital

On the other hand, all of the 28 informants agreed that returnees come with skills. Through direct questions or appearing indirectly throughout the interviews, every respondent claimed that

⁵⁰ Gabriella, interview.

⁵¹ Jack, interview.

⁵² Nancy (informant #21), interview by Linn Erslund, June 2013.

⁵³ John, interview.

returnees bring with them either academic or work experience from Khartoum. For instance, out of the eleven returnee respondents, there were four nurses, one small-scale business woman, one man with ten years experience within policing and security, one administrator, and four university students. Several of the informants also had family members with higher education or with experience from high positions in Khartoum. Many had attended the Juba National University, which was relocated to Khartoum from 1983 to 2011 for security reasons.

The macro-level informants also argued that returnees bring various forms of human capital. NGO-worker Gabriella said that “...*certainly people are turning up educated, people are turning up with assets, with different experiences...*”⁵⁴. Interestingly, academic actor Charles told that;

“...during the war, the government targeted highly educated people, they saw them as a security threat, as someone who can mobilize people. At the university, many professors and lecturers were targeted. The government targeted everybody, but especially highly educated people...”⁵⁵

This statement can imply that educated people were displaced during the war and that human capital were removed from the south. If this is correct, it is even more vital to bring skills back to South Sudan, and this study shows clear discoveries of such brain gain. The respondents mentioned nurses, doctors, pharmacists, administrators, carpenters, builders, plumbers, electricians, teachers, police, and business entrepreneurs who have returned from Khartoum to South Sudan – “...*qualified workers who South Sudan desperately needs, and who they don't have...*”⁵⁶. As we have seen, Anna, who returned after seventeen years in Khartoum, brought her clothing business back to South Sudan⁵⁷. She is also using her business skills to teach other women how to set up small businesses. Similarly, Kate reflected upon experiences from a returnee camp set up in the outskirts of one of South Sudan's bigger towns;

“There were many returnees with some sort of skills...absolutely...it took only three days before there was a market in the camp! Some of the most initiative, and who had some money, they bought a few packages of biscuits, some soap and some different things, and started their own business...it happened immediately, so there was quite a lot of initiative in them...”⁵⁸

It should, however, be kept in mind that there always are exceptions. The South Sudanese in Khartoum were indeed displaced, and many had no access to education or employment. According to Jacobsen, Lautze and Osman (2001), the Sudanese government employed strategies designed to

⁵⁴ Gabriella, interview.

⁵⁵ Charles, interview.

⁵⁶ Kate (informant #19), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

⁵⁷ Anna, interview.

⁵⁸ Kate, interview.

make it difficult for Southerners to get any kind of documentation or to claim any rights of residency in Khartoum. As mentioned above, many Southerners lived very vulnerably in IDP camps or in the poorest areas of Khartoum. It should be assumed that also some of these individuals and households have found their way to Juba in the post-war period. Based on this, former government official Eric described the situation as following;

“Those who had jobs are few among the returnees, because we had more than four million IDPs in the north...and if you take the proportion of educated people, because the government in the north also did not give them the opportunity, because they discriminated them...yeah...so they were fighting them...so only few...they got their scholars and scholarships for education, whoever is lucky to get that chance...so...maybe among four million you can say 500...it is not a big number...”⁵⁹

This is further reflected in the extremely low literacy rate (27 percent) in South Sudan today, and must be considered in the further analysis.

5.2.3 Social and Cultural Capital

In his theory, Helling argues that returnees often have experienced different lifestyles in exile, and that they therefore are bringing with them different values, attitudes and ideas when they return. Helling sees these acquisitions as an important part of the overall level of returnee capital. In this study, the urban life of Khartoum was found to cause a crucial change in the returnees lifestyles. According to research, 83 percent of the South Sudanese population is rurally based and 78 percent of households rely primarily on agriculture or livestock for their survival (Maxwell et.al., 2012). Tribalism, customary law and a traditional lifestyle are strong factors. Thus, when Southerners arrived in Khartoum, many experienced an urban setting for the very first time. Several aspects of this lifestyle were mentioned during the interviews as potentially positive for South Sudan's future.

Firstly, the respondents argued that the urban environment introduced people to a different life – a life with higher standards of living, different economic opportunities and new social networks. This is reflected in the range of skills discussed above. Victor, a South Sudanese NGO-employee, referred to it as “*the acquisition of urbanized survival mechanisms*”⁶⁰. However, Victor did not only mention work skills, but also the encounter with a different culture; “*they went and acquired different skills...they went and acquired a new culture...which have still prolonged, they have a new culture also...which means they have new attitudes...*”⁶¹. This argument was supported

⁵⁹ Eric (informant #26), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

⁶⁰ Victor (informant #17), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

⁶¹ Ibid.

by several other respondents. It was suggested that returnees in general, not only those from Khartoum, come back with both different mentalities, attitudes and opinions. One informant said that “*they come with a different spirit, a different attitude towards work*”⁶², while another suggested that “*returnees come with another mentality, that is more pro-development...or it is more...I mean, it is new, it is more modern!*”⁶³.

Furthermore, discoveries were made during the observation phase that many returnees had developed different perceptions of what is considered respectable work. According to tradition, there are certain professions that are considered very low level jobs that respectable people should not do. Examples of this in Juba is working in bars or hotels, or driving water trucks⁶⁴. Most South Sudanese people will, according to informal sources, not take such jobs. However, the urban experiences of many returnees have changed this perception. This was said to be particularly the case for people who had been in East Africa, yet you can also encounter returnees from Khartoum in such professions.

Moreover, the returnees' new ideas and attitudes were to some extent perceived as something positive by the informants. Interestingly, Charles expressed a high appreciation of returnees from Khartoum compared to returnees from East Africa:

“People from Sudan are perceived as being very honest and reliable, because of the Islamic, religious influence. Even before the war, they had the tendency of being honest, helpful, communicative. For example, if you give an envelop full of money to somebody at the airport of Khartoum, telling them to call this number when you reach Juba, they will reach Juba airport and call that number. If you give the envelope to somebody from East Africa...phf...you have given away your money! You see, people returning from East Africa have usually developed a more Western, individualistic attitude. They are often seen as more dishonest...as crooked! (...) ...if you are cheated by a dinka, you will ask; which Dinka? A Dinka from East Africa or a Dinka from Khartoum?”⁶⁵

This is very interesting, because it challenges the historical resentment against Islamic influence in the south. This will be further discussed below in the section on social (re)integration. Yet, it should be mentioned that only one informant, government representative Peter, suggested that knowledge of Arabic can be a resource. While the lack of English knowledge among returnees from Khartoum was repeatedly mentioned as a problem for both social and economic (re)integration (see below section 5.3.1), Peter argued that fluency in Arabic can be perceived as a resource; “*we even need Arabic, we need Arabic to be taught here. It is simple, because it is good to know, because Arabic is*

⁶² Charles, interview.

⁶³ Jack, interview.

⁶⁴ In Juba, virtually all households depend on water from the Nile. This is regularly transported in special tank trucks from the river to people's houses.

⁶⁵ Charles, interview.

*an international language. So it is good to know it...*⁶⁶.

Maybe the most interesting finding from a peace studies perspective was the repeatedly suggested peacefulness of the returnees. This was mentioned by both returnees themselves and other actors (both South Sudanese and foreign). South Sudan consists of a great number of ethnic groups, and tribal affiliation and identification are strong. Most people live together with their tribesmen and have their social networks within their tribe. However, it was argued that this dynamic changed considerably in Khartoum. Returnee Alicia said that “*in Khartoum all Southerners lived together and had no problems with the neighbors*”⁶⁷. Both in the city and in the IDP camps people were forced to live together across tribes, and their shared Southern identification became emphasized rather than their tribal identity. Eric explained this:

“...they have their exposure to urbanization, most of them live with neighbors who are not from their tribe...they can associate with any group. Here in the south, those who stayed here, if you are associating with someone that person has to come from your region or from...whatever...in culture-wise... Because they say you have to maintain the security...you don't want foreigners, like if somebody comes from outside our region, so that person may get the information of our culture, and expose what is good and what is bad about us. So privacy is an issue. (...) ...because [the returnees] are more exposed of town life, they are peaceful. Because they live there, staying different tribes together. They were not one tribe, so they are peaceful...”⁶⁸

If this attitude is transferred to South Sudan, it can have crucial implications for the future of the country; it can lead to increased understanding and acceptance of other people. As the informants suggested, returnees from Khartoum have a more open-minded attitude towards people outside of their ethnic or tribal group. As Charles argued;

“You develop a cultural awareness, you develop a certain understanding. You begin to challenge stereotypes. If a Dinka thinks a person from Central Equatoria eats people, and then his neighbor in exile is from Central Equatoria and he sees that he does not eat people... It changes people's minds. (...) People modify their ideas, begin to challenge the idea [of tribalism]... If somebody says Dinkas are bad, you will say; 'No, I met a good Dinka'.”⁶⁹

He continued by humorously sharing his own experiences from exile in Egypt:

“I had never met anybody from Darfur before, and I saw them as Arabs...blacks, but Arabs. But in Cairo I shared a flat with somebody from Darfur. My friends [from South Sudan] thought I was secretly Arabized. They came to my flat to see how these people really were, and there they saw them drinking beer! So they thought I had converted them...”⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Peter (informant #25), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

⁶⁷ Alicia, interview.

⁶⁸ Eric, interview.

⁶⁹ Charles, interview.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

This development can arguably be perceived as a positive aspect of displacement, and it illuminates the importance of recognizing the potential of returnee capital. Through living in Khartoum – often for several decades – South Sudanese have acquired new mentalities, attitudes and values, including awareness and increasing acceptance of other people. Whether or not these impulses can be directly transferred to the context of Juba is debatable, yet it is virtually indisputable that these are attitudes desperately needed in South Sudan. As former government representative Eric claimed; *“the issue that is draining all the resources of this country is tribalism...and these people can live alongside other tribes”*⁷¹.

5.2.4 Stimuli for Assistance

According to the returnee capital framework, returnees can furthermore act as stimuli for state capacity-building and aid distribution. This argument was investigated during the data collection process, with diverging results. Both returnees and others disagreed about whether or not the presence of returnees impacts the level of attention and assistance from macro actors.

When returnees arrive in South Sudan, they receive a ration card for food and non-food items (NFIs) for three months. This is directed at returnees only, and it is supposed to be of temporary assistance until they settle down and are able to provide for themselves. Additionally, the informants mentioned other types of programs for returnees, usually provided by NGOs, for instance income generating projects, construction of boreholes, health care and educational facilities, and hygiene and sanitation awareness. Several of the informants argued that such assistance often also benefit the return communities as well. Two INGO-employees reflected upon this:

“ A colleague recently told me when they were visiting a project site, people were expressing that, yes, the returnees strain resources, but they also bring the benefit of bringing developments with them...and this is...eh...you know, a somewhat controversial thing to say, because there are tendencies of ignoring the host community and issues like that, but... You know, any community where there are tensions, conflicts, resources are strained, and these are factors that a high influx of returnees bring, it is going to need more attention from the humanitarian community. I mean, it just sort of goes hand in hand.”⁷²

“...they bring development, I mean, they attract NGOs and international assistance. This is something that everybody says, in all the focus groups and when you talk with them. It is like, okay, this community did not have a borehole, but now because there are returnees they put a borehole...they did not have a school, but now there are returnees... In the end this outmatches the feeling that resources are scarce.”⁷³

⁷¹ Eric, interview.

⁷² John, interview.

⁷³ Jack, interview.

In accordance with the theory, several respondents claimed that projects usually are aimed at the entire community in order to avoid conflicts between returnees and others. Thus, instead of risking the complaints and resentment of only targeting returnees, some agencies rather seek to find solutions that will benefit entire communities. This is exactly in line with Helling's argument; macro actors perceive the presence of returnees as a threat to scarce resources and stability, and therefore seek to balance the situation by providing assistance for all. However, not all respondents agreed that returnees promote assistance, as will be demonstrated below.

When speaking about South Sudan as a whole, five macro respondents claimed that the presence of returnees has definitely led to an increase in NGO activities. The NGOs in this study that work specifically towards returnees, said that they tend to look at where the number of returns are highest and the needs are most pressing, when determining where to initiate projects. This is, however, when speaking about South Sudan in general. When it comes to Juba, the situation is quite different. None of the NGOs in this study had projects in Juba. Three NGOs had projects in other areas of Central Equatoria state, but not in Juba as such. During the observation period the researcher was in fact unable to find any organizations with projects involving returnees in the capital, except for the transit areas where people are awaiting onward transportation to their final destinations. John explains this by saying that “*Juba, being the capital, is a very big hub of these returns, but it is not where the humanitarian needs are pressing so much*”⁷⁴. Due to its central position, Juba is enjoying a higher level of social and economic development than most places in the country. This can be one of the reason why returnees in Juba are not given more attention.

Furthermore, two respondents illuminated additional aspects of the humanitarian and development efforts in South Sudan. They argued that the presence of returnees per se is often not sufficient for achieving attention in a country like South Sudan. INGO-worker John explained this:

“I think that the humanitarian community as a whole, and this is just me speaking of course, it is doing what it can with the resources that it has, because there are just all sort of numerable needs...(…) I would not say that the virtue of having a high concentration of returnees, that these places get more attention. I mean, it is a just a matter of trying to prioritize the most urgent needs, for instance with the epidemics recently, Hepatitis E...these issues that crop up, that is where the humanitarian focus is.”⁷⁵

The distinction between returnees and others was further reflected upon by NGO-worker Gabriella:

“...this is not the case in other countries, whereby the gap between those who were displaced and those who were not, interpreted often as, you know, that is intermingled with ethnic, religious, political... The Tamils in Sri Lanka is obviously an amazing example of a very marginalized ethnic community and minority, who have the very obvious gap between them

⁷⁴ John, interview.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

and everybody else, and so in that case you can pursue your singular line for a protective framework for the Tamils. But here it would not necessarily make that much sense, because, I mean, often the host communities...we find that often those communities can actually be in a worse situation than returnees.⁷⁶

It may seem that the extremely low levels of development and the myriad of urgent needs around the country take the attention away from returnees. Issues like security, access to clean water, food security, and health concerns for the population as a whole are often seen as more urgent than the (re)integration of returnees. When analyzing the interviews more thoroughly, this was further visible in the respondents' reflections on the international community's continuing emergency focus in South Sudan, rather than moving on to a more development oriented strategy. Gabriella mentioned that many agencies struggle to find financing for (re)integration programs;

“...it is just an incredibly short-sighted way to look at the issue. I mean, we will get you as far as the center, and... I mean, donors make this mistake repeatedly when working with returns. (...) I think that is the most frustrating aspect, because when people were returning there was a huge amount of support, but now that they have physically returned there is not as much support given to the durable solutions part of it.”⁷⁷

This was in fact complained about by some of the returnee respondents as well. During the focus group discussion with Rose, Hope, Helena and Ruth, they all said that they had received support by NGOs during the return, but that there was now no assistance to be found, except for the three months' rations of food and NFIs.

All in all, the situation for humanitarian and development assistance in South Sudan is complex, and the issues mentioned here are only a small part of the wider picture. It seems reasonable to argue that the presence of returnees is acknowledged by national and international actors, but that there often are more urgent needs to attend to than the (re)integration of returnees. Surprisingly enough, the connection between the two – that lack of (re)integration measures may lead to urgent needs and new displacement circles among the returnees – seems to be either unrecognized or forgotten. As some of the informants suggested, the returnees do seem to act as stimuli for increased attention and assistance in some communities, yet not in Juba. The level of development and service delivery in the capital, although not sufficient for the amount of people coming in, seems to currently be considered high enough to not receive additional support.

* * *

⁷⁶ Gabriella, interview.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Section 5.3: Prevailing Conditions: Can the Returnee Capital be Utilized?

Now that we have established what kind of returnee capital the returnees are bringing from Khartoum, it is time to look at the second part of the equation:

$$\textit{returnee integration} = \textit{returnee capital} + \textit{prevailing conditions}$$

As we remember, the prevailing conditions are the context, structures and processes surrounding the returnees. According to the theoretical framework, such conditions influence people's ability to utilize their human agency. More specifically, the prevailing conditions enable or constrain returnees' abilities to utilize their returnee capital. Thus, by drawing on historical and contemporary developments in South Sudan, this section seeks to investigate the prevailing conditions surrounding returnees in Juba. The study has discovered many obstacles to the (re)integration process, which subsequently create barriers for the utilization of the available returnee capital.

5.3.1 Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities

We have already established the fact that many returnees possess various work and educational skills. This section will now examine if and how these skills can be utilized in Juba. Sadly, the main discovery is that the current socio-economic conditions in South Sudan generally hinder people's livelihood revival and use of returnee capital.

Every single informant mentioned the lack of access to economic opportunities as the number one challenge for returnees. Respondents from all levels spoke about the lack of employment opportunities, the limited formal economy, and the harsh competition for livelihoods in both Juba and South Sudan as a whole. Returnee Mary said that *“it is very hard to find work. People returned with the plan to get jobs in South Sudan, but it is not happening. Because the government has no money, there are few jobs. Most people are doing nothing”*⁷⁸. Previous research shows similar findings; returnees came to Juba with “the perception prior to return that the town offered easy access to a wide range of employment and livelihood opportunities”, only to become disappointed by the economic hardship of the capital (Pantuliano et.al., 2008: 15).

Overview of Livelihoods in Juba

In Juba the main employers are the government and international organizations and

⁷⁸ Mary, interview.

companies. In 2011 the South Sudanese business registry suggested that approximately 700 NGOs and 8,000 businesses (within manufacturing, transport, construction, financing, trade, real estate etc.) were registered in South Sudan (Martin & Mosel, 2011). However, only 10 percent of the total economically active population was at the same time estimated to be in formal employment (ibid). According to Pantuliano and colleagues (2008), a large proportion of commercial trade is dominated by merchants of Northern Sudanese origin, while Ugandans and Kenyans dominate the construction sector. In other words, the majority of the South Sudanese people are excluded from the formal economy, as this study also suggests. Former referendum observer Kate emphasized this:

“That is the biggest, biggest challenge. One of the big challenges. I mean, there are no employment opportunities, there are no jobs here. There is not a single workplace here! I mean, there are jobs in the ministries, but those are very few. Otherwise, you have to...you have to start your own business, I mean, to sell something in the market. To make soap and sell it. To start your own hairdressing salon. Have enough money to buy a sewing machine and make clothes. But to do this, you need the skills.”⁷⁹

However, to have skills is not always sufficient in Juba. Returnee Anna, who had her own clothing business in Khartoum, has found it hard to reestablish her business in Juba⁸⁰. Despite her business skills and material capital from Khartoum, she said that high prices, low purchasing power, and lack of micro finance institutions⁸¹ in Juba have made the reestablishment challenging.

Although all the returnee informants were either in jobs or university during the data collection, they told similar stories of long-term unemployment and lack of suitable jobs. Many returnees mentioned that people's educational background is of little value in Juba. The majority had been unemployed for a longer period of time before finding work, and the jobs they had found were usually not relevant for their skills. Grace said her husband had a higher degree in accounting and twenty years of experience as an administrator for a international company in Khartoum, yet he could now only find small, temporary positions in Juba unrelated to his background⁸². Alicia told a similar story:

“There are no jobs here, even my sister cannot find work. She has a university degree in agricultural forestry, but she cannot find work, because her certificate is in Arabic, so she will not find employment in English in Juba. She is now working at an airline counter selling tickets, not using her education at all...”⁸³

⁷⁹ Kate, interview.

⁸⁰ Anna, interview.

⁸¹ There are some micro finance institutions in Juba, yet their lending criteria often restrict returnees' access (e.g. to have a business active for three months before the application, to own land, or to have been settled for 12-18 months before accessing the loan) (Maxwell et.al., 2012; Pantuliano et.al., 2008). This particularly effects women in poor areas.

⁸² Grace, interview.

⁸³ Alicia, interview.

This clearly suggests that there are barriers for the utilization of returnee capital in Juba. Even with a university degree and a high level of competence, returnees are struggling to find work – this was repeatedly mentioned as a frustration among the returnees.

Overall, the majority of the returnee population manage to make a living through the informal sector of Juba. Table 3 shows the various livelihood strategies people are using to generate an income. Adding to the list, respondents of this study mentioned small-scale businesses (e.g. tea making), collection and selling of scrap metal, and car washing. Charles suggested that *“people become creative, imaginative. The informal economy is important. You have to do things you normally don't do, or things you don't want to do”*⁸⁴. People may manage to survive on such day-to-day labor, however, it does not provide a stable income or enough money to pay for tuition fees or health care.

Table 3: Primary livelihood strategies for residents and returnees in Juba

	Livelihood: men	Livelihood: women
1	Daily labour (construction)	Domestic help
2	Stone-breaking	Clothes washing
3	Digging pit latrines	Stone breaking
4	Brick-making	Dish washing
5	Mechanics	Grass cutting
6	Bicycle repair	Charcoal making
7	Charcoal-making	Charcoal sale in small plastic bags
8	Charcoal sale in sacks	Firewood collection
9	Cutting and selling construction timber	Alcohol brewing
10	Drivers	Bread-making/-selling
11	Security guards	
12	Riding 'boda boda' (motorcycles – the youth)	

Source: Pantuliano et.al. (2008: 16)

Moreover, this has a major implication for the national economy, which former government representative Eric pointed out; *“...most of the people are not working. You can see it if you walk on the street, you can see people sitting playing cards, drinking tea... So, it becomes a question of how we get [state] revenue...”*⁸⁵. This illuminates a crucial aspect of the returnee capital framework; the returnees may be able to contribute economically to their own households on the micro level, yet not participate in the economic development on a macro level. When the majority of the population – including returnees – are unable to partake formally in the national economy, it will most definitely impact the level of tax revenue for the South Sudanese state. If only one tenth of the economically active population is paying taxes, this leaves about 90 percent of the potential tax revenue untouched. This is a huge number for an economically weak country like South Sudan.

⁸⁴ Charles, interview.

⁸⁵ Eric, interview.

Obstacles to Livelihood Revival

In order to illuminate the trouble of finding employment in Juba, this study has identified three main reasons for the constraints faced by returnees. Firstly, one rather obvious barrier for the returnees from Khartoum is language. Both returnees and other informants mentioned the returnees' lack of English skills as a major reason behind their unemployment. During exile in Khartoum, the South Sudanese IDPs went to Arabic-instructed schools and lived in an Arabic-speaking society. When considering the duration of displacement and the fact that many either came to Khartoum very young or were even born there, it is not surprising that Arabic is now their first language. Only three out of the eleven returnee respondents in this study had some sort of knowledge of English, while some others spoke different local languages in addition to the classical Arabic. And, as argued by Charles, “*when they are competing for jobs with people being educated in English in East Africa [or other places], they have a serious problem*”⁸⁶. Previous studies show that NGOs and UN agencies admitted to often preferring East African staff over returnees from Khartoum because of their fluency in English (Martin & Mosel, 2011; Pantuliano et.al., 2008).

Based on this it can be argued that the lack of English skills works as an obstacle for the utilization of returnee capital. Eric gave a clear example of this:

“I have one of my cousins, now he is driving a Land Cruiser, he is a driver. And by then, when he was in the north he was a project coordinator in Khartoum, for a sugar factory in Khartoum. He was the project coordinator, because he is a graduate from university with an agricultural degree in sugar cane plantations. So when he came here he applied for jobs within agriculture, but he could not get a job, because he knows [only] Arabic. So the only thing he can do...when he came, he came with some money, because he was given his salary from the north, so he had to buy a car to use it as a public transport.”⁸⁷

Thus, it is clear that language is a crucial barrier for returnees from Khartoum. Even if people come with high academic qualifications and extensive work experience, it can be extremely challenging to find work in Juba. As Eric said, “*Arabic is discriminating them*”⁸⁸.

Secondly, several respondents mentioned the lack of social networks as a barrier to employment. A commonly heard comment was that you need “to know somebody” to get a job. According to the informants, this goes hand in hand with tribal affiliation. South Sudanese INGO-employee Sebit said that when you are looking for work, “*people will ask; who are you? Who is your father? Your uncle?...*”⁸⁹. This will identify your family, clan or tribe, which will then determine your opportunities in society. This is not to say that this is the case everywhere in South

⁸⁶ Charles, interview.

⁸⁷ Eric, interview.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Sebit, interview.

Sudan, yet it should be mentioned that several of the returnees emphasized the issue. INGO-worker Richard even went as far as to say that “*talent has no scope in South Sudan, tribalism has scope*”⁹⁰. This is supported by other research, which claims that “workers are reportedly selected on the basis of their ethnic affiliation” (Pantuliano et.al., 2008: 16). Reports even claim that some ministries are completely dominated by a single tribe (ibid).

Finally, despite the urban context of Juba, surprisingly many respondents also illuminated the lack of farming skills among returnees. Jack argued that the government in general wants a larger proportion of the population to do agriculture⁹¹. As we have seen in chapter 2, only 4 percent of South Sudan's arable land is cultivated (Maxwell et.al., 2012). This is unfortunate in a country where the vast majority of food is imported, and the government would therefore like people to make use of the fertile land's potential. Returnees from Khartoum, however, are according to this study often not interested in agriculture:

“...they don't want to do it, they don't want to do agriculture, because they have...they already know the city, they don't want to return to work under the sun...so, you know, they prefer to be hired workers or whatever...”⁹²

“...people move to camps, and people forget how long, you know, people are in camps for...it is like, because your grandfather is a farmer, it doesn't make you a farmer...and when you are in a camp, you don't necessarily aspire to do what your grandfather did, you aspire to see what other people do...”⁹³

Both within Khartoum city and in the IDP camps for Southerners, people experienced a different kind of life – a more urban lifestyle with less dependency on agriculture. Jacobsen and colleagues (2001) argue that this has resulted in a change of identity, by which many former farmers or pastoralists now see themselves as urbanized and are unwilling to return to their rural lifestyles. As one informant phrased it, people “*adapted to other mechanisms of surviving*”⁹⁴.

In this regard, we should also not forget the many Southerners who have been born in Khartoum, and who have no previous knowledge of the agricultural traditions of the south. As Richard puts it; “*[they] were born and brought up in Khartoum, so they have not learned how to survive in this land. Just like a tiger in the zoo, after one year if you push him to the jungle he will die, because he has not learned the art of surviving*”⁹⁵. Interestingly, the lack of digging skills among returnees was mentioned by several respondents as a hinderance to agricultural production.

⁹⁰ Richard, interview.

⁹¹ Jack, interview.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Gabriella, interview.

⁹⁴ Victor, interview.

⁹⁵ Richard, interview.

Mary exclaimed; “...they don't even know how to dig!”⁹⁶.

As a result, people are migrating to the urban centers in search for jobs. Juba, being the capital, is the aim for many, especially young people. This was expressed as a major concern for the government; such migration increases the competition for the few jobs available and puts pressure on both housing and social services⁹⁷. Reports claim that the government is unable to absorb a large number of employees into the public sector, due to funding shortages (Pantuliano et.al., 2008). Salary payments are often irregular, and during the data collection period many government officials had in fact not received their salaries for two months⁹⁸. The government's plans to further reduce the size of the public sector, will only lead to an even harsher competition for the few employment opportunities available.

Returnee Capital and the Prevailing Economic Conditions

Under such circumstances, it seems reasonable to argue that the returnees' expectations for urban livelihood revivals in Juba are not met, and that a large proportion of their skills remain unused. The extremely few employment opportunities in the formal economy, leave most returnees with no choice but to make a living through the informal economy. The growing number of urban poor puts additional strain on already scarce resources, at the same time as the government is loosing out on state revenues. The prevailing conditions make it very challenging, if not impossible, for many returnees to make use of their returnee capital for economic development beyond the micro level. Interestingly enough, it seems like other South Sudanese residents of Juba are also facing similar hardship. However, the lack of English skills and social networks put the returnees from Khartoum in an even more vulnerable situation. Overall, this study suggests that there is a need for several reforms in Juba, for the returnee capital currently available to be utilized; an extensive development of the formal economy, creation of employment opportunities, harder restrictions on foreign workers, and intensive English training.

5.3.2 Access to Land

Access to land can be crucial for a process of (re)settling and (re)integrating into society. Lack of land and housing severely limits people's opportunities to restore their livelihoods and more generally reestablish their lives. As Mennen (2012:12) claims; “[land] is critical to livelihoods and development”. During this study access to land has been identified as a major challenge for

⁹⁶ Mary, interview.

⁹⁷ Peter, interview.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

returnees. We may recall from the previous section that only five of the eleven returnee respondents had access to land when arriving in Juba. Returnees who arrive without access to land are repeatedly reported vulnerable, and it is not an easy task to acquire a place to stay in Juba today. Failure to access land hinders returnees to settle down permanently, and thus halts the (re)integration process and the utilization of returnee capital.

The Land Belongs to the People

In 2006, the South Sudan Land Commission (SSLC) initiated the process of developing a national land policy (SSLC, n.d.). As an interim measure pending the policy, the Land Act was introduced in January 2009, in which section 75 states that “the Government of southern Sudan, State Government and private companies shall assist internally displaced persons and returnees in their efforts to improve their livelihood” (Land Act, 2009). In accordance with customary law, the Land Act identifies the people of South Sudan as owners of all land. Although customs differ slightly between the different tribes, the overall rule is that people have the right to land from their ancestral communities. Furthermore, “when a person leaves his home for however long a time, with the *intention* of returning, he does not lose his right to the land” (Mennen, 2012: 16). This implies that if the returnees return to their original areas, they should according to customary law have access to land.

However, as this study has discovered, not all returnees wish to return to their ancestral land. The urban experience of Khartoum and the lack of farming skills have left many South Sudanese with no interest in returning to a rural lifestyle. This is where the land issue becomes problematic; according to both customary and national law, returnees have no right to be allocated land in urban areas based on their returnee status per se (ibid). Based on an overall decentralized strategy, the government thus only allocates land to returnees if they return to the area they originally came from:

“...you should return to the rural areas, you should not try to come to the cities. And if you do it you loose every privilege or whatever...every relation with the government. I mean, you can do it, it is not like they are going to stop them, but you cannot claim for nothing after you have moved from your area...”⁹⁹

“You have to go to the local county and process some documents for land in the county you came from originally. If you want to live somewhere else, so the government will not help you. But according to South Sudanese law anyone can buy land. But the returnees can only be allocated land in the county they came from.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Jack, interview.

¹⁰⁰ Anna, interview.

This has major consequences for returnees who want to settle in Juba. More than half of the respondents in this study identified access to land in Juba as a serious barrier to the (re)integration of returnees. NGO-worker Gabriella further argued that *“lack of security of tenure is having a huge impact on the search for durable solutions”*¹⁰¹.

How to Access Land in Juba

If, then, returnees want to settle down in Juba – and they are not originally from there – they have to follow certain procedures to request to purchase land. The interviewed government representative in Juba argued that the government gives no special attention or treatment to returnees migrating to the capital:

“Any returnee...you arrive here, and you have to apply like any other person at the Ministry of Housing. And then, when they demarcate land and do allocations, you go and pull a lottery. If you get, then you are very lucky. So you apply like any other person, any other citizen. We are not going to have special cases that gives land for returnees. You come, you apply, you get.”¹⁰²

According to the returnee respondents, this can be a very long and difficult process. It requires the correct formal documentation, money, and in some instances approval by the local chiefs. According to Deng (in Martin & Mosel, 2011: 19), some people have been waiting for up to three years for an official surveyor to inspect plots. Furthermore, a study by Mennen (2012) claims that the Bari, the indigenous people of Juba County, often deny allocations to non-Baris or demand additional tenure fees of more than 3,000 SSP. This leads to a situation where, according to Martin and Mosel (2011), “in practice only those with money or connections can obtain land”. For most returnees, this is a huge amount of money. Taking into account how little material capital most returnees from Khartoum bring with them, this can seem an impossible price to pay:

“...the challenge is, when they go [to Juba] they need land, and to get land you need to have money. They cannot afford to pay those things, and if you don't have money, how do you acquire land? Because land is allocated and you have to pay for it, and most of the land, it ranges from 6,000 SSP and up. The cheapest one is at very least 6,000 SSP. Far from the city... And if it is 6,000 SSP, how do you pay if you do not have a job? And some of the jobs, like now, you cannot earn more than 1,000 SSP a month...”¹⁰³

As a result, returnees have to make use of other options. Some people rent, yet these prices are also often too high to pay. Furthermore, Alicia claimed that many landlords in Juba refuse to rent out to Dinka or Nuer people¹⁰⁴. Again, the tribal lines become evident. As a consequence, the

¹⁰¹ Gabriella, interview.

¹⁰² Peter, interview.

¹⁰³ Eric, interview.

¹⁰⁴ Alicia, interview.

last couple of years have seen a large-scale expansion of informal settlements in and around Juba:

“Juba is expanding quite quickly, and there is a certain amount of ad hoc community expansion to it. You have people moving in, their movement was unregulated at the time, people would set up structures, and they do not...they are living here, but they do not have security of land tenure. In certain areas you are completely fine, you showed up five years ago, got yourself some structures and your kids go to the local school. In other areas that are supposed to become retail are much more profitable. Suddenly, if you look along the Jebel, the UN decided to build its premises outside of Juba and next to the Jebel. Suddenly with that road came major property, and then you find that people are being displaced away from that road...”¹⁰⁵

This demonstrates the vulnerability of many people in Juba. People in informal settlements receive no compensation for moving, and they also live in constant risk of having their homes demolished. The government and the returnees have so far been unable to agree on settlements, and the issue of land is thus a continuing barrier for the realization of returnee (re)integration and returnee capital.

Land Grabbing

As we have already seen, some returnees had land in Juba before they flew to Khartoum. Fortunately the ones in this study had relatives looking after their properties, and they could easily return to their houses. However, this is not always the case. Many respondents spoke of returnees who are experiencing that others have invaded their land while they were away in exile. This is often IDPs who have come to Juba for security during the war, or ex-soldiers who need housing outside the military barracks. If the intruders refuse to leave, this can become a conflict of interests. In most cases it can be challenging to prove ownership due to a lack of documentation; “*people usually have no papers on their land, but try to identify their land by something else, for example a mango tree they planted a certain place a long time ago*”¹⁰⁶.

Land expert George said that some owners manage to talk to the intruders and regain their land, while others refuse to leave¹⁰⁷. This can create tensions and government representative Peter claimed that many land cases have been taken to court¹⁰⁸. The Land Act established a framework for reclaiming land as a result of involuntary displacement, including a three years deadline (Martin & Mosel, 2011). This has, however, been unknown for most people, and the deadline is now passed. According to Pantuliano and colleagues (2008), the party with the best connections usually wins such claims.

¹⁰⁵ Gabriella, interview.

¹⁰⁶ Sebit, interview.

¹⁰⁷ George (informant #18), interview by Linn Ersland, June 2013.

¹⁰⁸ Peter, interview.

Land and Returnee Capital

Overall, this study shows that inadequate access to land impacts returnees from Khartoum severely. Those who previously owned land is, according to customary law, entitled to have their land back upon return. This, however, is not always happening in reality, due to land-grabbing and an increasing demand for land. Those who wish to buy land in Juba also face several challenges, including high prices, ethnic discrimination and bureaucracy. The government's overview is limited, some plots are sold to several people simultaneously, and informal settlements are common. The issue of female ownership is also contested. According to customary law, women should not own land, yet, the formal law acknowledges their right to both inherit, buy and possess land (Land Act, 2009). This puts women in a vulnerable situation, and creates an unfortunate gap between customary and national law.

All these issues delay the chance for returnees to resettle permanently, to begin the (re)integration process, and to utilize their returnee resources properly. It seems reasonable to argue that both national and local authorities have had an unrealistic assumption that people will return to their (rural) places of origin. Instead, Juba's informal settlements are growing, official demarcations and allocations are delayed, and people's insecurity continue. This affects returnees' livelihood opportunities and choices;

“[p]oor urban dwellers are making significant contributions to the urban economy as casual labourers, consumers and small-scale entrepreneurs. Constant fears of relocation preclude engagement in more permanent livelihood strategies as well as the establishment of more stable living arrangements.”

Martin & Mosel (2011: 21)

Furthermore, Macdonald (2010) highlights the government's refusal to acknowledge the on-going process of urbanization, which have and will continue to have alarming effects on the livelihood and economic development opportunities in urban areas for both returnees and others. As this thesis is written, a new land policy is underway. It remains to be seen if this will lead to improvements for returnees' security of land tenure.

5.3.3 State Capacity and Social Services

Adding to the limited access to land and economic opportunities, South Sudan offers its population an extremely low level of social services. As President Salva Kiir stated in November 2010 (in Maxwell et.al., 2012: 20), “[t]here has been no development in South Sudan. We have no roads, no bridges, no water, no power, nothing at all, no hospitals, and no schools – everything is at

zero”. As a result of the lack of development described in chapter 2 – both during colonial and war times – South Sudan had virtually no service delivery upon independence. Thus, the (re)building began from scratch. However, the weak state apparatus and lack of financial and human resources have limited the development of both infrastructure and social services. This study shows that the lack of social services works as a barrier for returnee (re)integration and a stable life in South Sudan.

The Government's Capacity to Deliver

The government of South Sudan (GoSS) faces a huge task; to provide adequate service delivery to an increasing number of people. According to the Local Government Act of 2009, the local governments in every state have the responsibility to provide basic services to people (Maxwell et.al., 2012). However, the work they do is rarely sufficient. The governments' capacity is usually very low, due to lack of resources, corruption, and limited infrastructure, which results in an extremely poor service delivery (ibid). As argued by former government representative Eric, *“the government is a premature government, their institutional capacity is not there”*¹⁰⁹.

One reason for the state's inadequacy to deliver may be its difficult history. According to scholars, the international community and NGOs have historically played a major role in service delivery in South Sudan (Macdonald, 2010; Tvedt, 1998; Young, 2012). Tvedt (1998: 189) argues that NGOs have played a major role in the southern state administration since the 1970s. By taking on functions that would normally be the government's tasks, the NGOs – unintentionally – “assumed (...) the welfare functions of an ordinary state” and contributed to the undermining of the state apparatus. Thus, when the southern government was established in 2005, it lacked both skills, staff and funding, and were unable to meet the demands for service delivery. The large influx of people in recent years have only increased the pressure. Former referendum observer Kate reflected upon her time in one of the northern states:

“The problem was that the government, the state government, had no apparatus to absorb all the returnees. They had...it was said that a large amount of money was set aside to receive the returnees in South Sudan (...), but most of them had to manage on their own. There was absolutely no national assistance when they came here...”¹¹⁰

The government's capacity-building, on both national and state levels, has several challenges. Service infrastructure is not in place, and more schools, health centers and boreholes need to be built. In 2006, only 16 percent of classrooms were permanent structures (Maxwell et.al.,

¹⁰⁹ Eric, interview.

¹¹⁰ Kate, interview.

2012). The quality of the service delivery is further complicated by the lack of qualified personnel – both teachers, paramedics, doctors and nurses. According to Maxwell and colleagues (ibid), only 13 percent of the country's primary school teachers are qualified. Due to urbanization of teachers, the rate in Juba is, however, as high as 40 percent (Martin & Mosel, 2011). As this thesis shows, many returnee teachers are arriving from Sudan, yet remain unemployed due to their often poor English command. This hinders both maintenance and expansion of the South Sudanese educational system.

Furthermore, the government is also struggling to find financial resources for service provision. According to the International Monetary Fund (in IOM, 2013b), the government's revenue declined significantly in 2012 due to oil disputes with Sudan, reducing the GDP from \$1,765 in 2011 to \$1,101 in 2012. This has considerably reduced the public expenditures and the government's ability to pay public sector employees. According to Pantuliano et.al. (2008), every state receives the same allocation of services and staff, leaving Central Equatoria state with no additional resources for the growing demands of the capital city. However, Eric claimed that the government now has a policy of providing a certain amount of services per number of returnees – an extra school class, increased drug supply, additional boreholes and so on¹¹¹. The researcher has not been able to confirm this from any other sources, thus the question of the link between service distribution and returnees remains.

Lack of Social Services

While adequate education, health and water facilities are almost non-existing in rural areas, Juba is also facing a decrease in its service coverage level (Pantuliano et.al., 2008). As Richard said; *“even Juba does not have any service delivery...no water, no electricity, there is nothing...”*¹¹². While many NGOs work in other areas of South Sudan, very few seem to work in Juba itself. Possible reasons for this has already been discussed, yet it seems reasonable to argue that there is a widespread perception that the capital has a much higher developmental level than the peripheries. Both various reports and respondents in this study claimed that Juba has services that do not exist in the countryside. Yet, most returnees have been used to a higher degree of service delivery in exile. As Charles claimed; *“[t]hey came from something to nothing. They came to a different life”*¹¹³.

In this study the respondents complained about the access to both clean water, electricity, education, and health facilities. Interestingly, the returnees continuously emphasized one aspect; in Khartoum the services were free, while in Juba they are not. According to the interim constitution, both basic health care and education should be free, yet this is not the reality. When taking the lack

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Richard, interview.

¹¹³ Charles, interview.

of physical capital and the high level of unemployment among returnees into consideration, the resentment is thus not surprising. Returnee Mary said that *“most children are just sitting at home, because there is no money for school fees. If you have money from Khartoum, you can pay for the education, if not...”*¹¹⁴. The government representative also admitted that there are very few educational and health centers available, and that those existing are gradually deteriorating¹¹⁵. He emphasized the unbalance between the increasing number of people and the available services:

“In Juba town, where everybody is coming here, the services are not enough. The number of the people is more than what we have on the ground, especially in terms of education, and we have about a hundred students in a class! Which for a teacher is too much... (...) There are [also] too many children who come from areas where there are conflicts, say from Yonglei, from Warrap, from Unity State, from Rumbek, most of these people have migrated to Juba. And now it has caused a lot of congestion in Juba town, now it has affected schools, affected health centers, affected water, affected sanitation... Because in a town like Juba, at least there must be electricity, there must be water, there must be health centers...all these things and services must be around here...”¹¹⁶

The strain on the resources was mentioned by many of the other respondents as well. The common argument was that as more people are coming to South Sudan, the local institutions and facilities get pressured, and they are usually unable to respond effectively to the rising demands. John claimed that; *“[you have] the lowest ratios of health care professionals to citizens in the world, and then you have more people coming in every year which just strains that even further”*¹¹⁷. According to a recent report, 69 percent of the *bomas* (the lowest administrative unit) in high return counties do not have any health facilities (IOM, 2013b). NGO-workers with experience from other states supported this claim; local institutions are often unable to respond to the rising number of returnees. For example in Jonglei, the geographically largest state in South Sudan with a high number of returnees, a growing number of people are coming to the state capital Bor, where they are straining the available services¹¹⁸. This suggests a countrywide trend of underdeveloped service provision in both rural and urban areas.

Interestingly, there has been no reported discrimination in regards to service delivery. This study discovered that access to social services is equally challenging for all – *“everybody has equally poor access”*¹¹⁹. None of the returnees felt discriminated against in this regard, and they mentioned that only people's economic status determines your access to social services. Gabriella summarized it well; *“there is no better or worse to be returning than it is to be staying”*¹²⁰.

¹¹⁴ Mary, interview.

¹¹⁵ Peter, interview.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ John, interview.

¹¹⁸ Sebit, interview.

¹¹⁹ Kate, interview.

¹²⁰ Gabriella, interview.

Financially secure families can pay for services and transport to good facilities, regardless of their status as a stayee or returnee.

Basic Services and Returnee Capital

This study identifies lack of service delivery as a barrier for the (re)integration and active participation of returnees from Khartoum. The state's inability to provide adequate social services prevents the returnees from exercising their social and economic rights, to live stable and productive lives, and to make use of their returnee capital. The amount and quality of service delivery in South Sudan has not increased with the number of returnees, but rather deteriorated. Thus, the returnees are unintentionally putting a strain on the available services, and subsequently creating an increased competition with the rest of the population. Service delivery is then not only crucial for economic development, but can also be a strategic contribution to stability and peace (Pantuliano et.al, 2008; Maxwell et.al., 2012). For community development and rebuilding to take place, basic services need to be in place:

“For me, when I have visited the places where these people are living, it has been like... They really are in a terrible state, they need the most basic, basic services. And for positive changes or to see something positive about they returning, I think they have to have the basic social services – like access to health care, schooling for their children and livelihoods – for these kind of changes to start to show. So, I think, the provision of basic services is something that is urgent.”¹²¹

However, it is noteworthy that this prevailing condition affects not only returnees, but the entire population. The returnees' presence may reinforce the shortage of service delivery and illuminate the state's lack of capacity, yet the situation impacts every financially poor South Sudanese.

5.3.4 Social (Re)integration

Lastly, the social aspect of (re)integration can also be crucial for the utilization of returnee capital. The use of both human and social capital depends on an adequate social (re)integration; to find work, to create contacts, to spread attitudes and values. Juba has undergone a major social change since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, with rapid urbanization and a large-scale influx of work migrants from several countries. This has led to what one respondent called “*the South Sudanese equivalent to a multi-cultural city*”, where you can find people from most of South Sudan's ethnic groups¹²². Hence, Juba is today a multi-ethnic capital

¹²¹ Nancy, interview.

¹²² Gabriella, interview.

where diverging attitudes, values and norms face each other, and where people's perceptions and stereotypes are being contested. Within this context, returnees from Khartoum are facing various social challenges which can be argued to hinder their complete utilization of returnee capital.

Are the Returnees Welcome?

During this study, it became evident that the social aspect of the (re)integration process is crucial for the returnees. This was a topic the returnees themselves often chose to illuminate, and culture, identity and behavior were eagerly discussed. The informants had very diverging opinions of the social reception of returnees in Juba and their level of (re)integration.

Overall, the majority of the respondents argued that returnees from Khartoum were generally welcome in South Sudan. Returnee Mary claimed that most people were welcomed by their relatives¹²³, while several others argued that a sense of nationalism drew people together; “[*off course they were Southerners. That card was held very, very high. It is our people who are coming back*”¹²⁴. Peter, a government official, claimed that the returnees are highly welcomed by the population:

“Those who come from Khartoum, these are people who were forced by war. (...) Now when they come home, people accept them. Yes, people are very happy about it! They are now coming home, so that we, we together, can build our country. That is what people want. They are saying we do not want people to stay [in Khartoum], you come back and build your own country. Because you have been out, and you are not benefiting anything from there. You come home, so that we can build together... (...) So, generally we want those who are outside to come here, to bring all their skills here, so that we can benefit from it.”¹²⁵

This, however, is according to this study's findings, only one side of the story. Many of the respondents rather spoke of a shifting trend within the population from openly inviting all South Sudanese to return, to becoming more cautious and skeptical towards newcomers due to resource scarcity. The general public can now feel the strain from the growing number of people, and people's receptiveness has thus decreased correspondingly.

'Children of Arabization'

Adding to the resource scarcity, the returnees from Khartoum are in a complex situation both socially and culturally. As described in the previous section, most of the returnees went through an extensive change of lifestyle in Khartoum, leaving them with both new attitudes, values and norms acquired from the Sudanese society. This study perceives many of these characteristics as positive –

¹²³ Mary, interview.

¹²⁴ Kate, interview.

¹²⁵ Peter, interview.

as returnee capital – yet this is not necessarily the case among the population in South Sudan. According to Tony, people who stayed in Juba during the war made few changes in their lifestyles, while the people in exile experienced a completely new culture and developed new attitudes and opinions¹²⁶. Then, when the returnees later returned to Juba, they were by many perceived as different, as foreigners, as someone who did not belong there.

One keyword that every single informant mentioned in this regard, was 'Arab'. It is crucial to remember that those who fled to Khartoum in theory fled to the enemy's territory. The reasons for this choice of destination is outside this thesis' scope, yet its implications should be reflected upon. The returnees' connections to the north, to the Arabic world, were emphasized by many informants as something negative. Almost all of the returnee informants claimed that people refer to them as 'jallaba', a derogatory term for Arabs, or sometimes 'Khartoumers'. The returnees expressed great frustration over this, which became particularly evident during the one group interview conducted with four female returnees. Social (re)integration and acceptance were clearly sensitive topics, and the women constantly repeated the word 'segregation'. Interestingly, they argued that people in Juba particularly resent their greetings (in Arabic) when they pass them on the street, and that people claim it is a part of Arab culture.

Such negative perceptions were, unfortunately, extremely evident when talking to other South Sudanese in Juba. The word 'jallaba' was often mentioned, and people would say things like “that is a very Arab/Sudanese thing to do” or “that is not the South Sudanese way”. The respondents did not, however, agree on whether or not you could identify a returnee from Khartoum by their appearance. Some argued that the returnees' dressing, hairstyles, etc. give them away, yet some claimed that the only identifier is the language. Yet, the role of language should not be underestimated. According to one informant, the returnees' use of Arabic puts them in a difficult position; *“people [in South Sudan] have very little to do with Arabic. Arabic is the language of the oppressor, so they decide to refrain from Arabic as the mode of communication...it leaning on Arabic culture...and of course an aspect of resentment”*¹²⁷.

Overall, South Sudanese INGO-worker Sebit argued that returnees from the north are perceived more negatively than positively; *“it is easier for returnees from other countries, they get more respect. If you are from the north, people see you as a 'pure Arab’”*¹²⁸. However, the returnee respondents constantly tried to claim otherwise:

“I never, never change my culture, that one can not happen. I remain as a Southerner up to

¹²⁶ Tony, interview.

¹²⁷ Luke (informant #27), interview by Linn Erslund, June 2013.

¹²⁸ Sebit, interview.

this time.”¹²⁹

“We feel like South Sudanese, so we do not need to be identified otherwise.”¹³⁰

This demonstrates the sensitivity of the question of identity in South Sudan. The returnees often find themselves in a state of limbo in between the South Sudanese in-group and the Arabic out-group, in which other people do not fully accept them as a member of the in-group. In other words, the returnees are in a constant process of trying to convince people that they are South Sudanese.

In this regard, one informant highlighted the important historical reasons for this discrimination. As chapter 2 suggests, there has been a continuous divide between the north and the south of the Sudans since the dawn of history, with clear reflections in identity formation. The north and the south have stood in sharp contrast to each other throughout both colonial and war times, which has resulted in both resentment, stereotypes, and negative perceptions of the other. Although the war is over, this mentality is obviously still evident today. As Luke described it; “*it is not scares, they are wounds*”¹³¹. Thus, it seems reasonable to argue that any resemblance with the north might feel threatening for the South Sudanese, and that the so-called Arabization of the returnees is a clear example of that.

One of the most interesting discoveries in this regard, was the feeling of superiority. NGO-worker Victor argued that people who return from Khartoum often act superior to “*people who stayed back and hid in the bush and did nothing*”¹³². This became evident in other, informal conversations with the South Sudanese, in which returnees were talked about as patronizing, selfish and superior. South Sudanese Sebit told that;

“They don't like being corrected, they tend to know everything. For example when they speak the broken English, you cannot correct them. They will be very upset and angry. They don't want corrections at all, they see themselves as special, they say 'this is how we live in the north'...”¹³³

Surprisingly, this feeling was to some extent experienced by the researcher as well. Especially two of the female returnee respondents voiced resentment against people in Juba, and their 'ignorant and immoral behavior' (e.g. in dressing). Alicia said;

”Ah, their behavior is not good, they behave like villagers, it is not good. (...) There is no understanding. If you step on someone's foot in the street, they will fight you, or if you accidentally bump into a table, so somebody's glass falls down. In Khartoum you would pick up the glass and say sorry, and it would be okay. In Juba they will be very angry at you and

¹²⁹ Tony, interview.

¹³⁰ Hope, interview.

¹³¹ Luke, interview.

¹³² Victor, interview.

¹³³ Sebit, interview.

want to fight you. There is no understanding in Juba...”¹³⁴

These statements demonstrate an obvious suspicion and lack of trust between people. Both returnees and residents are skeptical towards the others, and stereotyped perceptions can be argued to have gained foothold in Juba.

A Barrier for Social (Re)integration

With such a starting point, the social (re)integration of returnees from Khartoum can arguably be challenging. Adding weak family links, intergenerational gaps and unfamiliarity with customary law, the picture becomes even more complex. A few of the returnee respondents claimed that they only socialize with other returnees from Khartoum, while others – especially those with family ties – seemed to socialize with other groups as well. Thus, the social (re)integration process is extremely complex and it is impossible to present one overall description. What we can state, however, is that the process is far from complete and that many prevailing conditions work as barriers for the returnees' (re)integration. The lack of an open and honest interaction between returnees and others prevents the utilization of the social and cultural returnee capital the returnees possess:

“...they have skills, that even in the south some people they do not see it...but because of hatred and negative perceptions, people see them like enemies, like people who ran away from war...They do not see it as potential...the potential they got from the north, because the north was the enemy...”¹³⁵

The skepticism and negative attitudes against the returnees make it extremely difficult for society to perceive any social or cultural aspects of the returnee capital as *positive* contributions to South Sudan. For instance, returnees' increased understanding and acceptance across ethnic groups are unlikely to be spread to others as long as they are not accepted themselves. Moreover, the lack of social (re)integration further complicates returnees' chances for employment as well. Instead of social inclusion, this study thus discovered that the returnees' new behavior often is perceived as unwelcome and not something society wish to adopt.

A Way Forward?

In regards to the use of returnee capital, the question then becomes how to move beyond this point; can the returnees' social and cultural resources be utilized with time? One very promising finding, was that none of the informants had experienced or heard of direct social conflicts between

¹³⁴ Alicia, interview.

¹³⁵ Eric, interview.

returnees and other residents. Negative perceptions were there, but no actual visible tensions or conflicts were reported – conflicts were usually based on ethnicity rather than returnee status. Returnee Tony strongly believed that the negative sentiments towards returnees from Khartoum are about to disappear:

“...that is just a simple thing, even I cannot mind about it. It is just a lack of understanding. What they mean is that the people who have been [in Khartoum] have changed their mind and become like a 'jallaba', but that is not true. Those who want to be like a 'jallaba' will not come here. (...) There is no more problem now, it was just a misunderstanding...”¹³⁶

If empirical experiences are to be repeated, Tony might be proved right. According to reports returnees from Uganda and Kenya used to face a similar resentment (Martin & Mosel, 2011; Pantuliano et.al., 2008). They were often associated with alcoholism, prostitution and HIV/Aids, and were described as uncivilized and non-South Sudanese. However, this has gradually changed and returnees from East Africa are now being (re)integrated into society. Informant Eric supported this;

“Before it was the East Africans, those who come from East Africa. The problems they were said they are drunkards, they like violence, and all those kind of things. But now, the shift goes to Khartoumers, because those of East Africa, they settled and they became part of society. Now the Khartoumers are the new group...”¹³⁷

If history is to repeat itself, a similar process might take place for returnees from Khartoum as well. Further speculations are outside the scope of this study, yet it can be argued that there is a possibility that with time the situation *can* improve. The returnees are expected to gradually settle down and time will give both sides an opportunity to get to know each other and accept the returnees as legitimate citizens of Juba. The idea of a common national identity in South Sudan is extremely contested, yet as one respondent argued, “*at least the hope is that it will foster better reintegration and loss of this isolation that leads to misinformation and mistrust*”¹³⁸.

A final point is the reverse connection between social (re)integration and returnee capital; if the returnees are able to contribute positively to the return community, then they are more easily accepted:

“It seems that if the returnees are able to contribute with something positive for the regular tribe, family, group in some sense, then they are welcome. But if they are straining resources then there has been some more tendencies to see them as outsiders and we have seen some resentment.”¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Tony, interview.

¹³⁷ Eric, interview.

¹³⁸ John, interview.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

Thus, if the prevailing conditions would allow returnees to contribute positively with returnee capital on the micro level, it could potentially ease the (re)integration process and subsequently open up for a greater utilization of returnee capital.

* * *

Section 5.4: Returnee (Re)integration: The Potential of Returnee Capital

After analyzing respectively returnee capital and prevailing conditions in the two previous sections, it is now time to illuminate the equation as a whole:

$$\textit{returnee integration} = \textit{returnee capital} + \textit{prevailing conditions}$$

Throughout this study it has become clear that the returnees from Khartoum face an extremely complex situation in Juba. The majority of respondents recognized the existence of returnee capital, yet its utilization is more questionable. When systematically analyzing the interview data, statements perceiving returnees both positively and negatively can be found – even within single interviews. However, even a brief overview will identify a much higher number of statements arguing for returnees' potential as resources. The word *potential* is particularly essential here, illuminating the various hindering prevailing conditions discussed above. To clarify these issues, the following section will present the final discoveries of returnees' role in the South Sudanese society, with emphasis on the overall question if returnees are perceived as a burden or a resource.

5.4.1 “Who is Going to Develop this Country?”

Throughout conversations with the informants, returnee capital was both directly and indirectly singled out as *the* positive outcome of return migration. As we have seen, all informants agreed that returnees bring some sort of resources with them, although of various kind and scope. Six of the returnee informants expressed that they themselves were contributing to society, while the five remaining argued that they were not given the chance. The opinions were equally diverging among the other informants. Yet, all informants claimed, in one way or another, that the returnees *could* be a resource for society. Victor, for example, claimed that returnees' contributions are already visible:

“...you can see the skills which they brought along, that will change that place [where they settle down]...you know, people who came with different skills, that are things that people

were not doing before, but now they are doing it, because of the displacement. (...) So you can see their contribution now, because these are people who had the opportunity to [get] education and now they can come and contribute...¹⁴⁰

In this regard, both INGO-worker Richard and government official Peter emphasized South Sudan's lack of internal human progress during the wartime. Lack of both educational and economic opportunities left the population with very limited chances of progressing, while those in exile experienced other circumstances. Based on this, Peter argued for the importance of bringing these skills back to South Sudan:

“Well...I think the return would give progress [for the] people, especially we got enough doctors, we got enough teachers, it is already a benefit to our society! Because during the war there were very few people who were trained, so people were all soldiers. Those [skilled] who were inside here were very few, and most of the fellows have gone to northern Sudan. So we need now all these skills to be brought back home, because now the soldiers, they don't have those skills, they only know how their gun is being shot, that is all. But what about the technical things? We need electricians, we need people who work in the petroleum, we need people who work on the roads, these are all things too technical that needs somebody who is educated. So if they bring all the skills here, then we shall progress, then we shall develop. And we cannot develop unless we get these people.”¹⁴¹

Some of the returnees were very clear on this as well. Student Vincent claimed that his choice to study geology was to be able to contribute to his country's extraction of natural resources¹⁴². Tony similarly argued that it was his and other returnees' responsibility to help build up their own country; “*as a father you are supposed to set the foundations for your children (...) Who is going to develop this country? It is me! For the future, for the young people who are coming...*”¹⁴³. This kind of motivation can be argued to be crucial for the utilization of returnee capital. Vincent, Tony and others are clearly prepared to try to make efficient use of their returnee capital.

To put it briefly, the respondents used words such as benefit, growth, development, and asset to describe the returnees' potential contributions in South Sudan. The overall argument was very much in line with the theory, that returnees – no matter the circumstances – always bring with them their brains and skills. And as Richard put it; “*if properly steered it could turn into assets*”¹⁴⁴. Returnee Anna claimed that she had assisted several other women in setting up their own small businesses in Juba; “*I have seen successful businesses being set up, the women are in the market now, selling maize, maize flour, ground nut paste...making a profit*”¹⁴⁵. However, this is only one destiny, and for most returnees the prevailing conditions are not always conducive to the use of their

¹⁴⁰ Victor, interview.

¹⁴¹ Peter, interview.

¹⁴² Vincent, interview.

¹⁴³ Tony, interview.

¹⁴⁴ Richard, interview.

¹⁴⁵ Anna, interview.

returnee capital.

5.4.2 “There is Nothing to Contribute with...”

Regardless of the optimism, approximately half of the returnee respondents argued that despite their returnee capital, they were unable to utilize it in Juba. We have seen how an extremely difficult job market as well as widespread discrimination make it almost impossible for returnees from Khartoum to find relevant employment for their set of skills. During the group interview, Helena exclaimed; “*we have capabilities, but we get no chance!*”¹⁴⁶. She later frustratedly added; “*foreigners can even work in the President's office, but not the locals*”. This feeling of idleness was further supported by other respondents. Former referendum observer Kate shared her experience from a different state:

“...many people came back from Khartoum with a high level of expertise, and this was something I often discussed with the local governor. I said I thought it was very sad that they did not do a proper screening of the returnees, and at least try to make use of the skills that are actually available. I remember talking to several returnees trained within craftsmanship, they were plumbers and electricians, which is highly needed here, because they hardly have any qualified craftsmen... Yet the governor was just talking around it, because it was not in line with his political intentions. Yeah, it is a very sad situation...”¹⁴⁷

This clearly demonstrates the situation for many returnees in South Sudan. They return with returnee capital and often motivation to work hard, yet the prevailing conditions hinder them in doing so. Thus it can be argued that the South Sudanese government has not taken advantage of the available potential among the returnees. Unfortunately, this further prevents people from experiencing the positive aspects of return migration and rather highlights returnees' negative impact on society and reinforces the prejudices.

5.4.3 “They are Straining the Few Resources we have!”

Several respondents claimed that the negative perceptions of returnees are highly linked to the level of resources available. If there are enough resources and the returnees are not creating harsh competition with the population, then there can be a much more cooperative relationship. If, however, the resources are scarce, there can arguably be more resentment and tensions between the two groups. According to Richard, it is all about survival; “*...you know, if you are dying with your children, and sometimes [more] people are coming in... I mean, what about the relatives you have?*”

¹⁴⁶ Helena (informant #5), interview by Linn Erslund, June 2013.

¹⁴⁷ Kate, interview.

Your first priority is your wife and children”¹⁴⁸. Interestingly, resource scarcity was repeatedly mentioned by the macro actors as an argument for the negative perception of returnees, yet not mentioned once by the returnees themselves. We should keep in mind the international assistance the returnees sometimes attract, which would ease some of this reported burden, yet this is not the case in every place where returnees settle down – for instance not in Juba.

Overall, the macro informants argued that the returnees strain the few resources that is already available, without adding anything new. We have seen that the returnees are unable to contribute due to prevailing conditions, while the weak state apparatus simultaneously is unable to keep pace with the increasing number of people. Thus, the returnees rather reinforce the resource competition, when it comes to both natural resources, land and housing, employment, access to social services and the general goodwill from the population.

5.4.4 Further Reflections

As a result of the issues discussed in this chapter, many returnees expressed disappointment with the return to Juba, and many do actually decide to leave South Sudan anew. Several informants spoke of people who have chosen to go back to Khartoum to resume their lives there. One of the returnees in this study, Alicia, claimed that she wished to leave South Sudan as soon as she finishes her studies. Although the numbers are unknown, it is clear that these re-migrations take place and the returnee respondents voiced a concern about the situation facing them in Juba. Especially with the newly deteriorating security situation in South Sudan as well, it will not be surprising if some of the respondents of this study are considering a new flight.

This issue is rather paradoxical. As Sebit argued; *“the government encouraged people to return to South Sudan, but they have nothing to offer the returnees”*¹⁴⁹. As we have seen in both literature and in this study, there is a continuous focus on repatriation – the actual process of returning displaced people – while the post-return (re)integration receives limited attention from both authorities, the international community and donors. This can create extremely difficult situations, in which the returnees receive very little assistance in their process of settling down and reestablishing their lives. The (re)integration of returnees in Juba is a clear example of this. In this regard, we should not ignore the actors who continuously work to improve returnees' and others' welfare, yet the overall trend shows an omission of returnees in Juba. This has further implications for the field's durable solutions perspective, as pointed out by Gabriella: *“...you cannot as soon as*

¹⁴⁸ Richard, interview.

¹⁴⁹ Sebit, interview.

you put somebody back on their land, give them some kind of shelter assistance, and then leave, assuming that everything is fine for them. Reintegration is a huge problem for returnees..."¹⁵⁰. The findings of this study highlight exactly this lack of a comprehensive and adequate understanding of the durable solutions.

If similar strategies will continue to be applied in the future, it seems fair to argue that the returnees' future potential to contribute to their home communities and country is bleak. With an estimated 2,5 million returnees, South Sudan has experienced one of the largest peace-time population movements since World War II (IOM, 2013b). Due to the high numbers, it is extremely crucial to find good, sustainable solutions to the returnee issue, for the resource competition not to escalate and for people not to start new displacement cycles. It is promising that no direct conflicts between returnees and others have been discovered in this study, yet the present skepticism and resentful perceptions against the other are worrisome.

5.5 Summary

This chapter has examined the existence and use of returnee capital among returnees from Khartoum in Juba. It has demonstrated that the returnees possess various forms of returnee capital, with educational and professional experience, and social skills being the most prominent. The returnees were also reported to act as stimuli for international assistance in South Sudan's rural areas, yet not in the capital Juba. This chapter has further illuminated the various obstacles to the utilization of returnee capital, with emphasis on livelihoods, access to land and social services, and social issues. Based on this, this chapter argues that the returnees' potential is underutilized by the local communities and the government of South Sudan. This further leads to an emphasis on the negative and straining aspects of returnee (re)integration.

The next chapter will further summarize the results of this research, discuss its impact on the durable solutions paradigm, and propose ways in which local, national and international actors can make better use of South Sudan's untapped returnee capital.

¹⁵⁰ Gabriella, interview.

6 Summary and Concluding Remarks

This thesis has investigated returnees' potential to contribute to post-conflict development and reconstruction, by examining the process of returnee (re)integration in South Sudan. The study has sought to illuminate both micro and macro actors' individual perspectives on returnee capital and its potential to contribute positively to society. In this regard, the thesis began by thoroughly examining South Sudan's historical background in order to understand the contextual framework, including reasons for the forced migration and the contemporary return environment. The following methodological chapter outlined the tools and techniques utilized in this research, with special emphasis on the study's limitations and challenges. Furthermore, chapter 4 outlined the conceptual and theoretical frameworks utilized by this analysis, more specifically Dominik Helling's concept returnee capital and Ajak, Biar and Larson's following equation:

$$\textit{returnee integration} = \textit{returnee capital} + \textit{prevailing conditions}$$

Altogether, these chapters constitute the backdrop for the data presentation and analysis in chapter 5, in which the study's discoveries were discussed and reflected upon.

This final chapter will summarize the empirical findings of the research, based on the theoretical equation above. It will also discuss the contemporary situation in South Sudan and some possible reasons for the country's inability to prioritize the returnee issue. Furthermore, the chapter will reflect upon the returnee capital framework's theoretical potential and the future of the durable solutions to the world's displacement problem.

6.1 Summary of Empirical Findings

Based on the assumption that human beings have agency, Helling with others argue that returnees can act as active agents of change in post-conflict societies. The returnees' possession of material and non-material returnee capital can, according to Helling, be utilized for developmental and reconstruction purposes within the return areas. This thesis has attempted to investigate this claim by examining 1) returnees' actual possession of returnee capital, 2) the prevailing conditions enabling or hindering the utilization of the existing returnee capital, and 3) the returnees' subsequent

roles in society. The discoveries made will now be summarized in turn.

6.1.1 *Returnee Capital*

According to this study, the returnees from Khartoum have brought substantial resources to South Sudan. Based on the concept of returnee capital, the returnees can be argued to have transferred both material capital, human capital, and social/cultural capital to Juba, with the two latter categories being the most evident. Every single informant claimed that returnees represent resources, yet in different types and scopes. Higher education and work skills were singled out as the main returnee capital, as well as social changes in lifestyles, attitudes and values. Interestingly, material capital among the returnees were rather rare, despite a considerably higher level of economic development and opportunities in Khartoum. Various prevailing conditions both prior to and during the return accounted for this lack of material returnee capital.

Furthermore, this study found that the presence of returnees can, in some instances, work as stimuli for increased attention and assistance to certain areas. However, the current state of underdevelopment in South Sudan often seems to undermine this dynamic, in which other urgent issues, such as food relief and epidemics, are prioritized above returnee settlement and (re)integration. As a result, Juba, being the most developed part of the country, seems to receive little additional attention despite the presence of urban returnees.

Overall, the empirical findings from this study conform with the returnee capital framework, in which returnees are understood as individuals with resources and agency. The returnees do possess various degrees of returnee capital, depending on their individual pre-flight and exile experiences. The existence of returnee capital was generally acknowledged by the micro and macro informants alike.

6.1.2 *Prevailing Conditions*

The discoveries regarding the prevailing conditions can also be claimed to correspond with the critique of the returnee capital framework, referred to by Ajak, Biar and Larson as prevailing conditions. The empirical findings claim that there are several aspects of the South Sudanese society that severely hinder the utilization of returnee capital, with lack of employment opportunities, limited access to land, poor service delivery, and social discrimination being the most prominent.

Lack of economic opportunities was by all respondents seen as the biggest challenge to returnee (re)integration. The limited formal economy, the growing rural-to-urban migration, and the social discrimination of returnees from Khartoum leave many returnees with no choice but to make

a living within the informal economy. Moreover, lack of English skills and social networks are further barriers for formal employment. All in all, the findings show a trend of returnees struggling to become economically sustainable within the challenging economic environment of Juba. This limits their economic (re)integration on a micro level, as well as a further economic contribution on the macro level (e.g. through paying taxes).

Access to land is another challenging prevailing condition. Despite the initiated Land Act of 2009, there are several obstacles to obtaining land in Juba today. The official government policy encourages all returnees to return to their ancestral areas in order to be allocated land there, yet this is clearly not happening in reality. As a result of the large-scale urbanization process and land-grabbing of others' properties, we are currently witnessing a land crisis in Juba. It seems reasonable to argue that accessing land is difficult for the returnees, as well as expensive and virtually exclusively for those with the right contacts. This prevents the returnees from settling down permanently and start utilizing their returnee capital optimally.

Furthermore, the government seems to lack the capacity and finances to provide adequate service delivery to its population. According to the empirical findings, the influx of returnees to Juba has not been followed by a subsequent increase in social services. Instead, the existing services are deteriorating, and the returnees are, unfortunately, perceived to contribute to a growing competition for the few existing resources.

Lastly, this study shows that social (re)integration is extremely important for the returnees themselves. While the findings claim that the returnees generally were welcome on the surface, several underlying issues severely problematize their social (re)integration. The returnees' background in the Arabic culture in Khartoum, including language, values and behavior, have proven to meet resistance in Juba. The returnees are constantly seen as 'jallabas' (Arabs), and they are often perceived extremely negatively. It is questionable, however, how far such attitudes reach; if it is purely attitudes or if it translates into a systematic discriminatory behavior towards the returnees. Further research is necessary on the issue.

6.1.3 Returnee (Re)integration

Throughout this study it has become evident that the returnees from Khartoum still have a long way to go to become fully (re)integrated into society. Positively, the majority of the informants showed a clear acknowledgement of the fact that returnees possess capital. We may therefore claim that return migration represents a transfer of resources to the country and/or areas of origin. However, its utilization and durability are questionable. Based on this study's empirical findings, it seems reasonable to argue that there exist several contextual prevailing conditions that hinder the

returnees and their communities from exercising their social, economic, civil, and cultural rights, and thus subsequently the utilization of returnee capital. The lack of the most basic aspects of life – access to employment, land, social services, and social acceptance – make it challenging for the returnees to engage in stable, productive activities which can benefit not only themselves, but also the society they belong to as well. As a result, the returnees are often perceived as a burden on already scarce resources, rather than a potentially contributing factor.

6.1.4 What about the South Sudanese Government?

The reasons behind the South Sudanese inability to make use of its desperately needed human resources is outside the main scope of this study. However, some reflections upon the subject seem appropriate. What is the government's perspective on the returnee issue? Why are they not utilizing the available human resources to build up South Sudan as a viable and developing country?

According to the empirical discoveries of this study, the government of South Sudan is generally aware of the capital the returnees from Khartoum (and other places) bring with them. As we have seen in chapter 5, the government informants highlighted the returnees' human resources and cultural capital. Despite this acknowledgement, the informants expressed that the returnee capital is currently not being utilized, and they rather spoke in future-oriented terms using words like 'can', 'could' and 'shall'. What possible conclusions can we draw from this?

In chapter 5 we saw that former government official Eric said that *“the government is a premature government, their institutional capacity is not there”*. South Sudan is a young state with both limited resources, infrastructure and stability. In this regard, Eric particularly emphasized the government's lack of financial resources; *“the government now, I am seeing it as not a government that can deliver services, because most of the money go to salaries”*¹⁵¹. Added to accusations of corruption, this bears witness of a capacity-weak government with limited economic and political leeway.

However, is economic capacity the only reason for the government's deficiency? As we saw from former referendum observer Kate's statement, a central state politician claimed that the returnee issue was *“not in line with his political intentions”*. Does this bear witness of a lack of political will in South Sudan? Are there other political issues that overshadow the issue of returnee (re)integration? During the wars against the north, the South Sudanese people formed a relatively united front against the common enemy. However, it can be argued that this cohesion has

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Eric, interview.

diminished in recent years. In addition to various local conflicts across the country, South Sudan is now facing severe internal strife. An intense power struggle is taking place within the ruling party SPLM, which puts a large proportion of the population at risk. The conflict also has dangerous ethnic affiliations, which can lead to mobilizing oppositions within the population.

Overall, the current situation in South Sudan bears witness of a disintegrated state, in which both the capacity and the political will to engage in the returnee issue are limited. Despite limited empirical support, it seems reasonable to argue that the issue of returnee (re)integration is neglected in favor of other, more pressing issues such as state survival. This, however, demands further research.

6.2 Concluding Remarks

Return migration can lead to a disruption of livelihoods and a subsequent readjustment where the returnee settles down. This analysis has demonstrated evidence that returnees bring with them returnee capital in this complex process of (re)integration. Moreover, it has demonstrated a number of obstacles to the utilization of these vital resources. As such, the actual utilization of returnee capital is dependent on the specific prevailing conditions in the return area. This is problematic in a context where both material and non-material resources are desperately needed in order to create reconstruction and developmental changes. This thesis recommends that greater attention is given to the potential impact of returnees in post-conflict settings, in which their presence arguably can have such diverging positive and negative effects depending on the circumstances.

The situation in South Sudan is constantly changing and the current conflict (Dec 2013 -) demonstrates an uncertain future. Close to a million people have fled their homes since the violence broke out in December 2013, and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates (as of March 2014) that 4,9 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 2014b). For many returnees the conflict has disrupted their ongoing (re)integration process and utilization of returnee capital. It is not surprising if some of the respondents of this study have entered into new displacement cycles. As one contact in Juba recently said in an informal conversation; *“don't get surprised to hear that a good number of the people you met are no more”*.

Such developments show the importance of highlighting the post-return period and developing a general framework for both identification of returnee capital and assistance for returnee (re)integration. As the current conflict comes to an end, refugees and IDPs will again return to their areas of origin. Without an adequate identification of their potential as productive citizens,

the reconstruction and development of South Sudan may again come to a halt.

Despite the difficulties of generalizing from empirical studies, this study is aiming to contribute to a greater theorization of returnee capital. So far, the attention within return migration has been directed towards the actual transfer of people. If this is the focus of policy makers and agencies alike, how then can we direct the effects of return migration towards the development of the state? As this study has shown, there is an overall lack of research on returnee (re)integration and the effects of the international community's durable solutions. Moreover, there is a lack of both theoretical and practical frameworks for the assistance and (re)integration of returnees. In this regard, this analysis has attempted to show the returnee capital framework's potential as a theoretical tool. If an adequate number of empirical studies are carried out in a similar line of thought as this research, it will arguably be possible to identify certain trends within returnee (re)integration and the utilization of returnee capital in post-conflict contexts. To give an example, if certain economic prevailing conditions continuously tend to hinder returnee capital across studies, we can feasibly identify such factors as barriers for returnee (re)integration in an overall theoretical framework. Furthermore, when such factors are identified, it will be possible to move on to finding adequate and durable solutions for the post-return period.

This proposed theorization will require an effort on the part of international and national actors to recognize returnees as individuals with agency. As an integral part of the durable solutions, we should alter the way we perceive displaced people; they are not passive victims indifferent to their surroundings, but active agents with productive lives ahead of them. Their reception both prior to and after return, will have a tremendous impact on their present and future ability to contribute on both micro and macro levels of society. As this study has demonstrated evidence of, it is time that we consider development a fundamental part of returnee programs, and returnees a fundamental part of development plans. If repatriation is to continuously be seen as the preferred solution to the world's refugee problem, it is crucial to develop sound solutions for it to be efficient and successful.

One obvious limitation to such an approach is the cost; who is willing to add additional funding to the already high budgets of returnee transportation, food aid and non-food items? This question is outside the scope of this thesis, yet it is also important to recognize the initial costs of *not* linking returnees to a more long-term developmental perspective. Continued relief dependency, internal conflicts, and not least renewed displacement cycles are also costly and will continue to require efforts from international donors and agencies. Successful (re)integration programs in which returnees and their communities alike are able to create long-term sustainable and peaceful lives can arguably have a positive impact on the future.

Return migration must give attention to the post-return period and the sustainable

(re)integration of returnees to ensure the durability of repatriation. Until this can be accomplished, the international community should acknowledge the relative failure of the durable solutions and recognize the large pool of untapped resources that returnees possess. The potential for post-conflict reconstruction and development is undoubtedly there, yet its utilization is not necessarily realized.

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Appendix 1: Informant Overview

Table 4: Informants' categorization, occupation, citizenship status, sex and age group.

Interview Number and Pseudonym	Type of Informant	Occupation	South Sudanese Citizen	Sex	Age Group
1 - Mary	Returnee	NGO-employee	x	F	30-40
2 - Anna	Returnee	NGO-employee	x	F	30-40
3 - Rose	Returnee	Nurse	x	F	40-50
4 - Hope	Returnee	Nurse	x	F	20-30
5 - Helena	Returnee	Nurse	x	F	20-30
6 - Ruth	Returnee	Student (nursing)	x	F	20-30
7 - Winny	Returnee	Student (administration)	x	F	18-20
8 - Vincent	Returnee	Student (geology)	x	M	20-30
9 - Tony	Returnee	Security guard	x	M	40-50
10 - Alicia	Returnee	Student	x	F	18-20
11 - Grace	Returnee	NGO-employee	x	F	30-40
12 - John	Other	INGO-employee		M	20-30
13 - Jack	Other	INGO-employee		M	30-40
14 - Hannah	Other	INGO-employee		F	30-40
15 - Richard	Other	INGO-employee		M	40-50
16 - Sebit	Other	INGO-employee	x	M	30-40
17 - Victor	Other	NGO-employee		M	30-40
18 - George	Other	NGO-employee	x	M	30-40
19 - Kate	Other	Former referendum observer		F	50-60
20 - Gabriella	Other	NGO-employee		F	20-30
21 - Nancy	Other	NGO-employee		F	30-40
22 - Daniel	Other	NGO-employee		M	30-40
23 - Caroline	Other	NGO-employee		F	20-30
24 - Charles	Other	Professor	x	M	50-60
25 - Peter	Authorities	Government official	x	M	50-60
26 - Eric	Authorities	Former government official	x	M	40-50
27 - Luke	Authorities	Government official	x	M	20-30
28 - Tim	Resident	Lecturer		M	30-40

Source: Fieldwork June, 2013

Appendix 2: Interview Guides

Interview guide for interviews with returnees:

Background information:

- basic information about the informant (age, marital status, number of children etc.)

Flight

- When did you leave South Sudan?
- Where did you use to live originally? (place, urban/rural)
- How did you use to support yourself in South Sudan? (livelihood)
- Why did you leave?
- What happened to your land/house when you left?
- Where did you go to?

Exile

- For how long did you stay there?
- Where and how did you live? (urban/rural, temporary/permanent)
- How did you support yourself there? (job, aid, savings)
- Was your livelihood different in the new country? How? Why?
- Did you remain in contact with relatives or friends in South Sudan?
- Did you gain any new skills while staying in your host country?
- Did your children get the chance to go to school there?
- How would you describe your life there compared to before you left South Sudan?

Return:

- When did you return to South Sudan?
- Why did you return? Was it a voluntary decision? (personal motivation, pressure)
- Did you return through assistance from UNHCR/IOM? Alone? Other?
- How was the process of returning? (documentation, transport, duration)
- Where did you return to? Your home town/area/region?
- If resettled in another part of South Sudan – why?
- Have you settled here permanently now?

Returnee (re)integration:

Economic integration

- What is your livelihood today? Why? How did you end up with this?
- Do/did you receive any help from the government, NGOs or other actors?
- Did you manage to bring any financial resources with you when you returned? Or any other useful assets?
- How do you see your financial situation now compared to before you left South Sudan? What has changed? Why?
- Has it been difficult to find work after being away for many years? Why do you think?
- Do you have access to the resources, tools etc that you need?
- Are there any opportunities for accessing credit in this area? (micro loans)

- How do you live now? Was your land/house still available when you returned?
- What is the situation for your family now? (exile, remained, housing)

Social services

- How would you describe the access to social services in this area?
- Do your children go to school? Do you have to pay for their education?
- Do you have access to health care? (public, NGOs)
- What about infrastructure and transportation?
- Has this changes any? (exile, before flight, NGO projects)

Social integration

- Has the return turned out as you thought it would?
- Did you have any family members or friends here when you returned?
- How is your neighborhood made up? (returnees, residents)
- How do you feel about your relationship to other South Sudanese? Other returnees? Residents who did not leave South Sudan?
- Who are the people you mostly interact with? Why? (returnees, residents)
- Do people tend to stay together with returnees they know from exile?
- Did you feel welcome when you returned?
- How was the reactions when you returned? Have you seen/heard any positive or negative comments?
- Have you experienced or heard about any tensions or conflicts between returnees and residents?
- Which role do you think language plays in the integration process?
- How does your community solve disputes? Who is responsible?

General

- Do you think returnees can contribute to building up the state of South Sudan? How? Why not?
- Do you feel like you contribute to your community in any way?
- What do you see as positive of returning?
- What do you see as the main challenges of return?
- What do you see as South Sudan's future? (conflict, peace, cohesion)

* * *

Interview guide for interviews with residents:

Background information:

- basic information about the informant (age, marital status, number of children etc.)

Effects of displacement

- Many people fled during the war, but not you. Why?
- Did you ever consider fleeing/moving?
- Did many people from this village/area move?
- What is your opinion about people who left South Sudan?
- How did you experience the large-scale displacement? Any special effects on this village/area?

Return:

- Have many people returned to this area?
- Is this generally people that used to live here before?
- How is your neighborhood made up now? Compared to earlier? (returnees, residents)
- Who are the people you mostly interact with? Why? (returnees, residents)
- Do people tend to stay together with returnees they know from exile?
- Do you see any big differences between people who left and people who stayed during the war? (language, religion, livelihood)
- Are you able to communicate with all returnees? (language)

Returnee (re)integration:

Economic

- What is your livelihood?
- How do you see your financial situation? Have anything changed the last decades? Why?
- Do/did you receive any help from the government, NGOs or other actors?
- How is the employment market today? Are there enough jobs?
- Who have the most problems finding jobs? Why do you think this is the case?
- Do you have access to the resources, tools, etc. that you need?
- What about land?
- Are there any opportunities for accessing credit in this area? (micro loans)

Social services

- How would you describe the access to social services in this area?
- Do your children go to school? Do you have to pay for their education?
- Do you have access to health care?
- What about infrastructure and transportation?
- Have any of this changed lately? Why, do you think?
- Are there any NGOs working in this area? What kind of projects?

Social integration

- What was your initial thoughts when people started returning back to the area?
- How did other people in the area react? (positive/negative experiences)
- What do you think about the people returning? What is your relationship to them?
- Have you experienced or heard about any tensions or conflicts between returnees and residents?
- Which role do you think language plays in the integration process?
- How does your community solve disputes? Who is responsible?

General

- Do you feel like you contribute to your community in any way?
- What do you see as positive of the return migration?
- What do you see as the main challenges of return migration?
- Do you think returnees can contribute to building up the state of South Sudan? How? Why not?
- What do you see as South Sudan's future? (conflict, peace, cohesion)

* * *

Interview guide for interviews with other actors:

Background information:

- basic information about the informant
- NGOs: history in South Sudan, activities concerning returnees (Juba?)
- authorities: policies regarding migration

Displacement and return:

- How will you characterize/experience the displacement in Southern Sudan?
- What kind of effects did the large-scale displacement have on South Sudan?
- Was it generally perceived as legitimate to flee?
- Which parts of the country are mostly effected by the return migration? What about Juba?
- Do people tend to return to the areas they came from?
- What about the house/land they had before?

Returnee (re)integration:

Economic and social issues

- How is the employment market today? Are there enough jobs?
- Has this changed with the large influxes of returnees? How?
- Who have the most problems finding jobs? Why do you think this is the case?
- Does people have access to the resources and tools they need to sustain themselves?
- Are there any opportunities for accessing credit in this area? (micro loans)
- What about access to education, health care, and infrastructure? Has this changed since people started returning?
- Are there more NGO activities due to returnees?
- Do you see any main differences between returnees and other residents when it comes to economic and social opportunities?

Social integration

- How was the initial atmosphere when people started returning back to South Sudan?
- Did you see any positive/negative reactions from the population?
- Do people tend to stay together with other returnees, or interact with other residents?
- Have you experienced or heard about any tensions or conflicts between returnees and residents?
- Are there any big differences between people who left and people who stayed during the war? (language, religion, livelihood...)
- Which role do you think language plays in the integration process?

General

- What do you see as positive of the return migration?
- What do you see as the main challenges of return migration?
- What do you see as the main security challenges today?
- How do you see the government's role in all of this?
- How do you think returnees can contribute in South Sudan today?
- What do you see as South Sudan's future? (conflict, peace, cohesion)

Appendix 3: Informed Consent Statement

MA Research Project: Information for informants

I am a student at Center for Peace Studies (CPS) at the University of Tromsø, Norway, where I am conducting a master degree in Peace and Conflict Transformation (2012-2014). In this regard, I am now writing a thesis about returnee issues in South Sudan. Therefore, I would like to interview informants with relevant insight and experience regarding this issue.

The intention of this project is to examine the potential of returnees to participate in the process of post-conflict reconstruction in South Sudan. The main research aim is to analyze whether returnees impact the return areas positively or negatively, and to identify the various influencing factors. The issue will be attempted addressed from three different perspectives; I) from the returnees point of view; II) from the residents in the return areas; and III) from the perspective of national/international actors (e.g. NGOs, INGOs, national authorities).

To conduct this research, I wish to undertake interviews with members from all these groups in South Sudan. The topics will concern issues of migration, exile, return migration, and (re)integration in the South Sudanese society. During the interviews I will use audio recorder and take notes. The recorded data will only be used for this particular research project and will not be available to anyone other than this researcher. Personal information will be treated confidentially and the recordings will be deleted when the study is finished.

The participation in this study takes place on a completely voluntary basis, and we will agree on the time and place for the interview. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to justify this further. You also have the right to ask questions at any time. The project is not intended to help or evaluate specific projects, but to contribute to a greater understanding of the experiences and challenges regarding return migration.

This project is supervised by Christine Smith-Simonsen (christine.smith-simonsen@uit.no) at the Center for Peace Studies (CPS) at University of Tromsø, Norway.

If there are any questions about the study or if you wish to withdraw your materials from this study, please contact:

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