



**When are you going home?
Voluntary repatriation of Liberian in Ghana**



SVF-3901

Justice Yeboah

*Master's Thesis in Peace and Conflict Transformation
Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education
University of Tromsø
Spring 2013*

Acknowledgement

.

I am grateful to Norwegian Government for the opportunity to study in Norway.

I am indebted to the following people for their support, understanding and encouragement.

The entire staff and students of CPS for creating congenial atmosphere for study.

I am most appreciative of the following personnel for taking time off their busy schedule to talk to me; Mr Tetteh- Padi, co-coordinator of refugee programs at Ghana Refugee Board, the camp manager of Buduburam refugee camp, Mrs Mills- Tetteh, Protection Associate UNHCR Ghana office. All my informants at Buduburam Refugee Camp.

And to my supervisor Percy Oware for the guidelines and patience.

Abstract

The study examines voluntary repatriation in the context of Liberian refugees living in Ghana. The aim of the study is to throw more light on why some Liberian refugees living in Ghana are unwilling to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. The study hopes to provide better understanding of why the top – down approach to voluntary repatriation that is employed by UNHCR does not work for some refugees. Also what motivates refugees into making a stance not to participating in the voluntary repatriation exercise. In order to achieve this end, the study interviews 15 refugees living in the Buduburam refugee camp. Concepts and theories such as agency, identity and critical consciousness, social network theory and resource mobilization are used to give a framework to voluntary repatriation.

The field returns of the study indicate that refugees are not passive. They apply their agency, critical consciousness and their identity to make decisions that will be in their best interest. The returns indicate that majority of those not returning think Liberia is not peaceful enough for them. Also there are worries about economic hardships, inadequate security. There are parents who want to fulfill their role as parents by providing good education for their children and they think they are better off doing so in Ghana than in Liberia. Although most respondent agreed living in Ghana is not easy for reasons of being discriminated against, lack of assistance from UNHCR, being seen as threat. I

The study calls the present UNHCR organized voluntary repatriation program into question. Refugees seems not to be buying into the top – down approach used by UNHCR in drawing repatriation program with little input from refugees. Whereas, UNHCR sees the existence of peace in the country of origin as proviso for repatriation. Refugees sees existence of peace as not enough attraction, but rather yearns for a return where they would not be a burden on others, since they have amassed enough resources for their return.

Key words; Liberian refugees, voluntary repatriation, identity, social network, critical consciousness, agency.

Table of content

1.....	1
1.1 History of Africa’s refugee crisis.....	1
1.2 The Liberia civil war.....	3
1.2.1 The Liberia peace process.....	5
1.2.2 Challenges of living in Ghana as Liberian refugee.....	5
1.3 Previous research topics.....	7
1.4 Problem statement.....	9
1.5 Research questions.....	9
1.6 Structure of the thesis.....	10
2. Refugee repatriation.....	11
2.1Patterns of repatriation.....	12
2.2 Voluntary repatriation.....	14
2.3Conditions that should prevail before voluntary repatriation is carried out.....	14.
2.4Basis of voluntary repatriation in international law.....	16
2.5 Organisations involved in the voluntary repatriation exercise.....	17
2.6The voluntary repatriation process.....	19
2.7 Challenges to the success of repatriation programs.....	20
2.8Summary.....	21
3. Methodological framework.....	23
3.1 General information about study area.....	23
3.2The buduburam refugee settlement (camp).....	24
3.3 Pre - field work preparation.....	25
3.4 Data collection method employed.....	25
3.5 informants’ selection and size.....	26
3.6 Getting access.....	28
3.7In - depth interview.....	29
3.7.1 Conducting in-depth interview.....	29
3.8 Field reflections.....	31
3.9 Summary.....	34

4. Conceptual framework for voluntary repatriation.....	35
4.1 conceptualizing return migration.....	35
4.2 Micro and macro level analysis of return migration.....	37
4.2.1 The Micro (individualist) models of return migration.....	37
4.2.2 Macro (structural) approach to return migration.....	39
4.2.3 Macro – micro dynamics (structuration) to return migration.....	40
4.3 Other factors that help conceptualize voluntary repatriation.....	40
4.3.1 Individual identities.....	40
4.3.2 The social network theory to return migration.....	41
4.3.3Critical consciousness.....	42
4.3.4 Agency of the refugee.....	43
4.3.5 Mobilizing resources and refugee preparedness for voluntary repatriation.....	44
4.4Summary.....	45
5.Data presentation and analysis.....	46
5.1 Section one: Background of informants.....	46
5.1.1 Age of informants.....	47
5.1.2 Educational background of informants.....	48
5.1.3 Occupation of informants.....	49
5.1.4 Household size, marriage status and length of stay.....	51
5.2 Section 2.....	52
5.2.1 Effect of social network.....	52
5.2.2 Issues on Security.....	54
5.2.3Socio-Economicconsiderations.....	56
5.2.4Opportunities for self-advancement.....	60
5.2.5 Painful memories.....	65
5.2.6 The case of highly integrated refugees.....	67
5.2.7 Demotivating voluntary repatriation package.....	69
5.2.8 Putting personal interest ahead of collective interest.....	71
5.2.9 Critical consciousness and agency of refugee at work.....	72
6. Summary and concluding remarks.....	75

6.1 Summary and concluding remarks.....	77
6.2 Findings.....	77
6.2 Contributions to refugee issues.....	82
Literature.....	84

List of Tables

Table 1. Age Distribution of Informants.....47

Table 2 : Educational Background of Respondent.....49

Table 3. Education and Occupation Distribution of Informants.....50

Table. 4 Household size, marriage status and length of stay of informants

List of maps and figures

Map of Ghana showing Buduburam Refugee Camp.....	x
Satellite Maps of Buduburam.....	25
FIGURE.1 Mobilizing resources and preparedness for return	45

ACRONYMS

ECOMOG - Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group

ECOWAS - Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group

NPFL - National Patriotic Front of Liberia

GRB- Ghana Refugee Board

UNHCR - United Nation High Commission For Refugees

ULIMO – United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy

NPP – National Patriotic Party

RUF - Revolution United Front

LURD - Liberia United for Reconciliation and Democracy

IGCL - International Contact Group on Liberia

DDRRR – Disarmament Demobilisation Repatriation Resettlement and Reintegration

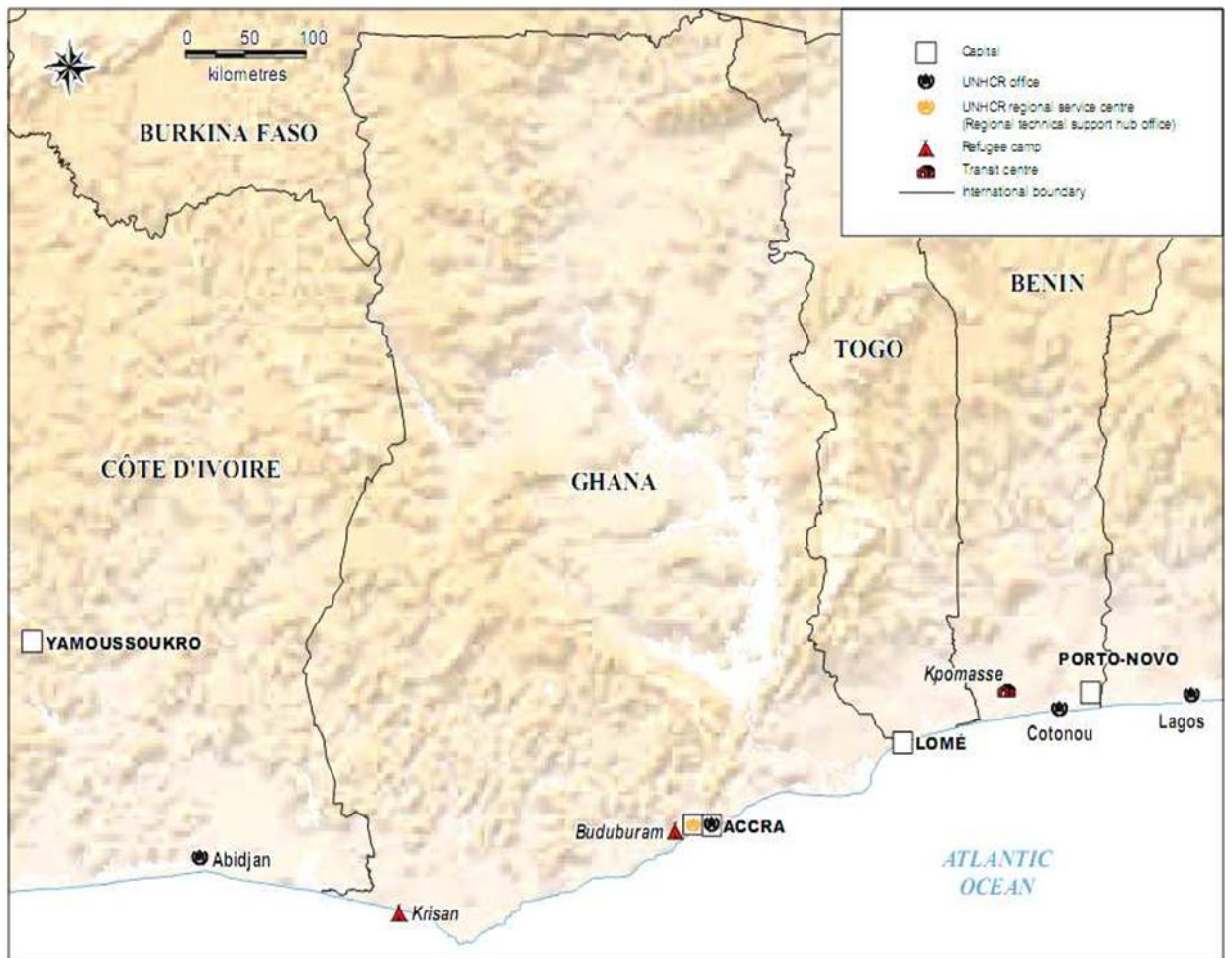
IDP – Internally Displaced Persons

GPI – Global Peace Index

GIS – Ghana Immigration Service

UNMIL- United Nation Mission in Liberia

Map of Ghana showing Buduburam Refugee Camp



1. INTROUCTION

Scenes of helpless mothers with unassuming young children, the weak and vulnerable old people, and desperate men with no hope of a better future characterize refugees across the globe. Who are forced out of their homes through no fault of theirs. Due to the enormity of the refugee crisis, the 20th century was aptly described as the century of the uprooted. (Crisp, 2000; Ogata, 2005). Some of the major refugee movement in the past include the following; the about 2 to 3 million Kurds and Shi'ites that gathered near the borders of Turkey due to attacks by Saddam Hussein; ethnic cleansing that expelled about 2.5 million Ex-Yugoslav from their homes; intertribal conflicts in Somalia that led to the demise of 1000s of people; and about half of the population of Jordan being made up of Palestinian refugees (Loescher, 1993); the Angolan civil war between 1975 – 2002 ended up with about 470000 refugees living in neighboring countries including Zambia, DR. Congo, and Namibia; also between 1992 and 1995 the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina turned about 430 000 people into refugees living in the United States of America, Sweden, Netherland, and Denmark. The Vietnam War between 1960 and 1975 reduced 330000 people to refugees (Collier, 2003). Other major conflicts in the world that have generated huge number of refugees include the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet and later by the USA, (Bhatia, 2008).

UNHCR was set up in 1950 with the mandate to assist refugees resulting from the second world war and people fleeing from the eastern block and then later “people of concern”. Such people of concern included internally displaced people, returnees and other victims of conflict (Loescher, 2001). Since 1960, the number of refugees in the world have seen a sturdy increase and they are mostly from Africa, Asia and Latin America. In 1976 the number of refugees was 2.8million which rose to 8.2 million by 1980 and to almost 18 million by 1992(ibid; Cutts, 2000). As at 1995, 1 out of every 130 persons were forced into flight and that included IDP's at a time when the world's population was 5.7 billion (Weiner, 1996).

As at 2005 about 12million of the world's refugee population were in protracted situation, which involved long period of exile in villages, camps and urban centers. Such protracted situations are caused by unceasing wars and conflict. Protracted situation can hinder peace processes and economic development due to the persistent insecurity and outflow of refugees. Protracted refugee situations can sometimes trigger conflict in neighboring countries. In some instances, refugee camps are used as bases by

armed groups that are involved in insurgency, resistance and terrorism (Loescher & Milner, 2005). In most cases, refugees in protracted situations remain uprooted, unprotected and have no sense of direction. Africa has the most intricate of all protracted situations. Majority of the 3million population of refugees in Africa remains in exile for over 10 years (ibid). According to the UNHCR global trends report (2010), at the end of 2010 the world had 43.7million people who have been forcibly displaced from their original place of residence, of this figure 15.4 million are refugees and 2.2 million were from Sub Saharan Africa¹.

1.1 History of Africa's refugee crisis

Africa's refugee problem deteriorates by the passing day (Crisp, 2000). It had a slow start in the 1960's but assumed alarming dimension at the tail end of the 1970's. By 1979 there were about 4 million refugees in Africa and it reached 6 million by 1994, constituting about a third of the world refugee population of 20 million (Adepoju, 1982; Cutts, 2000; Akokpari, 1998). Africa also has nine out of the first twenty of the refugee generating countries in the world. Twenty five African countries host at least 10 000 refugees. Out of the twenty five, eleven host at least 100 000 refugees (Crisp, 2000).

Some of the major refugee sources in Africa over the years include the following; The Mozambican conflict which ended in 1992 causing over 1.7 million people to become refugees in neighboring countries; The 1994 Rwanda genocide of over 800 000 also led many people to flee to neighboring countries for safety; The internal conflict in Ethiopia in the 1970's; internal conflict and the subsequent attack of Ogaden by Somalia, forced between 450 000 and 620 000 people to flee to Somalia and DR Congo(Cutts, 2000).

The West African sub region has witnessed countless conflicts especially since the 1990's. From 1995 to 2004 the sub region experienced forty-four successful coups, forty three failed coups, about 82 coup plots, 7 civil wars, and other forms of conflicts (McGowan, 2006). The violence and instability in the region has resulted in many refugees and internally displaced persons. For example, the civil wars in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, political clashes in Mauritania, and Guinea have led to increasing refugees numbers in the region. As at 1992, there were 16000 refugees from Chad living in Sudan and 41 749 living in Cameroon. 431 500 Liberian refugees were

¹ The 2.2million Sub- Saharan refugees, includes an increase of 110000 from the previous year end, from renewed conflicts in some parts of the continent. Hence upsetting the previous decreases recorded in the region.

living in Guinea, 220 000 in Cote D'ivoire and 12 000 in Guinea-Bissau. Sierra Leone had 153 500 refugees in Guinea and 100 000 in Liberia. Togo had 100 000 refugees in Benin and 100 000 in Ghana. Mauritania had 66 498 refugees in Senegal and 13 076 in Mali (Baker and Zetter, 1995)². In 2006, there were about 261 800 refugees living in the West Africa sub-region, of this number 117 000 were from Liberia and 18 000 were from Sierra Leone (Adepoju et al, 2007) As at January 2011, there remained 168 000 refugees in West Africa (unhcr.org).

1.2 The Liberia civil war

The root of the Liberian civil war can be traced to the formation of Liberia as a state. Liberia was formed as a home for freed slaves from America. These settlers known as Americo- Liberians dominated the indigenes Liberians and ruled the state from 1821 until Samuel Doe an indigene seized power from President Richard Tolbert in 1980 through coup d'état (Ellis,1999). The Liberia civil war can be divided into two phases. The first part spans from 1989 to 1997. The major events being the insurgence of Charles Taylor; The death of Samuel Doe; The electoral process which ended up electing Charles Taylor as President. The second phase also started in 1999 and ended in 2003 when Charles Taylor gave up power (Hegre et al, 2009). As a build up to the war, Samuel Doe organized coup d'état in 1980 to bring an end to the long tradition of Americo- Liberian oligarchy. Upon usurping power, Doe regime turned into a dictatorship and proceeded to eliminate all political opponents through assassination and chasing them into exile. His regime was also marked with widespread corruption, and mismanagement of the economy. Doe also endeavored to appoint his Krahn tribesmen to all politically sensitive positions including the army and reserved some few positions for the Madingo tribes (Nilsson & kovac, 2005).

As a result of the power concentration, Doe's tribesmen became a target during Charles Taylor insurrection. The supporters of Taylor were mostly from the Mano and Gio tribes who were presumptively oppressed during Doe's era. By July 1990, Taylor's NPFL despite their internal squabbles were able capture most part of the country with the exception of Monrovia the capital city (ibid).

² These figures included refugees who were under the care of UNHCR as well as the unassisted refugees

In response to ever increasing advancement of Taylor towards Monrovia, ECOWAS dispatched ECOMOG to Liberia. However the first batch of the ECOMOG force, upon arriving in Liberia was attacked by Taylor's NPFL. ECOMOG therefore fought alongside the ruling government to prevent Taylor from entering Monrovia. ECOMOG was supposed to provide protection for Doe, but in a surprising twist, Doe was captured under the watch of the top hierarchy of ECOMOG. He was later murdered and his mutilated body paraded throughout the principal streets of Monrovia (Ellis, 1999). The death of Doe paved the way for the first of the three interim administration that would be set up. However, all three interim administrations had the challenge of dealing with limited legal legitimacy and limited influence over state affairs (Nilsson & kovac, 2005:398).

From 1990, the conflict in Liberia took a cyclical turn, with a period of peace interspersed with period of violence and negotiation for peace. This led Liberia to the brink of collapse as a functioning state³. Other political movement also emerged with the sole aim of joining in the struggle for the control of the country. Some of these groups included the ULIMO; ULIMO was established by leading politicians of Krahn and Mandingo ethnic groups. Later ULIMO was split into ULIMO – J lead by Roosevelt Johnson a Krahn and ULIMO- K led by Alhaji Kromah a Mandingo. Concurrent to the arms struggle for power, there were others that were making frantic effort to ensure that a peace agreement could be reached and sustained. Strings of peace agreements were reached but they were short lived (Nilsson & kovac, 2005:398).

The effects of the Liberian war include; political struggle in nearby countries such as Cote D'ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Gambia; The war drew outside intervention particularly Nigeria; It threw light on how political elitist maneuver to serve their interest with international partners using the natural resource of their country; Further it showed how politicians whip up their social network to catapult themselves into power (Ellis, 1999: 27). It also led to over 750 000 Liberians being displaced internally and across neighboring countries and about 250 000 people losing their lives⁴

³ Liberia carries the label as failing states or failed state(Zimmerman,2007)

⁴ UNHCR, (2012) Protracted refugee situation in Liberia and Angola to finally end.
<http://www.unhcr.org/4fed81049.html> Retrieved 16/04.2013

1.2.1 The Liberia peace process

The former head of state of Nigeria, General Abubakar, was appointed by IGCL to mediate in the conflict. By June 17, 2003, The Government of Liberia, LURD and MODEL agreed to sign a cease fire agreement, which was to be followed by a more comprehensive agreement. The comprehensive agreement was to delve into issues like transitional government and, deployment of stabilization force, unfortunately a few days after the agreement, the conflict was rekindled in Monrovia leading to the death of many. This was as a result of indictment of Charles Taylor by the UN backed special court for war crimes based in Sierra Leone that forced him to withdraw from the initial ceasefire agreement. However, due to his weakened resource base and mounting international pressure to give up power, he finally conceded and accepted asylum in Nigeria. In August 2003, the comprehensive peace agreement was signed. Among other things, the agreement called for the establishment of the national transitional government of Liberia, a DDRRR process, and a new national army and police force established. Also UN force should be deployed and finally election should be held by October 2005. The transition government was established on 14th October 2003 (Nilsson & kovac, 2005). UN peace mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was deployed in October 2003. And the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration project was launched by December, 2003 (Essuman-Johnson, 2011).

1.2.2 Liberia refugees in Ghana

Liberians started fleeing to Ghana as a result of the initial armed incursion by Charles Taylor in 1990. In response to the increasing arrival of the Liberian refugees to Ghana, the Ghana government established the Buduburam Refugee Settlement⁵ in 1990 to accommodate the teeming refugees (Omata, 2011; Dick, 2002a).

There were about 7000 Liberians at the camp by the end of September 1990. And about 2000 Liberians living on their own in Accra (Essuman-Johnson, 1992:37). Many churches and other benevolent organization came to their aid and the government of Ghana also called on UNHCR to assist in caring for the refugees. The Liberian refugees were provided with blanket, food, medicine, water, and other essentials, Karnga (1997) cited in Dick (2002a). At the peak of the civil war there were about 45000 refugees living in Ghana, with the camp hosting about 25000 (Essuman-Johnson, 1992:37). Due

⁵ See chapter 4 for more information about The Buduburam Refugee Settlement

to the continuous influx of refugees the camp extended beyond the original demarcation of the camp into local settlement, making the Liberian refugees to co - exist with local villages (Omata, 2012; Codjoe et al, 2012)

The Liberia civil war officially ended in 2003 with the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement in Accra (Nilsson & kovac, 2005). With that agreement in place UNHCR turned attention to encouraging voluntary repatriation to Liberia. From 2004, UNHCR started organizing voluntary repatriation for Liberian refugees living in Ghana. However, the response was very slow, for example from 2004 to 2007 only 7000 refugees voluntarily repatriated to Liberia(Esuman-Johnson, 2011) But UNHCR continued to advocate for the return of the Liberian refugees to Liberia. UNHCR voluntary repatriation package included \$150 for each adult and \$100 for each minor. The refugees rejected the offer and rather wanted third country settlement or a repatriation package of \$1000 for each person that participated in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. Also the option of local integration in Ghana was rejected outright. Further to the refugees rejecting the voluntary repatriation exercise, with a population of 26 967, the government of Ghana became unwilling to activate the option of local integration lamenting that it did not have the requisite resources to undertake such project (Salducci, 2008).

Further in April 2008, the government of Ghana in response to demonstration staged by the Liberian refugees to drive home their demand for third country settlement or \$1000 voluntary repatriation package, had 13 refugees deported to Liberia⁶. The government also had an intention to activate the cessation clause in pursuant of article (4) e of the 1969 cessation clause of the OAU convention governing refugee problem in Africa (ibid). After the demonstration UNHCR organized another voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. With the tensed up conditions and feeling of uncertainty of life in Ghana many Liberian refugees offered to participate in the voluntary repatriation

⁶ During the course of the infamous demonstration staged by the Liberian refugees . The then minister of interior Kwamena Bartels made the following comments “ the refugees have forcibly stopped the national catholic secretariat and other NGOs from distributing food to the elderly, the sick and children and have continued to intimidate other refugees who do not support their course and making a number of them to flee the refugee camp in fear of their lives”.

He continued by stating emphatically that “ the government has not taken any decision to locally integrate Liberian refugees and neither does it have any intention of doing so, that their statement they do not want to settle in Ghana is an insult to Ghana showing their crass ingratitude to a country that has protected, fed and given their children free education”(Bartels, 2008:2)

He then ended by saying “the demonstration is in breach of public order act 1994 and is therefore illegal(ibid)

exercise to Liberia reducing the number of refugees considerably (Esuman-Johnson, 2011).

1.2.3 Challenges of living in Ghana as Liberian refugee

Although the laws of Ghana grant refugees the right to work, entry into the formal sector of employment is very much protected from foreigners. Immigration laws are also protective of the labor Market But refugees are allowed to work in the informal sector (Salducci, 2008; Omata, 2012). Though they face stiff competition from the local people who are protective of their interest. Local people tend to discriminate against the Liberian refugees when they do business in the market making it difficult for the refugees to compete with the local people (Agblorti, 2007). This makes living difficult for the refugees⁷.

Further, UNHCR provided humanitarian aid to the refugees when they arrived in Ghana in the 1990s but this assistance was gradually phased out due to resource constraint on the part of UNHCR. By 2009, refugees living in Buduburam refugee camp were paying for all basic services including; clinic bill, water, electricity, with the exception of food aid provided by UNHCR for children and vulnerable refugees. The aid provided by NGOs as well as other benevolent Ghanaians dwindled too (Omata, 2012). As mentioned by Jacobson(2005,1& 2) once the emergency part of the arrival of refugees and its related media attention phases out most assistance from NGOs as well as humanitarian assistance also passes out . This leaves refugee in dire need of support in order to survive in the host country⁸.

In January 2012, UNHCR announced that by 30th June, the refugee status of all Liberian refugees in the world would be revoked. And therefore started registering refugees for the voluntary repatriation exercise that was scheduled to begin by 30th June. Liberian refugees had four options either to voluntarily repatriate to Liberia, choose the option of local integration, or choose neither voluntary repatriation or local integration and remain a refugee or remain undecided⁹. But as at the time of conducting interview, in July

⁷ One official I spoke to who wanted to remain anonymous stated that some refugees living in the camp do not take advantage of UNHCR organized training programs and do not actively endeavor to fend for themselves for fear getting actively involved in pursuing making a living in Ghana or preparing for return to Liberia would to opportunities for third country settlement getting blocked.

⁸ The willingness for donor state to support refugees in protracted situation took a down turn from the 1990. And Liberian refugee living at the camp were victims of such policy. This effectively reduced the resources at the disposal of UNHCR to fund refugee oriented projects(Loescher,2001) .

⁹ These categorizations were made known to me by Protection Office of UNHCR Ghana branch in an interview. And they were also confirmed by project co-coordinator of GRB.

2012, there was absolutely no information about the local integration component of the exercise since nothing had been approved by parliament. Laying credence to the notion that the government of Ghana is not committed to local integration of Liberian refugees (Agblorti, 2007; Essuman- Johnson, 2011). This situation made a lot of the refugees to live in suspense.

But according to Takahashi (1997), Refugee issue is a human right issue, in that refugees abandoned their home for fear of persecution and flee to another country to seek protection. And the principle of non-refoulement implies that refugees cannot be forcibly repatriated to their country of origin even if there is perceived peace in the country of origin. Refugee would have to make the decision whether to return or not to return. But Liberian refugees fled from Liberia for fear of being persecuted, so once Liberia is peaceful and the course of flight is no more in existence. And given that the living conditions prevalent in Ghana does not favor the refugees. It was expected that Liberian refugees would respond to the series of voluntary repatriation exercise carried out by UNHCR and return to Liberia, but unfortunately this has not been the case (Essuman-Johnson 2011; Omata,2012).

1.3 Previous research topics

There has been extensive research on Liberian refugees in Ghana, and that include repatriation. Refugee repatriation is a complex issue in that whereas refugees flee their homes to seek asylum abroad because their country is unable to provide them with necessary protection they need. Once refugees arrive in the host country, most often their stay turns into a protracted situation. As they settle in the host country, they are equated to voluntary migrants by the officials and the general public (Kunz, 1973), therefore making issues on repatriation very complex.

Most research on Liberian refugees in Ghana have focused on the effect of protracted refugee situation on the host community. For example, (Aglorti, 2007), (Codjoe et al, 2012), (Dick, 2002a), (Dzeamesi, 2008), (Jacobsen, 2005), (Jacobsen, 2002), (Porter et al,2008).

But on the issue of repatriation of Liberian refugees from Ghana, Essuman-Johnson (2011) talks about when refugees refuse to go home and buttress the fact that refugees would not go home unless UNHCR devote resources to assist in re - building their post conflict society.

Omata(2011) talks about the importance of personal contacts in the country of origin as being of paramount importance when it comes to refugees willingness to participate in voluntary repatriation.

Hardgrove(2007) talks about protracted Liberia refugee situation in Ghana and how the refugees perceive return as economic setback and rather prefers to live in hardship in Ghana which they are now used to.

The interview with the respondent confirmed a lot of the outcomes of studies conducted by Hardgrove (2007), Essuman-Johnson (2011), and Omata (2012). But where it seems to depart from the above are the issue of timing; the study was carried out in the heat of the last repatriation exercise, after the International community had applied the cessation clause on the refugee status of all Liberians and there was no more option of third country settlement for Liberian refugees. The study argues that Liberian refugees in reaching a decision not to repatriate, consider multiple of factors bothering on their personal circumstance in terms of resource at their disposal, the content of the voluntary repatriation package, whether they are under pressure to leave Ghana, the circumstance prevailing in Liberia, where it would be easier to achieve their goals in Life. And made a decision to show mastery of their environment by maneuvering around these issues to their best interest.

1.4 Problem statement

The study seeks to highlight the failure of Liberian refugees living in Buduburam refugee camp to respond to the voluntary repatriation exercise. It seeks to understand the content of the voluntary repatriation scheme. It taps into the refugees reflections for a better understanding of the conditions under which refugees voluntarily return home. It is about refugee evaluation of conditions in their host communities vis- a- vis their country of origin and then make decision about voluntary repatriation exercise. The study seeks to vocalize refugees and highlight bottom –up perspectives in voluntary repatriation processes. It is about refugees mastery of their lives, immediate social worlds and viewpoint on macro policies and their collective impact on individual decision making.

The outcome will seek to challenge the traditional top – down approach adopted by UNHCR in the process of voluntary repatriation policies making. The study focuses on refugee side of the story with regards to the voluntary repatriation exercise. It uses the perception of refugees about the voluntary repatriation policy to call into question the

effectiveness of the voluntary repatriation exercise. The outcome would add to the need for a re-look at the content of the scheme.

1.5 Research questions

The main question the study attempt to answer is: why are some Liberian refugees living in Ghana not willing to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia?

To enable me address on the above question I have formulated the following supplementary questions

1. Which agencies are involved in the voluntary repatriation exercise?
2. What is the content of the voluntary repatriation exercise?
3. What are the characteristics of the refugees who have refused the exercise?
4. What account for failure to participate in the exercise?
5. What are the reflection of refugees about the exercise?
6. Do the refugees reflections, aspiration , viewpoints and actions manifest agency and mastery of surrounding environments?

1.6 Structure of the thesis

The study is divided into six chapters;

The first chapter, is a general introduction to the study. It addresses the background including the refugee problem across the world and in Africa, the Liberia civil war and Liberians refugees in Ghana. Chapter two, focuses on voluntary repatriation. Chapter three, is about the methodology of the study. Chapter four, is about the conceptual frame for the study, it discusses concept and theories that has been used to explain voluntary repatriation. Chapter five, is about the analysis of the data returns within the study's conceptual framework. Chapter six, is about summary and conclusion for the study.

2. Refugee repatriation

Working towards and implementing voluntary repatriation is to give refugees a chance to break away from being victims of persecution to being a genuine part of the solution.

- Shirley C. deWolf, Christian Care Zimbabwe

This section is about refugee repatriation. It starts with a brief introduction to repatriation, then delves into patterns of repatriation, and then talks about voluntary repatriation which is of concern to this study, the chapter looks at conditions under which voluntary repatriation should be carried out, also the chapter talks about the basis for repatriation in international law, the voluntary repatriation process, it also looks at those responsible for organizing voluntary repatriation and finally challenges to voluntary repatriation.

Refugee repatriation can be defined simply as the return of refugees to his or her country of origin from the state where he has been seeking asylum (Bakewell, 1996). However the definition is problematic in that it fails to capture refugees who are born while in exile, and therefore returning to country of origin as home may not be applicable to them, this definition implies that refugee status is inherited and their origins will be maintained. However, it has been argued that prior to the flight their nationality has little meaning to refugees and tend to forget the importance of their nationality to them overtime. Further it is argued that return should be a return to the status quo, in terms of their physical residence and all the other environmental factor that made home a place that was desirable but this is hardly met. Therefore refugees returning to a totally different environment which cannot be described as home (ibid).

Repatriation can be seen as lying along a spectrum, and may differ based on which factors triggered the repatriation. Repatriation can generally be categorized into three ; if it is not supported by any government or UNHCR and was started by the refugees themselves either as individual or group, then it is called spontaneous or unorganized repatriation, It is usually triggered by inadequate humanitarian assistance, cold reception, lost hope of a better future in the host country (Stein & Cuny, 1994), the second category is where refugees are forced to leave by the host government or element within the host government which is termed forced repatriation and the third which is of importance to this thesis is voluntary repatriation which refers to a

collaborated effort between the host nation, the country of origin and UNHCR to organize repatriation within the international law framework(*ibid*).

Among the three durable solution accepted by UNHCR as solution to the refugee crises ; resettlement to a third country, local integration in a host country, voluntary repatriation to the country of origin. The latter is the preferred option out of the refugee crises. Voluntary repatriation is seen as the best and most optimal solution to refugee crisis (Harrell – Bond, 1989). Refugees are depicted as longing to return home (Warner, 1994). According to Chimni (2003) from the 1990s the international community focused on providing humanitarian aid to refugees in war ravaged zones and also encouraging large scale voluntary repatriation. The preference of voluntary repatriation over the others can be attributed to the fact that refugees are no longer white, male, Christian and anti – communist in the instance of the northern states. For the southern states because of the lack of support for hosting refugees from the international community. and therefore hosting refugees has become a burden on an already impoverished economy (Chimni, 2003). According to Takahashi (1997) the durable solution that turns to be the preferred choice, has not been static throughout the years, circumstance surrounding a particular era dictates which option turn to be preferred. For instance during the post-world war era, third country settlement was the preferred option but this changed in the 1980 to voluntary repatriation to the country of origin. After the cold war, repatriation was preferred over the others because refugees were coming from variety of countries unlike the world war era when they mostly came from communist state, further the number of refugees have increased turning out to be a burden on the Western states (Black & Gent, 2006).

2.1 Patterns of repatriation

The underlying factor for refugees decision either to repatriate or not to repatriate and the manner under which repatriation takes place is influenced by refugees desire to have control over their lives. Refugee repatriation can be categorized into five, based on the desire for refugees to have control over their lives (Stein & Cuny, 1994).

The first category of repatriation may result from a military action that forces refugees to flee from the danger . In instance like these refugees who think they are not so much affected by the issue back home may choose to repatriate. Also refugees who are not supportive of the main stream refugee ideas may repatriate (*ibid*).

Stein and Cuny (1994), refers to relocation stimulated refugee repatriation; this comes about as a result of the host government deciding to place all refugees in a camp so as to have more control over their activities. Some refugees may not want to live in the camp and be controlled by the government and may wish to find shelter and work within the community. However, if they are not able to achieve such target then they may easily repatriate at the earliest opportunity.

Additionally, Stein and Cuny (1994) talks about community and alienation triggered repatriation. By this, they refer to political associations, interest groups, that are formed by refugee groups that find themselves in a refugee camp. This is usually the consequence of refugees in the camp forming a cohesive group with the motive of pursuing political, economic and social change. However, there may be those elements of the social group who may not be willing to join such movement and according to Stein and Cuny (1994) such elements are likely to move in case there is the possibility of repatriating¹⁰. Further, secondary relocation stimulation results when the host government decide at some point to relocate a refugee camp from the border of the country to another location or to move refugees more inland. This calls for refugees to make a decision whether they are willing to accept the change and its consequence on their lives or avoid the disruption such change will bring to their lives and will therefore attempt to integrate with the local community or opt to repatriate to the country of origin¹¹.

Finally, UNHCR sanctioned voluntary repatriation is carried out within the international framework with the assistance of the host government and the government of the country of origin. This usually comes about in response to increasing pressure either by the host government, country of origin, and the international community. In recent times UNHCR intervention tend to start sooner than later (Stein & Cuny, 1997; Crisp, 1984; Takahashi,1997)

¹⁰ For example, Liberian refugees living in Ghana formed an association with the aim of pressing UNHCR to settle them in a third country or \$1000 travel grant which led to agitation and demonstration (Salducci, 2008; Omata, 2012; Essuman - Johnson, 2011).

¹¹ In Ghana the infamous demonstration staged by Liberian refugees in 2008, led to some refugees getting arrested, most of the refugees arrested were sent to Kodiabeh ,a small village in the Eastern region near Accra whiles some got deported to Liberia. The frenzy that was created led to unprecedented response to voluntary repatriation exercise carried out just about the same time (Essuman-Johnson, 2011).

2.2 Voluntary repatriation

The origin of voluntary repatriation is bedded in forced repatriation. Eastern European states practiced forced repatriation to get their displaced population home after the second world war. However, this practice was curbed by allowing people who had genuine reasons not to repatriate to stay on as refugees (Zieck, 2004). The bases of voluntary repatriation lies in international human rights law which stipulates that everybody has the right to leave any country and to return to his/her country of origin. Since international human right laws requires the ruling authorities to accept its people. Voluntary repatriation from UNHCR perspective means returning to a condition which is safe material wise, legal wise and safety wise¹². Although voluntary repatriation is not directly mentioned in the Geneva Convention. Provision such as the principle of non – refoulement, which has the implication that states that accept refugees cannot force them out, serves as the basis for refugee protection in the host country. Therefore for refugees to be repatriated they must voluntarily choose to do so or in some instance as a result of the application of the refugee cessation clause (Bialczyk, 2008).

It is a bit complex to know the exact figure that are involved in repatriation in Africa since most refugees return home with little or no assistance from UNHCR and therefore are not recorded, but according to Rogge (1994) as cited in (Backwell, 1996) between 1971 and 1990 an estimated 3.5 million people repatriated to their country of origin within Africa. This to some extent has contributed to the end of some refugee crisis in Africa. Refugees sometimes repatriate before the end of the conflict.

2.3 Conditions that should prevail before voluntary repatriation is carried out

According to Takahashi (1997) issues of refugee is inseparable from issues of human right, in that people flee their homes in order to prevent their human right from being abused. So, for voluntary repatriation to be encouraged the human right conditions prevailing in both the host country and the country of origin is vital. Also in compliance with the principle of non-refoulement, the refugee should not be forcibly returned home knowingly or unknowingly to a condition of danger. The conditions in the country of origin should be such that the human rights of the returning refugee should be assured and safe for the refugee to return home. It is therefore essential that before voluntary repatriation is encouraged and promoted objective and critical assessment of the human

¹² UNHCR Handbook on voluntary repatriation(1996)

right conditions prevailing in the country of origin is carried out (Takahashi, 1997; Vedsted-Hansen, 1997). But according to Takahashi (1997) this is not the case in most instances. UNHCR which has the primary mandate to protect refugees seems to have its focus shifted to rather encouraging repatriation at the earliest possible time and this has been encouraged even in times when the human right conditions in the country of origin is not good enough to encourage and promote repatriation.

Another condition that should be prevalent before voluntary repatriation is promoted and encouraged, is the availability of free information concerning the country of origin. To enable prospective returnees to make a voluntary decision with regards to returning to the country of origin. Refugees are assumed to have better information about their country of origin than the host country and the expatriates and therefore see their choice as rational decision. Therefore, for voluntary repatriation to be encouraged, it is necessary for profound and enduring social and political changes to be made in the country of origin and such changes relayed to the refugees to enable them take rational decision of participating in the voluntary repatriation (Stein and Cuny, 1994). According to Stein and Cuny (1994), refugees would make rational choices among unsatisfactory alternatives and will go for an option that gives them security and some element of control over their lives. Refugees therefore have reason and purpose for their choice which is directed towards achieving a specific goal. How refugees perceive conditions at home is very important in the decision making process (Koser, 1997).

Additionally, measures should be put in place to ensure that refugees return in Safety and in dignity. And that conditions in the country of origin should have gone through fundamental changes. This implies that the circumstances that forced the refugees to flee from their country should have gone through enormous change. So that the fear of persecution would not be there. There should be basic social and political changes in the country which should be profound and enduring (Stein and Cuny, 1994). And voluntary repatriation should be carried out within the international framework on repatriation – tripartite agreement between the host nation, the country of origin and UNHCR. Although the UNHCR major repatriation usually marks the final repatriation it is usually not the first to take place. Sometimes smaller ones are organized and other factors such as the above also trigger repatriation based on the personal circumstance of the up-rooted person (ibid).

2.4 Basis of voluntary repatriation in international law

Since the 1990's was declared as the decade of repatriation. There has been a paradigm shift of emphasis from third country settlement to voluntary repatriation. The belief that protection is moveable has made the UNHCR shift their focus from reactive and exile oriented focus, moreover, states are not willing to grant asylum to uprooted people. So the motive is to bring the protection to uprooted people right in their country of origin rather than having them to cross borders to other countries (Landgren, 1998). And this has led to a situation according to Takahashi (1998), where refugees are repatriated at the earliest opportunity by UNHCR. Further, the emphasis on repatriation to country of origin as the long term solution to refugee crisis has created a situation where the country of asylum and the donor nations become frustrated when repatriation do not occur at the earliest opportunity (Landgren, 1998). For example in the case of Liberia, refugees were encouraged to repatriate immediately the war subsided only for it to start again (Dick, 2002a; Nilsson & Kovac, 2005; Omata, 2012)

Although voluntary repatriation has become the most preferred solution to refugee crisis, the content of voluntary repatriation is generally seen as still indeterminate and therefore its legal content depends on parameters that is used to determine it. As international law, it can be part of humanitarian law, human right law and refugee law (Chetail, 2004).

2.4.1 Humanitarian law and voluntary repatriation

In a resolution on 12th February 1946, the UN declared that no refugees after receiving accurate information from the government of his country of origin and deciding against returning will be forced to return and that such refugee shall be in the care of any organization that is established by the UN. Voluntary repatriation was adopted into the statutes of UNHCR on 14th December, 1950 and gradually became the main stay of UNHCR. But unlike humanitarian law, there is no outward expression of voluntary repatriation in international refugee law, although the 1951 convention advocates forced return. It rather encourages local integration in the country of asylum. But the continuous emphasis of voluntary return has led to a situation where the UNHCR responsibilities are not what is advocated for in the refugee conventions (Chetail, 2004).

2.4.2 Human right law and voluntary repatriation

The human right law that is mostly used to justify repatriation is the universal declaration of human right of 10th December 1948, article 13 states that, everybody has right to return to his country of origin and this include the right to be recognized as a nationality of the land. This is enshrined in the 1966 international covention on civil and political right which gives it a better basis, this aconvention is accepted by 144 states in the world. The committee on human right recommendation article 22 recognize the right to return in safety and in dignity (Chetail, 2004).

2.5 Organisations involved in the voluntary repatriation exercise

Role of UNHCR in refugee repatriation of liberian

As the main organizer of the voluntary repatriation program, UNHCR announced in January 2012 that by 30th June 2012 all Liberian refugees in the would have their status as refugees revoked. Consequently UNHCR started registering refugees for the last and main voluntary repatriation exercise from March, 2012 (UNHCR Ghana, 2012).

Prior to this present exercise, UNHCR had organized series of voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. However, with the exception of 2008 exercise which was organized just after the Government of Ghana had detained and deported some refugees and threatened to close the camp. The response to voluntary repatriation had been very slow (Esuman-Johnson, 2011). For instance, by March 2012 only 400 out of the 11000 officially recognized refugees were willing to voluntarily repatriate to Liberia (GNA, 2012).

The mandate of UNHCR has been modified over time, beginning from the era where UNHCR mandate ended when the refugees crossed the border to their country, to the present era that UNHCR is responsible for ensuring that returned refugees protection is secured and also provide refugees with assistance in the reintegration into their country of origin¹³.

¹³ The priorities of UNHCR when it comes to voluntary repatriation is to promote enabling environment; provide free and fair information for informed choice; and mobilize support for returnees. In practice this is achieved through “go and see visit”; compiling information about the country of origin to refugees, organizing peace and reconciliation activities; encouraging housing and property restitution, and providing assistance to returnees and legal aid. (<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cfe.html> , retrieved on 24/05.2013)

In the repatriation program, UNHCR collaborated with different organizations including; GRB, GIS, IOM, UNMIL, and the government of Liberia representative in Ghana¹⁴.

UNMIL

The United Nation Mission in Liberia was established in September, 2003 by Security Council resolution 1509(2003) to assist in securing peace in Liberia by providing protection for UN staff, facilities and civilians, support humanitarian and human rights activities, assist in national reforms and also provide training for Soldiers and Police.

In the repatriation exercise to Liberia, UNMIL provided aeroplanes that were used in transporting the refugees to Liberia¹⁵.

International Migration Organization (IOM)

The IOM which has been active in Ghana since 1987, has been involved in migration policy development, resettlement for refugees, assisted voluntary repatriation, combating human trafficking, providing information on the risk and realities of migration, border management, and responding to emergency and humanitarian needs.

In the voluntary repatriation exercise it provided assistance to UNHCR in ensuring that the refugees were able to travel safely to Liberia¹⁶.

Ghana Refugee Board

The Ghana Refugee Board was established under the Ghana Refugee Law 1992 (PNDCL 305D) with the responsibility for the management of activities relating to refugees in the country. The Board interviews and grants refugee status to asylum seekers from areas of civil conflict or places where they face political persecution¹⁷.

Ghana Immigration Service(GIS)

The Ghana Immigration Service was established as the agency of the government of Ghana to advise the government on and to ensure effective implementation of all laws and regulations pertaining to immigration and related issues. The Ghana Immigration Service is mandated to regulate and monitor the entry, residence, employment and exit

¹⁴ Although these organization had some roles to play, they were minor roles and in most instances did not get to interact directly with the refugees.

¹⁵ Final repatriation movement for Liberian refugees in Ghana to Liberia. <http://www.unhcr-ghana.org/node/210> retrieved ,15- 04-2013.

¹⁶ <http://www.iom.int/cms/ghana>

¹⁷ Ministry of interior

of all foreigners. Movement of Ghanaians in and out of the country. GIS serves as a member of the GRB and also collaborate with UNHCR in organizing voluntary repatriation¹⁸

2.5 The voluntary repatriation process

Promotion and facilitation

UNHCR which served as the main organizer of the voluntary repatriation program had a core responsibility to promote and facilitate voluntary repatriation among refugees living in the camp with the aim of creating an environment that would encourage refugees to repatriate. In order to embark on such activities UNHCR must ensure that the conditions of the refugees in their country of origin are conducive for their return. In a situation where the conditions in the home country does not warrant voluntary repatriation, UNHCR may not sanction such repatriation. However, if the refugees desire to return to their country of origin, UNHCR cannot stop them but rather provide them with assistance. Especially when they have strong desire to return to their country of origin (ibid). Repatriation taking place before the conditions are right for repatriation to take place has always been a challenge (Takahashi, 1997; Milner, 2008).

Interviewing, counseling and registration

Once, UNHCR had successfully promoted voluntary repatriation among the refugee community. Those who desired to return to Liberia were interviewed, counseled and registered. This exercise was carried out to ensure that refugees declared that the exercise was voluntary and personal details and proposed destination taken (UNHCR Ghana, 2012).

¹⁸ <http://www.ghanaimmigration.org/> retrieved ,15- 04-2013.

2.6 Challenges to the success of repatriation programs

Current repatriation exercise is driven by the object of ensuring that refugees return early to their country of origin rather than ensuring protection (Takahashi, 1997). In recent times UNHCR are under increasing pressure to repatriate refugees even if the conditions that forced refugees to go to exile still persist in the country of origin (Chimni,2003; Takahashi,1997). In the repatriation of Rwandese refugees from Tanzania, UNHCR in collaboration with the Tanzanian government issued a joint announcement that Rwanda is safe for the Rwandese refugees in Tanzania to return to Rwanda which amnesty debunked as untruth due to the massive human right abuses that were taking place in Rwanda at the time. According to Takahashi (1997), However UNHCR ignored the warning and repatriated refugees to Rwanda .Also the commissioner in 1991 emphasized that there is the need for repatriation to be on the same scale as exile in abroad since the makeshift camps that most refugees live in abroad were in most cases more deplorable than the condition they left behind at home.Encouraging repatriation at the earliest opportunity even at the peril of the refugee (Takahashi,1997). misses the fundamental notion of protection of refugees which is supposed to be the core mandate of UNHCR.

Another factor that works against the successful implementation of the voluntary repatriation program is that in most instance of peace in the country of origin, the peace has been reached by neither side clearly having the mandate to govern. So the peace that emerges is quite fragile and can be easily destabilized (Stein and Cuny,1994). Refugees residing abroad may refuse to participate in the voluntary repatriation program for the fact that they are not very certain of the peace that is achieved (Stein and Cuny,1994). Added to this refugees that can be found at the borderline are known to have supported insurgence at home, and have also served as a source of unrest, training opposition to the government and this makes many refugees doubt voluntary repatriation exercise(ibid). However dwelling on the effect of unstable peace and not encouraging voluntary repatriation may lead to missed opportunities to establish and consolidate the peace attained.

In addition to the above, fear of losing one status as refugee also serve as barrier for some refugees from participating in voluntary repatriation. For refugees to decide on participating in voluntary repatriation they need some level of assurance about security in terms of their long term interest. So to encourage refugees to voluntarily repatriate, some refugees may need to have a first hand experience about life in their country of

origin before making decision, but refugees law is such that once one return to ones country of origin the person loses his status as refugee this therefore serves as massive disincentive to prepare oneself for voluntary repatriation to their country of origin. In most instance one may be forfeiting a life in a host country that is more comfortable than one that the refugee is returning to in the country of origin(Vedsted-Hansen, 1997). Related to the above is the fact that voluntary repatriation in itself does not promote reconciliation. In Bosnia homes of thousands will be repatriates were burnt down in order to make their return impossible, also some repatriates in Bosnia were burnt to death. In Rwanda returnees have been meted with revenge attacks (Landgren,1998). Therefore there is the need for securities of prospective voluntary participants to be assured that their security would be guaranteed.

2.7 Summary

Out of the three durable solutions for refugee crisis; third country settlement; local integration to the host country and voluntary repatriation to the county of origin. Voluntary repatriation is regarded as the optimal solution for various reasons and include the fact that it involves less cost on another country, the number of refugees are so many and from different countries unlike the world war era where they were coming from the communist states, and for the third world countries hosting refugees involves additional burden on an already impoverished economy.

Repatriation ranges from forced repatriation; where refugees are forced to leave country of asylum due to pressure from government, unorganized repatriation where refugees flee on their own, and voluntary repatriation which is the ideal one is organized in collaboration with UNHCR, host government and country of origin.

For voluntary repatriation to be carried out some of the necessary conditions include; there should not be unnecessary human right abuses in the country of origin; there should be abundant information about the country of origin for the refugees contemplating repatriation in order for them to make conscious decision, and the voluntary nature of the exercise should not be in doubt.

Due to the broad scope of voluntary repatriation, the international law under which voluntary repatriation operates includes human right laws, and humanitarian laws.

Some of the challenges to successful implementation of voluntary repatriation include; due to pressure from the international community, the host country and sometimes the country of origin. Voluntary repatriation is sometimes promoted even if the conditions

in the country of origin is not right. In most conflict states the mandates to govern is not very clear and may lead to unstable peaceful conditions which serve as disincentive, finally there is the issue of losing one's status as refugee and the other benefit that goes with it serving as disincentive to participate in voluntary repatriation.

Chapter 3. Methodological framework

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the methodological aspect of the study. It looks at the choice of the study area, data collection method employed, pre - field work preparation and selection of informants and reflections – especially as a Ghanaian and a male field worker.

3.1 General information about study area

The primary data was collected during a field research conducted from June to August 2012. The fieldwork was carried out in Buduburam refugee settlement (camp or Buduburam camp) and subsequently the term camp will be used interchangeably with Buduburam Refugee Settlement. The camp is located at Gomoa East district in the central region of Ghana.

Gomoa East District Profile

Gomoa East with its capital Afransi forms part of the newly created districts and municipalities. Until 2008 that it became district on its own. It formed part of the Gomoa West district¹⁹. Gomoa West is one of the 20 districts within the central region of Ghana. It falls between latitude 514 north and 535 north and longitude 0.22 west and 054 west on the eastern part of the central region of Ghana. It is bounded on the north by Agona West Municipal. On the North East by Effutu Municipal, on the west and the North west by Mfantseman Municipal and Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam Districts respectively and on the south by the Atlantic Ocean and larger part of the dissected Awutu-Senya District. It covers an area of 1,022.0 sq km and has a total population of 194,792 making it the district with the highest population within the Gomoa district.

The people of Gomoa are part of the Akan speaking Ethnic group and they speak the Fante dialect. They are mostly farmers but along the coast there are couple of Ewe natives who are engaged in fishing. Buduburam township is the only settlement within the Gomoa district that is located along the main Accra-Winneba-Takoradi road. It is about 44km from west of Accra.²⁰ The Buduburam settlement had a population of 380

¹⁹ <http://gomoaeast.ghanadistricts.gov.gh/> (retrieved , 16th April, 2013)

²⁰ <http://gomoawest.ghanadistricts.gov.gh/?arrow=atd&=56> (retrieved, 16th April 2013.)

in 1970 but by the year 2000, it increased to 18 713²¹. The rapid expansion in the population may be attributed to the location of the camp at Buduburam.

3.2 The buduburam refugee settlement (camp)

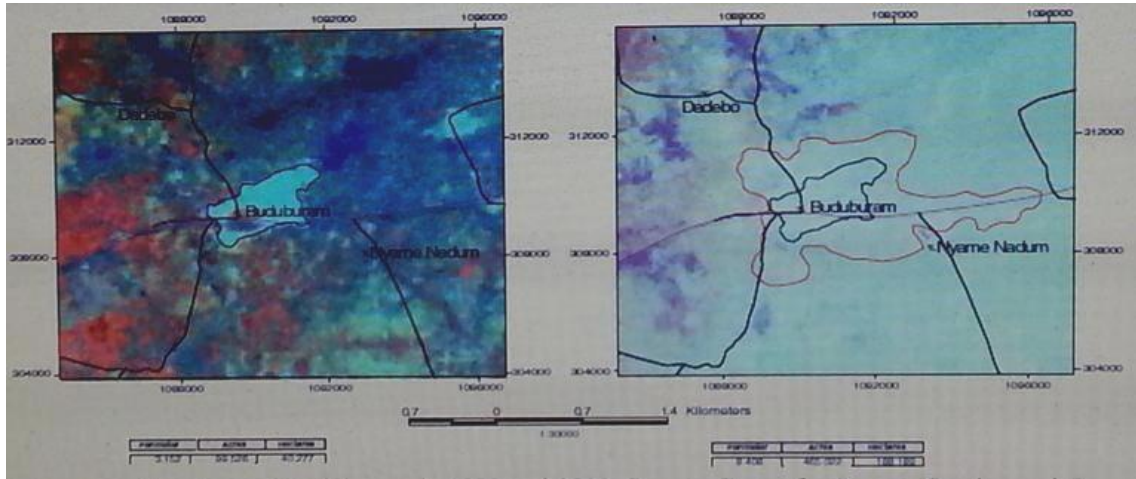
The buduburam refugee settlement can be located in Gomoa East district in the central region of Ghana. It is about 44km West of Accra. It was established in 1990 to house refugees that came to Ghana with Ghanaians evacuated from Liberia. The settlement was originally a retreat center located on a 140 acres plot intended for use by about 400 church people (Agborlati, 1997; Boateng, 2006; Dick, 2002a; Esuman-Johnson, 2011). UNHCR with the assistance of The Ghana Refugee Board were able to set up tents and some few structures to accommodate the Refugees. At the peak of the influx of Liberian refugees to Ghana, there were about 25000 refugees living at the camp (Esuman-Johnson, 1992: 37). Hence, the camp expanding beyond the demarcated area into the nearby villages and transforming them into vibrant communities and further attracting others to reside in the area.

The camp can boast of numerous facilities such as a police post, a health clinic, schools, shops, a market, football and basketball recreational facilities, a neighborhood watch dog committee office, and churches and mosques (Codjoe et al, 2012). The camp is subdivided into 12 zones with 9 of these demarcated for occupation by the refugees and the other three extending into the villages. Most of the housing structures are similar to what you find in low, medium and high class areas in Accra. Most of the amenities are located in zones 1 and 2 (Dick, 2002a). The Gomoa refugee camp has grown to be almost like a town of its own. The location of the camp allows free and easy movement of refugee both to either Accra or Gomoa Township which has been useful for those who try to earn a living.

The camp is administered by a Ghanaian manager from National Disaster Management Organization and he is assisted by a welfare council. The duty of the camp manager includes being responsible for the daily administration of the camp and ensuring that all activities undertaken in the camp is in the interest of both the refugees and the people of Ghana as well. The welfare council is also there to promote the wellbeing of the refugees. Activities in the camp is supported by host of organizations. There are a couple of primary, junior and senior high schools as well training centers being ran by NGOs. UNHCR is the main body responsible for most other logistics undertakings and

²¹ Ghana Statistical Service (2005) 2000 population and Housing census reports, Accra.

supported by some NGO's, churches, and other organization. As at December 2011, there were about 11 100 refugees registered with UNHCR living in the camp and other 2600 living in the environs, mostly in Kasoa, Awutu, Accra, Kumasi and Tema (Dick,2002b; Ghana UNHCR Office,2012).



Map. 2 Satellite Maps of Buduburam in 1990 and 2000. Source: Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems, University of Ghana, 2009

3.3 Pre - field work preparation

In preparation for the field work, I prepared a research proposal and financial estimates for the field work. Also efforts were made to make advance contact with officials of the Ghana refugee Board, The UNHCR office in Ghana, and informants at the camp, also I obtained letter identifying me as student which stated the purpose of the field work. Advanced preparation were also made in the form of secondary data research on the research topic from books, journals, news broadcast and others

3.4 Data collection method employed

The study aimed at vocalizing what individuals refugees had to say were their reasons for not participating in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. Different refugees respond differently to voluntary repatriation exercise. And therefore it always turn out to be inappropriate to use macro analytical tools to analyze repatriation (Koser, 1997). Kunz (1973) mentions that refugees movement maybe either expected or unexpected. The bottom-line was to understand how refugees perceive the voluntary repatriation exercise and why they were not willing to participate.

Generally, the aim of a study decides the method to be employed in the study to collect data (Glense, & Peshkin, 1992). As mentioned by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) the various traditions of conducting qualitative research is different means of representing

the same thing. Therefore one cannot be too critical in advocating one method as superior to the other. So, what informed the choice of the method was one that would allow the study to delve into the social world of the respondent. According to Bryman (2012:399) qualitative study sees events and social world through the eye of the respondent. Qualitative study traverse the perspective of the respondent. As Kvale (1996; 33) notes, qualitative study does “not ask for the general opinion of the respondents” but rather has limited respondents and therefore is able to study the practical details of the individual respondents and how each construct their perception of their world.

Denzin and Lincoln define qualitative research as ‘a situated activity that locates the observer in the world’ (2005:3). This definition implies qualitative study allow researchers to understand natural occurrences by knowing how people involved in it interpret it. So qualitative research looks for the meaning people give to events around them. However, because of the subjective nature of qualitative research for instance different respondent giving different interpretation of their experience of similar situation, there was the need for different perspective of the same subject matter in order to have an accurate understanding of the subject at hand.

So in order to experience the lived life of refugees that informed their decision not to return to Liberia. Qualitative method was the best method to apply in the study. This is because it allowed the understanding and thoughts of the refugees about the voluntary repatriation to be highlighted.

.

3.5 informants’ selection and size

Some informants are ‘richer’ than others. Sociologist generally agree that some people are better than others in observing, understanding, interpreting and recounting their experience, than that of others. Therefore choosing someone at random may had led to a respondent who was not ‘rich’ as a respondent (Jackson, 1970). The study did not aim at generalizing the outcome but rather to understand the complex behavior of Liberian Refugees living in the Buduburam refugee camp and their decision not to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. Therefore the study needed to rely on purposive sampling procedure in order to have access to informants who were appropriately qualified to participate in the study. Purposive sampling involves selecting

informants in a strategic way so that those selected are relevant to the study, it is a non – probability sampling method (Bryman, 2012:418).

The informants selected comprised of adult refugees, both men and women 18 years and above and covered those that were single, married, widowed and separated. They were selected because they were of legal age to grant their consent to respond to the study. It focused on those who were in a position to participate in the repatriation exercise (Skjelsbæk,1997).

The ideal size of informants to use for a qualitative study, is one that adequately answers the question. So that for a detail study only one informant may be deemed appropriate whereas for a complex study with numerous facets a larger number may be appropriate (Marshall, 1996). For the current study, given the varying reasons that people may attribute for their inability to participate in voluntary repatriation to Liberia. Further, the size required for a study becomes obvious as the study progresses. This occurs when new themes and new data ceases (Marshall, 1996), that is when data generated becomes saturated. As noted by Kvale (1996) qualitative study does not seek to generalize the outcome and so does not need huge numbers.

For this study, although I initially planned using 10 respondents. In the field, I ended up with 15 respondents. It was the snow ball technique that was used in sampling for the reason that repatriation of refugees is quite emotionally difficult and also involves personally sensitive issues(Lee, 1993). For instance, some disgruntled refugees saw repatriation as being forced to go home and therefore were bound to make politically sensitive comments. Also given refugee laws and the survival strategies of refugee²², the probability of having refugees not willing to participate in the research could not be discounted. Lest they end up, revealing too much about themselves and their activities that ends up incriminating them.

I used snowballing, which involved one respondent leading the researcher to the other respondents who were relevant to the research topic (Bryman, 2012). My first respondent led me to ten of his friends who he knew were not interested in participating in the voluntary exercise. I realize that the study stood the probability of suffering from the disadvantage of snowballing. That is, one ending up speaking with a group of friends with like-minded ideas and making the first respondent an informal research

²² I got to realize that most refugees have clandestinely been to Liberia and returned back to the camp. By refugee laws once a refugee returns to his country of origin, s/he refuses to be a refugee. Unless in special circumstance. For example, during the “look and see” exercise, sanctioned by UNHCR that allowed refugees to travel to Liberia to confirm the information they had heard about Liberia.

assistant also one losing control over who participate in the study which also affects the quality of the data obtain (Faugier and Sargeant ,1997). In order to counter such effects, I decided to speak to other people who were not known to the first respondent. As the study progressed, it became easier to accost others in the camp because I was used to the environment. And people were willing to open up to me, for the fact that I was visiting the camp almost every day.

Snowballing helped me to have access to refugee respondent who were willing to reveal it all. Hence the need to protect their identity by ensuring that nobody was identified by his real name. The possibility of respondent being victimized as a result of participating in the study was almost ruled out. Due to the nature of the study all information resulting from the study would be treated confidentially.

3.6 Getting access

Getting access can be in two segments, first getting access to the camp and others such as UNHCR and Ghana Refugee Board then getting the people to open up.

To get access to conduct the research at the camp, I asked for permission from offices of Ghana Refugee Board and once the coordinator of refugee programs granted my request, he gave me a letter and asked me to hand it over to the camp manager at the camp with that I had permission to conduct my research. I was able to schedule an interview with the coordinator of the refugee programs at GRB, the camp manager as well as a protection associate from UNHCR office in Accra. Once I had permission to conduct research at the camp. It was easy in that before arriving in Ghana. I had made initial contact through a Liberian friend of mine who used to live at the camp. Given all the above officers were very busy people it took some time before I had the opportunity to conduct interview with them.

My first respondent was a very busy person in that he juggled two full time responsibilities. He owned a groceries shop as well as was studying in one of the tertiary institution in Accra. He invited some of his friends that he knew were not repatriating to Liberia. Getting them to open up was not a problem. According to most of them they had participated in such studies before. Others also felt participating in the studies would let their predicament be known by people that matters and that may benefit refugees even if they don't reap the benefit directly. Although I explained the purpose of my studies to them such ones insisted that I never knew who would end up

reading it. Moreover, once the first respondent assured them it was alright to participate in the program study, they had no problem responding to questions asked.

3.7 In - depth interview

The choice of the approach to use in conducting social research usually depends on the kind or problem to be addressed. One technique is never superior to the other but each is most effective for specific problem (Bryman, 1984). In order to get to deeper understanding, observations, experiences, motives of the Liberian refugees that informed their decision not to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise (Kvale, 1996: 1; Corbetta, 2003: 264; Brymann 2012: 469 – 474). In-depth interview was an appropriate method to use. It involved face-to-face questions and answers with the respondent. In-depth interview looks for the meaning people give to events around them. And also allows one to arrive at a method that would be able to delve into detail perspective of the refugee and experience the world of the respondent.

It was best to use semi-structured and unstructured interview guide. Since they are known to be very flexible and hence allowing the respondent to freely express him/herself. Unstructured and semi structured interview guides were prepared for the Refugee respondents as well as for the organizations officials. These guides were not made to be strictly adhered to, but assist in conducting the interview so not to miss any question. And also help make the interview informal so to encourage the respondent to even say things that were not asked but relates to the topic.

3.7.1 Conducting in-depth interview

In as much as I wanted quality data from the field work and therefore had to do things right, it was necessary not to fall into the trap of seeing the respondents as objects good enough only to churn out data. I ensured that I did no harm to the respondent by asking them to do anything against their will. I gave much consideration to their personal schedule in fixing appointment to ensure that I did not cause so much inconvenience to them. Also I respected their culture, and sought all the necessary permission from the appropriate authorities before embarking on the fieldwork.

All the respondent were living in the camp, so it was easy to get in touch, communicate and develop a relationship that was essential for the research (Oakley, 2003). All the

interviews were conducted on the camp. The procedure I used for the interview are as follows; Once I was introduced to the potential respondent by my point of contact. My point of contact told him/her where I was coming from and the reason why I was there. He made him know that he was also part of the study, this helped the respondents to relax. After introducing myself, we talked a little about social issues. I then briefed the respondent about the study and through that I tried to test how suitable s/he was for the study by asking whether they had UNHCR registration number that made him/her an official refugee by UNHCR standard²³. Also I ensured that s/he did not feel pressured to participate in the study, that s/he was participating because he wanted to participate in the study. Once I did a little background check and sensed that the person would be appropriate to participate in the study. I went ahead and explain more about the study to the person, the essence of the study, what has necessitated the study, and give some guidelines on good interview practices. All these took not less than 3 meetings. I always planned what I would accomplish for the day before setting off. So in a typical day at the camp, I ended up interacting with 3 to 5 respondents. And we scheduled the interview for the final meeting. The essence of trying to meet the respondent at least twice before the interview section was to ensure that I would be able to create some friendship to enable the respondent relax and dig out all encumbrances that had led him/her to snub the voluntary repatriation to Liberia. The interview section lasted from 30 minutes to one hour for each respondent. All sections were recorded. I also made notes after I had finished with the interview since making notes while interviewing was on – going would have stopped the flow of progress of interview. The questions were not asked according to how they were arranged in the interview guide. They were asked randomly, And the aim was to create an informal environment to allow respondent to relax in responding to questions. Also I encouraged each respondent to say exactly how they felt and their experiences but not what others were thinking or saying.

²³ At the camp there are Liberians who live there, but are not recognized as refugees by UNHCR because they don't have valid ID numbers.

3.8 Field reflections

Language

Language is the main medium through which one communicates during research. Therefore being able to communicate in the same language was essential to understanding each other well without the need for an interpreter whose effect on the interview could not be swept discounted. Liberian has English as their official language and I absolutely did not have any problem communicating with them and understanding what they said. I think being able to communicate in English enhanced the quality of data generated.

Ghanaian researcher conducting research in Ghana-The insider –outsider role dilemma

The insider role refers to the idea that for maximum result researchers should be members of the group they were studying since possessing intimate knowledge of the issue they were researching on will enhance their understanding of the experiences of the interviewee (Collins, 2000; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). The issue of whether the researcher is an insider sharing a lot of the attributes of the population under study or an outsider and therefore has not much in common with the population under study is important in that the personality of the researcher is very pivotal in shaping the outcome of the study (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Interviewees may opt not to reveal everything about their experience to researcher they classify as outsiders in that they may not see them as working in their interest(ibid).

As a Ghanaian conducting research in Ghana, it was easy for me to navigate my way in Ghana. Gate keeping was not an issue. I had no problem securing the necessary permission to conduct the research from GRB as well as having the opportunity to interview refugees, UNHCR officials, the refugee program coordinator at GRB and the camp manage. As a Ghanaian I could identify with some of the frustrations of the refugees, making me an insider in general context. However, as a Ghanaian I had to contend with the issue of tension between some Liberian refugees and Ghanaians. Following the 2008 arrest, detention and deportation of some refugees back to Liberia (Essuman - Johnson, 2011) and some general complaints about Ghana discriminating against them in all spheres of their daily life. But with regards to the research, which concerns why Liberian refugees were not responding to voluntary repatriation programs to Liberia, I was an outsider. I think that helped me to be more objective and neutral. In

that I did not have any prejudice and therefore wanted to learn everything and did not preempt the respondents.

However, the effect of insider – outsider roles on the data generated, has been debunked in that the different roles of the researcher and the respondent can also be harnessed in arriving at a unique outcome (Miller & Glassner, 2011). Inside investigators have been accused of biasness (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Position of an insider is mostly associated with the feminist approach to qualitative interview in that it represents most likely emotional involvement between interviewee and researcher (Kanuha, 2000). However, being an insider has its own issues as an insider it becomes very easy for researchers not to probe further during an interview section in that it is easy to assume that one understand what the interviewee means by statements he or she makes. Additionally, the researcher finds it difficult to detach him/herself and for that matter remain objective as s/he conducts qualitative in-depth interview (ibid).

3.8.3 Being objective amidst glowing invitation to be emotionally involved

The tenets of proper interview according to the traditional (positivist) method of conducting qualitative interview include; objectivity, detachment, hierarchy and “science” and these qualities are supposed to be exhibited above the concerns of the individual researcher (Oakley, 2003 p.251). By implication being subjective, getting involved, getting unduly concern whether there was equality, whether the interviewee and the researcher are statistically comparable are issues that are associated with bad interview. For an interview to be classified as good there should be rapport between the researcher and respondent, well prepared respondent should be one that does not ask back questions during the interview process, interviewees are not to know the opinion of researcher with regards to the topic and if respondent ask questions during the interview section, it is to be ignored politely. Researchers are not to get involve with informants.

Additionally, qualitative interview from the traditional perspective frowns upon being emotional and sentimental attribute of women which it has no space for but rather encourages being rational and objective in carrying out research. Emotions is viewed among the masculinity as a stumbling block in achieving result (Oakley, 2003 p.251). In terms of the human factor to the research positivism endeavors to suppress human subjective contribution to the study. For the positivist truth is to be found through method and method should be independent of the context and content of the research.

Influences by the researcher should be eliminated or kept as low as possible (Kvale, 1996:61).

My experience while conducting the research was challenging. For example, some of the respondent narrated so many of the challenges they had been through from Liberia through Cote D'Ivoire and finally in Ghana. Some of the challenges especially the ones in Ghana really touched me because sometimes I felt I could do something to help. But with the reading I had about good interview practices. And being more attuned to the positivist approach to conducting interview. I restrained myself in order to minimize my effect on the study. I endeavored to make any comment only after the interview section. I also think my attribute as student from Norway may have had effect on the manner in which some refugee respondents spoke to me because I could sense some really wanted me to keep in touch when I return to Norway.

However, in order to counter the criticism of the positivist approach to conducting interview. That is, the positivist approach to qualitative interview has been criticized on the ground that Objective understanding of an event can never be achieved. Since we know something about an experience through the interpretation of the subject involved. I endeavored to ensure that before conducting interview I spent time creating rapport with the interviewee and talk about good interview practice before conducting the interview so my effect on the response will be minimal.

3.8.4 Cross – gender interviewing

The individual attributes of the researcher is said to shape the output of a qualitative data obtained since it affects the choice of the methodological and theoretical type used in making analysis (Arendell, 1997; Finlay, 2002). Therefore understanding how the interpersonal dynamics and how they shape the qualitative interview is paramount if one is to produce high quality analysis. In the context of this study how the interviewer – interviewee relation - male researcher interviewing female respondent and male researcher interviewing male respondent affected the outcome of the study. In qualitative in-depth interview influences of cultural practices and social values are brought to bear on the study (Oakley, 1998). Effect of gender transcends all aspect of social life and in the context of in-depth interview, it is mainly on how one juggle between performance and impression management: involve researcher and respondent looking out for differences and similarities and also fulfilling their social cultural

expectation such as coming across as manly, feminine and displaying professionalism(Oakley, 1998).

In my experience conducting qualitative interview at the camp. I realize that the women were more forthcoming about their plight in Ghana, what they went through during the war in Liberia as well as their worries about life in present Liberia. But my first impression upon interviewing the first male respondent was that of trying to come across as masculine and tough and trying to cover up their challenges. Therefore I adapted the strategy of reassuring all respondent about the essence of the study, the fact that their names will not be used in the write up, and that it will be impossible to identify them. And that the study would be very useful if they tell their experience just as it happened. Added to that, I tried to create a relaxing environment for the study to take place.

3.9 Summary

The chapter focused on where and how data was collected for the study. The data for the study was generated from Buduburam refugee settlement, because about 90% of Liberian refugees living in Ghana can be found there. The aim of the study was to know what individual refugees had to say was their reason for not participating in voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. In order to know what the refugees had to say the study used a methodology that would enable me get closer to the respondent so I could elicit the necessary information.

Qualitative in-depth interview was used because it allows the researcher to get as much information as possible from the respondent. Since it does not aim to generalize the information generated. Further using semi - structured and unstructured interview guide made it possible for refugees to relax creating a simulation of a real life conversation that has no boundary on what to say about a lived experience.

As a researcher I came with my own baggage and that included being a Ghanaian conducting research on Liberian refugees in Ghana, being a male and interviewing male and interviewing males as well as females, and challenge not to be emotionally involved with refugees. probably, these attributes of mine may have contributed to the kind of responses I received from the respondents.

4 . Conceptual framework for voluntary repatriation

This chapter, attempts a conceptualization of responses of voluntary repatriation schemes. The chapter starts with a general introduction to theories and concepts on return migration, then takes a look at micro/individualist decision making - under micro level of decision making the section considers how identity, critical consciousness, agency aids in decision making. The second section looks at decision making resulting from the structural approach to return migration – under this section transnational theory is considered, the next section considers how the interplay of macro/micro policies leads to structuration policies. Further the chapter focuses on mobilizing resources and refugee preparedness to participate in voluntary repatriation.

4.1 conceptualizing return migration

There has not been too much research purposely directed at framing theories on voluntary repatriation (Harrel-Bond, 1986; Bakewell, 1996; Kunz, 1973: 128). Therefore theories on migration/return migration are generally used in explaining voluntary repatriation. So, the aim of this section is to synthesis theories and concepts that gives a framework to voluntary repatriation. Explaining voluntary repatriation is about explaining refugee decision making (Koser, 1997).

Koser (1993) specifically tries to explain repatriation as the product of refugees comparing the conditions in the host country with that of the conditions in the country of origin and making a decision that will be in their best interest. His model lays much emphasis on refugees having the necessary information which is expected to be relayed to them through the international community, the government, social network, and the media, in order to make a decision whether to repatriate or not to repatriate. A major assumption underlying his model is that such information is received passively, further his model does not show how the process of repatriation takes place (Bakewell, 1996).

Bascom (1994) on the other hand, proposed that different sections of refugees are motivated by different factors towards their participation in return migration. And his model was based on De Jong and Fawcett's value expectancy model. The value expectancy model involves rating set of values or goals which are deemed to be of importance to the migrant after that one measure expectations of achieving these goals in specific locations, then using the formula $\sum V_i \cdot E_i$ to obtain a place - specific attraction

score which is then used in predicting migrant intention or likely behavior (De Jong et al, 1983). The study of Bascom demonstrates that different demographic group respond to voluntary refugee repatriation differently and shows that the individual agency factor should not be discounted in making refugee repatriation decision. However, his study was not able to account for the effect of structure on the decision making of the refugee (Bakewell, 1996).

According to Kunz (1973; 1981) refugees may opt to repatriate for varying reasons. Some refugee movement are anticipated, some are spontaneous, some as part of the decision of the majority in the community. Others because they don't feel part of the local community of refugees in the host country. The resettled refugee stops being a problem that calls for international attention. Also once a refugee arrives in a place, statistically he is classified among voluntary migrant. What is common among these groups is that they have lost control of their life and therefore the difference between political refugees and economical refugees is often a thin line (Kunz, 1973).

As noted by Kunz (1973: 128) *“if the absence of theoretical studies of refugee in flight can be explained, so there are understandable reasons why once the refugee is resettled he is more often than not equated with the voluntary immigrant by the administrator and the general public alike with the voluntary immigrant around him”*.

Due to the fact that individual decision are influenced by the actions of entities such as multinational corporations, ethno-religious leaders, state and supra-state agencies the distinctions between social, economic and political influences in making decisions is insignificant (Richmond, 1988). Also the notion that refugee movement is spontaneous and unpredictable is increasingly being debunked, since more recent research is proving otherwise (ibid).The dichotomy between general migrants and refugees (Gordenker, 1987) is questionable since a study conducted by Riddle and Buckley (1998) by interviewing Armenian refugees living in Russia also demonstrated that the refugees behaved just like the normal migrant in terms of the factors underlying their choices.

4.2 Micro and macro level analysis of return migration

Return migration theories can generally be grouped into micro and macro level of analysis. On the one hand, micro level theories sees the individual as the most important entity when it comes to refugee repatriation decision making. Whereas, macro level

analysis refers to the conditions under which large stream of people movement occurs. Macro level of analysis, is concerned with structures that are beyond the control of the individual as being paramount in reaching the refugee repatriation decision making. There is also a third class of theories and concepts which postulate that the repatriation decision making process is a result of interplay of micro and macro influences (Richmond, 1988; Bakewell, 1996:5).

4.2.1 The Micro (individualist) models of return migration

The individualist or micro concepts to return migration assumes that one would make a rational choice that is likely to maximize his utility. Although, he is also constrained just like all other human endeavors (Bakewell, 1996).

Todaro (1969, 140) cited in Cassarino (2004) sees return migration as the result of one not being able to achieve his /her targets in the host country. That people would normally return to their country of origin when they consider their stay abroad as failure or when they are not able to achieve their target in the host country (Cassarino, 2004). Theories by Todaro and Harris are normally referred to as the neo-classical perspective. This perspective relates the migration decision as a function of the wages to be earned in agriculture to that to be earned in the manufacturing sector in the city given that there is no unemployment in the city. That migration is an attempt by rational actors trying to improve their wellbeing by moving to places where the reward for their labor will be higher compared to what they receive presently and such earnings should be high enough to offset the tangible and intangible cost resulting from the move. So, for the neo-classicals, migration/return migration is an individual, spontaneous, and voluntary move that involves the person comparing conditions in his present location to what he is likely to gain if he makes the move abroad. Then making a cost benefit analysis and then making a decision (Arango, 2000). A major criticism of the theory is that it has lost touch with reality. For, instance although there are huge labour – wage discrepancy between villages and cities just a few moved, and also the inability of neo classical to explain migration differentials or the inconsistency in the movement of people (ibid). Subsequently, others have also added some other non - income factors such as relationship with family and friends, ownership of immovable property and social status. In addition other macro level policies such as government policies as constraints that have the tendency to tie one to specific place. These factors can potentially influence the benefit to be derived from not participating in migration or return migration (Da Vanzo, 1981). The neo- classical labour migration also projects that, once

one stays in abroad one aspire to better his/her earnings and also endeavor to secure permanent settlement to ensure family reunification. In the case, one is not able to achieve these objectives then one sees the stay as a failure and is forced to return to his country of origin(Cassarino, 2004).

In contrast to the neoclassical school of thought, the new economics of labour migration posit that one will only return to his country of origin when one has achieved his target. It implies that the migrant/refugee have a specific target to achieve while living abroad and will only return when he has achieved this target. The new economics of labour migration does not see return migration as an act of desperation, but rather a strategy to ensure that one achieve all his aims while living abroad before returning home and this may include taking advantage of wage differentials between his country of origin and the host country or due to slow growth of the economy of the country of origin (stark, 1996).

Although, these two theories migration/return migration explain why return migration occurs; the neo classical perspective and the new labor economics of migration contrast each other in terms of why return migration occurs. First, both the neo-classical and new school of labour economics seems to suggest that money is the only motivation for people to decide whether they will return to their country of origin or not. Secondly these theories seems to assert that those abroad have a lot of foreign money they bring into the country of origin. Further both theories talks about return to their country of origin but does not show where they return to, since these theories do not talk about the political and social environment (ibid).

4.2.2 Macro (structural) approach to return migration

The structural approach postulate that the individuals decision to return to his country of origin is a factor of the social, economic and political environment that he finds himself in rather than his own doing. That the individual is passive in the return migration decision making. (Bakewell, 1996). Also the structural approach to return migration is based on the expectations of the potential returnee given the resources he has been able to gather and the reality of the economic and social conditions prevailing in the country

of origin. Based on these expectation of potential return migrant Cerase (1974) was able to classify returnees into four different categories of people.

The first group he classified as return of failure; they are group of people who were not able to adapt to the culture of the host country and therefore were forced to return to their country of origin. The sheer difficulty in adapting to the culture forced them into making such stand of returning. Secondly, there is the group he calls the return of conservatism, members of these group had specific target before moving to the host country and therefore will return to the country of origin once this target has been achieved, thirdly there is group called return of retirement, they are group that will return to their country of origin once they reach retirement age and finally there is the group known as return of innovation; they usually return with the vision of implementing all the skills and using all the means they have at their disposal to make an impact in their country of origin. This group which is the most dynamic of all the groups, usually is not able to effect the purported change because they are under immense pressure from the powers that be to ensure that the old structures are still operational in the country of origin (Cerase, 1974).

These categorization (Cerase ,1974; Koser, 1993) shows that whether the mooted return will be a success or a failure is dependent on the structures in the country of origin. There is therefore relationship between migrant intention to return and motivation to return. Whether one will return or not is dependent on the prospect that people expect to have in their country of origin relative to what is being offered in the host country. And for Gmelch (1980) return migrants get to be ill prepared because they are able to get accurate information about situation pertaining in the country of origin later not sooner.

4.2.3 Macro – micro dynamics (structuration) to return migration

In voluntary repatriation programs, the refugee is free to make individual decision amidst constraint imposed on him by structures that are beyond his control. Due to the nature of the process of refugee repatriation decision making, a model that combines individual and structure models would be most appropriate in explaining why repatriation occurs. Therefore the structuration model is the most appropriate model to explain refugee repatriation. Since it tackles the element of agency and the element of

structure (Bakewell, 1996; Cassarino, 2004). It is also appropriate in that it is able to explain the extent to which repatriation can be branded as voluntary or forced repatriation since it is seen as negotiation or interaction between the element of agency and structure. However, although the structuration model is seen as the most appropriate method for explaining refugee repatriation, it does not show how this is to be done, that is to what extent the individual agency or structures influence the decision made by the refugee. The refugee is seen as having a pool of resources at his disposal that he can resort to in order to make decision that will work to his best interest. These resources may include social network, household status, human resources, and also material, and natural resources - these resources as mentioned are socially constructed and may mean different things to the refugee and the other stakeholders in the refugee (Cassarino, 2004).

4.3 Other factors that help conceptualize voluntary repatriation

4.3.1 Individual identities

Identity can be seen as having five components. The first components deals with social interaction, it concerns how people take on different roles in different circumstances (mead,1934) cited in (Chrysochoou,2003). The second is related with how identity drives inter group motivated behavior and discrimination (Stryker,1992; Stryker & Burke, 2000) cited in (Chrysochoou,2003). The third component deals with how an individual acquire knowledge about himself and how an individual is able to use this knowledge to protect himself in the face of change(Breakwell, 1983, 1986, 2000) cited in (Chrysochoou, 2003). The fourth part is related to how people identify themselves as part of a group and participate in a group action(Turner and Onaroto,1999) cited in (Chrysochoou, 2003). The fifth talks about how one's position is constructed in order to promote one's vision (Whetherell & Maybin, 1996) cited in (Chrysochoou, 2003).

Identity is expressed through the relationship one has with the world. Such relationship can be broken into knowledge one has about himself. Secondly, the element of self-action which regards motivation one in terms of what s/he can achieve then there is the third component is about how others recognize one, and allows one to make the claims one make about oneself. This acceptance is important if one is to achieve one's goal. These concepts allow one to recognize his/her attributes and others that have similar attributes leading to group action (Chrysochoou, 2003).

From the above it can be concluded that the decision refugees make can partly be as a result of the identity they have about themselves, how they try to achieve their target in life and how people perceive them. Also it concerns how refugees acquire information. This lays credence to fact that identity, agency and critical consciousness act in concert. Further if challenging the status quo by maintaining one identity, may come with a high social cost. One may be forced to go with the flow, the culture and the norms of the society one find himself in which may result in one not being able to exercise his/her agency (Kabeer, 2005). Critical consciousness is very important in knowing one's identity. The interpretive process of critical consciousness leads to the revelation of one's identity (De Lauretis, 1986; Alcoff, 1994). De Lauretis portends that:

Individual identity is constituted within a historical process of consciousness a process in which one's history is interpreted or reconstructed by each one of us within theorization horizon of meanings and knowledge available at a given historical moment, a horizon that also includes modes of political commitment and struggles... consciousness is therefore never fixed and never attained once and for all because discursive boundary change with historical conditions (p.116)

Identity is not static but dynamic and is dependent on the circumstance one find him/herself in and also the application of the individual agency.

4.3.2 The social network theory to return migration

The social network theory postulate that return migrants are people who try to keep a link with people back home when they are in the host country in order to secure the resources needed to survive in their country of origin. And these resources can be tangible resources which may refer to financial capital or intangible resources that refers to skills, contacts, relationships, acquaintances. The amount of resources that one is able to mobilize affects the propensity for one to return to the country of origin. Network with people back home serve as useful source of information and resources and can also be vital in making a successful return to the country of origin (Cassarino, 2004). For the network which consist of numerous social structures to be effective, Laumann et al (1983, 21) cited in (Cassarino, 2004) says "there is the need for long standing relationship and also mutually beneficial exchanges between actors".

Also the importance of social capital in the success of the social network cannot be underestimated. Social capital in this context refers to all resources that can be useful to

the return migrant. It may be financial or social resources from family, household, or cross border social network (ibid). Social capital according to Bourdieu (1985; 248, 1980) cited in (Lesser, 2000) is “ the aggregates of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less of institutionalized relationship of mutual acquaintance or recognition”. Social network increases the probability of international movement in that the interpersonal ties between migrants, non-migrants, former migrants through families, kinship, friendship and shared community in the country of origin and the host country. These ties reduces the risk associated with return migration in that they serve as social capital that the individual draws on to defray cost associated with return migration (Massey et al, 1993:448).

4.3.3Critical consciousness

Critical consciousness is defined as the process by which people move from unquestioning acceptance of the social order to a critical perspective on it (Kabeer, 2001). Critical consciousness from this perspective has got to do with the power people have to explore their alternative and make choice that will yield to their best interest. By being critical conscious, one explore all the alternatives associated with making a particular choice given the constraint imposed on one by the structural factors that are beyond one’s domain of control (Kabeer, 2001). The term critical consciousness can also depict the ‘process of continuously reflecting upon and examining how our own biases assumptions and cultural world views affect the way we perceive differences and power dynamics’(Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005)

According to Freire (1974) one integrate into the local community by adapting to the dictates of the local community, while having the critical capacity to make choices, such a person becomes subject rather than a passive object. Also critical transitive consciousness is characterized by in-depth interpretation of problems: rejecting passiveness, advocating dialogue, open mindedness, and soundness of argument. Change in economic circumstance may lead to one becoming critically aware (ibid).

In the context of Liberian refugees in Ghana contending voluntary repatriation, individuals having lived in Ghana for a long time have formed identities that may lead them to ask questions based on the circumstance in Ghana and what they get if they repatriate to Liberia, the experiences of those who repatriated earlier and the feedback they are getting from them, what they wish of the international community is and their

own wish, what the repatriation package entitle them to and make decision that will yield to their interest.

4.3.4 Agency of the refugee

Agency, refers to one being in a position to define his/her goal and acting on it (Kabeer, 2001: 21). Agency according to Giden (1984: 9) refers to an 'event of which an individual is the perpetrator, in the sense that the individual could, at any phase in a given sequence of conduct have acted differently. What ever happened would not have happened if the individual had chosen not to intervene'. Exercising one's agency would enable one to make choices that reflect one's identity which would be devoid of outside influence (Freire, 1974) Agency can be positive or negative, in the positive sense, it refers to the ability for one to define what he wants and working towards it, despite opposition. In the negative sense it refers to the ability of an entity to override the agency of another (Kabeer, 1999). Agency can take various forms it can be through bargaining and negotiation, deception and manipulation, subversion and resistance, reflection and analysis. Agency implies power to choose to act or not to act in a specific manner (ibid).

. The agency of the refugee at the institutional level is about participation of the masses and social inclusivity. But at the micro level its about self-efficacy and the idea that the individual can be an agent of change in his/her life.. Agency may result in the capacity of one to make strategic choice, have access to resources and make decisions that affect pivotal life outcomes (Malhotra & Schuler, 2006). In action the agency of the refugee does not act with a free flow, there are constraints that are imposed on the refugee by institutional structures that are bias against the individual exercising his agency.

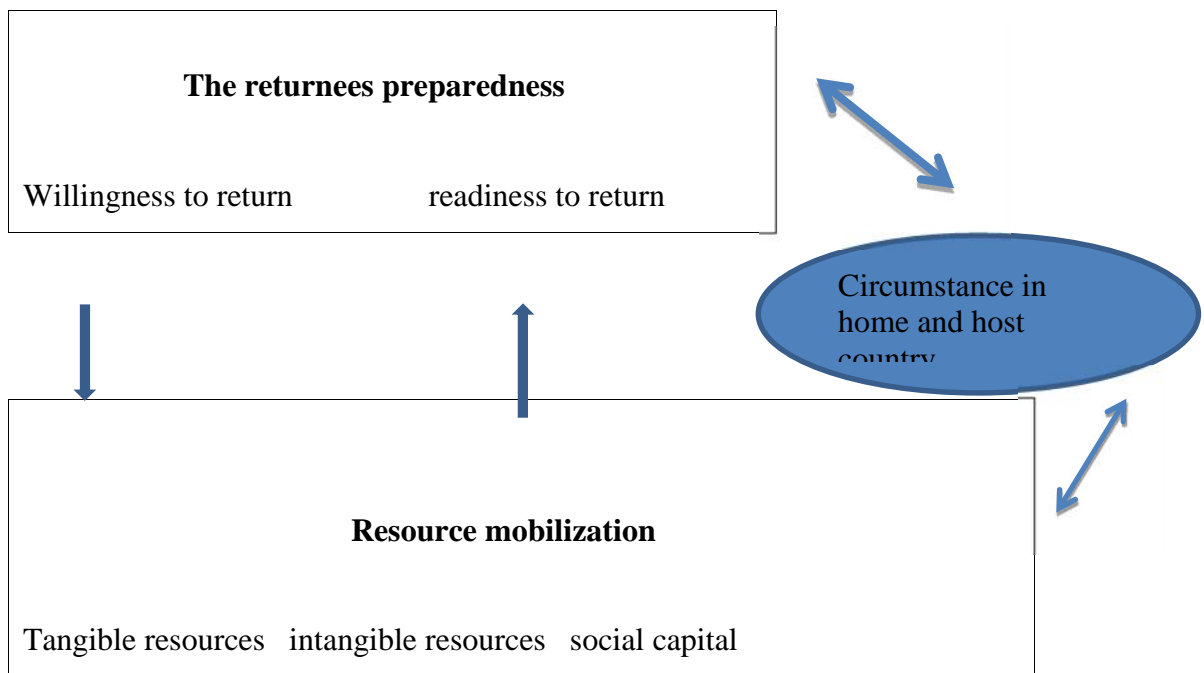
Given the fact that "top down" approach to decision making has not always been popular among refugees. Agency of the refugee leads to the individual refugee participating in the decision that will ultimately affect him/her. The refugee is not passive, but rather re- examines and negotiate with the situation he finds himself to reach a decision that would yield to his benefit.

4.3.5 Mobilizing resources and refugee preparedness for voluntary repatriation

The success of a returnee to the country of origin is dependent the resources he/she is able to mobilize and also how long he has been preparing for his return to the country of origin, while living in the host country. Therefore for one to be successful in returning to the country of origin, one needs time to prepare and also be able to gather enough resources. By resource mobilization, it refers to the tangible and intangible resources mobilized during one stay in the host country. And also the social capital the person has at his/her disposal. Preparedness refers to the willingness of the refugee to return home and also how ready he is to return home. This may require that the refugee in addition to having enough resources should be able to have enough information about post conflict condition at the home country (Cassarino, 2004).

When these two factors of willingness and readiness on the part of the refugee are available and very high it leads to a situation where the probability of return being a success becomes higher, but they require resources which also requires time otherwise we may have a situation where the refugee maybe willing to go back to the country of origin but may not be ready to go back to the country of origin (ibid). A refugee with optimal length of stay in the host country may have enough time to mobilize resources relative to the one who had a short period of time to stay. Further each refugee has different motivation and preparedness to go home. More so, the perception that a refugee may have with regards to economic, social, political changes that has occurred in the country of origin may affect his decision to go home since it has an effect on how his resources will be utilized. How prepared a refugee may be is dependent on the conditions in the host country and the country of origin

FIGURE.1 Mobilizing resources and preparedness for return



4.4 Summary

The chapter set out to show how concepts and theories on migration/return migration can help explain voluntary repatriation. No single theory has been able to adequately explain voluntary repatriation, apart from attempt by Bascom and Koser. Koser(1993) specifically tries to explain repatriation as the product of refugees comparing the conditions in the host country with that of the conditions in the country of origin. Bascom (1994) on the other hand, proposed that different sections of refugees are motivated by different factors towards their participation in return migration.

Individualist/micro, structural/macro and structuration/micro- macro dynamics is used to explain return migration. Individualist/micro sees the individual the most important entity when it comes to decision making on voluntary repatriation. Structural/macro concerned with structures that are beyond the control of the individual as being paramount in reaching the refugee repatriation decision. An interplay of micro and macro analysis is used in explaining voluntary repatriation and this is probably the best in that it combines element of agency and structure.

Other factors that help explain voluntary repatriation include social network theory, The social network theory postulate that return migrants are people who try to keep a link

with people back home when they are in the host country in order to secure the resources needed to survive in their country of origin. Identity is expressed through the relationship one has with the world. Such relationship can be broken into knowledge one has about himself. Critical consciousness is defined as the process by which people move from unquestioning acceptance of the social order to a critical perspective on it. Agency, refers to one being in a position to define his/her goal and acting on it. The success of a returnee to the country of origin is dependent the resources he/she is able to mobilize and also how long he has been preparing for his return to the country of origin, while living in the host country.

5. Data presentation and analysis

Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses field data from Buduburam refugee camp. It is divided into two sections; section one is about informants background information and the second section is on the specific choices or decisions of the refugees and the related discussions vis-a vis the conceptual framework of the study.

5.1 Section one : Background of informants

This section focuses on the background of the informants: the age of informants, family size, education, employment and length of stay in Ghana.

5.1.1 Age of informants

Table 1. Age Distribution of Informants²⁴

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
15 - 19	1	6.67
20 - 24	3	20
25 - 29	4	26.67
30 - 34	3	20
35 - 39	1	6.67
40 - 44	1	6.67
45 - 49	1	6.67
50 - 60	1	6.67
Total	15	100

Source: fieldwork, 2012

From the table above, about 67% of the respondent fall within the age group of 20 to 34. This age group tend to be the economically active group. According to the life cycle hypothesis productivity increases with age, early in the life cycle and then decreases with age later in the life cycle as human capital depreciation exceeds investment. The age of 15 to 49 is considered to be the productive age (Johnson & Neumark, 1997). Given the time that Liberian refugees started arriving in Ghana, majority of the respondent who have opted not to join the voluntary repatriation may have spent the

²⁴ The refugee population is young about 50% are less than 18years .Female make about 50% of the overall population and they are mostly urbanized. (<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opensslPDFViewer.html?docid=49e479cc0&query=salducci>)

greater part of their life in Ghana. This may also affect their social network and social capital base in Ghana. Also about 67% of the group are in the prime of their youth and this may probably account for their desire to achieve higher status and therefore may wish to stay on. Which is in line with the new economics of labour migration, which posits that people would only return to their country of origin when they have achieved their target for moving abroad (Cassarino, 2004).. Considering their age, all my informants fall within the economically active population. They are in the bracket where one is available to actively participate in the production of goods and services. The people in these category is important, in that they determine the size and structure of a country's work force. Also, it is the age bracket that is used in determining the supply of labour, labour input, and the degree to which the available labour supply is being utilized in the production process of a nation (Husmanns et al,1990).

5.1.2 Educational background of informants

The educational and occupation experience of a refugee affect the job options available to him. This is due to fact that education is regarded as a form of investing in human capital(Lamba, 2008). The educational level of the respondent affected their human capital development and therefore impacted on the options available to them. And this can be understood in that the more one increases his/her education and skills the higher the probability of increasing his livelihood options. Education and training are the most important investment in human capital and the relationship between one level of education and unemployment turn to be strongly inversely related. Also inequality in the education and access to training is positively related to inequality in income (Becker, 1993).

Due to the importance of education, some of the refugees felt staying on and accessing relatively quality education in Ghana would increase their opportunities for better employment when they eventually decide to return to Liberia.

Table 2 : Educational Background of Respondent

Educational background	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary	9	60
Secondary(high school)	4	26.67
Tertiary/university	2	13.33
Total	15	100

Source: fieldwork, 2012

From the table above, just few refugees who are not repatriating have been able to attain higher education. There is an inverse relationship between higher education and the number of refugees attaining it. With the exception of Rose who is currently studying in a private university in Ghana, and Weah who is a part time student in one of the nation's polytechnic, the rest have not been able to make it past secondary school. And this had effect on the livelihood options available to them in Ghana. The other students who are still enrolled in secondary school hope to continue to the university just after secondary school.

5.1.3 Occupation of informants

Although the laws of Ghana grant refugees the right to work, entry into the formal sector of employment is very much protected from foreigners. Immigration laws are also protective of the labor Market. But refugees are allowed to work in the informal sector (Salducci, 2008). though they face stiff competition from the local people who are protective of their interest (Omata, 2012). For these reasons, most refugees end up working in the informal sector in the camp. However, those who were daring enough to venture out were able to have a wider appeal. Among the employed some baked bread, some sold chilled water(pure water), one informant who had completed secondary school was as an interior décor expert as well sold jewelries, one was a mason cum carpenter, one was a trained driver who could not find job so was forced to resort to undertaking menial jobs ,and also assisting his wife in taking care of their three children, one student earned a scholarship from a local NGO to pursue a bachelor's degree in a private university, one woman is married to a Ghanaian with whom she has

one child but had recently separated from him due to pressure from her Ghanaian in-laws.

Table 3. Education and Occupation Distribution of Informants

Pseudonym	Educational level	Occupation
Esther	Senior high school	Interior designer
Weah	polytechnic	Student & groceries shop owner
Anita	Junior high (vocational)	baker
Michael	Junior high school	Driver(unemployed)
Siafa	Senior high	student
Rose	university	student
George	Junior high	-
Roselyn	Senior High	Shop attendant
Linda	Junior high	Hair Dresser
Doe	Senior high school	Carpenter.
Annette	Junior high school	Baker & sell sachet mineralwater
Ken	Vocational	Carpentry cum mason
john	Junior high school	Commercial mobile phone operator
Johnson	Junior high School	Internet Café operator
mark	Junior high school	Construction worker

Source: fieldwork, 2012 From the table above comments it is easy to see that getting well educated increases one's options in terms livelihood strategies available to a former

refugee and that will help in resource mobilization which is essential if one is to get prepared for voluntary repatriation(Bakewell, 2006). The table shows that all the informants with Senior High School education have respectable jobs or are still schooling. Considering their age, all my informants fall within the economically active population.

5.1.4 Household size, marriage status and length of stay

Household is usually organized around the welfare needs of the members; such needs may have social, cultural, psychological and historical perspective (Gardiner, 1997). The social network provided by these nuclear families were very essential as a means of support in times of need. The family can be very essential in the voluntary repatriation decision making (Horst, 2006).

Table. 4 Household size, marriage status and length of stay of informants

Pseudonym	sex	Length of stay in Ghana	Marital status	Number of children	Household size
Esther	F	18	married	1	3
Annette	F	9	widow	3	4
Micheal	M	12	divorced	2	3
Anita	F	19	widow	3	4
Rose	F	21	single	nil	5
Linda	F	15	single	1	2
Weah	M	22	single	nil	1
Ken	M	16	single	nil	4
John	M	12	married	2	4
Joanna	F	14	single	nil	6
Mary	F	15	married	nil	2
Doe	M	22	widower	4	5
George	M	20	single	1	2
Roselyn	F	21	single	nil	5
siafa	F	19	single	nil	4

Source: Field work, 2012

The table above shows a comprehensive data on the demographic attributes of the informants.

The field returns shows that about 60% of the informants arrived in Ghana between 1990 and 1995, 27% between 1996 to 2000. And 13% were born in Ghana, although by the constitution of Ghana they are qualified to be Ghanaians they don't see themselves as Ghanaians but rather Liberians. The age, gender, length of stay in Ghana, affects the social and capital power of refugees (Lamba, 2008: 46). The average length of stay of informants was 17 years. The long period of stay in Ghana means they have been living in Ghana for some time without any assistance from UNHCR. It also means they would have a lot of social network in Ghana that they can fall on for assistance (Lamba, 2008). The marital status of the informants vary. Some are single, some are divorced, others are widowers while others are widows. About 53.3 % of the informants are single. 20% are married and another 20% are widower/widow. And 6.7% divorced. This implies refugees not willing to repatriate can have any kind of marital status. However, majority were single and this could be due to the young ones being optimistic of achieving their goal in Ghana, before thinking about returning which is in line with the new labour economics theory on migration (Cassarino, 2006). Most of the informants were in their youth and had lived in Ghana for a long time. Living in Ghana for long, they would have survival strategies. It is therefore not surprising, they wanted to stay on.

5.2 Section 2

This section discuss the reasons informants gave as informing their decision not to participate in the voluntary repatriate program to Liberia.

5.2.1 Effect of social network

A person can be seen as the product of the interaction between the individual and his/her environment. The environment in this instance, is the social network that one surrounds him/herself with (Meshcherkina, 2000). The social network theory postulate that return migrants are people who try to keep a link with people back home when they are in the host country in order to secure the resources needed to survive in their country of origin(Cassarino, 2004). And these resources can be tangible resources which may refer to financial capital or intangible resources that refers to skills, contacts, relationships, acquaintances.

Social relations potentially mitigate the effect of social and economic structures on the individual contemplating voluntary repatriation (Boyd, 1989; Mescherkina, 2000). The final decision whether to repatriate or not to repatriate lies mostly with the individual. Although there are instances where refugees come under duress to make decision to please some members of his/her social network or risked being ostracized by some members of his social network who seemingly wield so much power over him/her. This may be due to the support they offer them (Horst, 2006).

In the context of the Liberian decision on voluntary repatriation. There were two ways that the social network that one kept could have effect on the decision to repatriate or not.

Social network in Liberia

Information about current state of Liberia, what it takes to survive in Liberia, job issues, health matters, cost of accommodation, safety and other important information could be provided by one's social network in Liberia. Essentially if one had social network in Liberia who could provide not just information, but also assist or provide jobs, accommodation, then it made repatriating an easy decision to make. However, if one did not have much social network in Liberia. Then one may not be willing to participate in the repatriation program.

As Linda stated,

I am in touch with my friends who use to live here in the camp with us but left for Liberia, according to them Liberia is very hard to live now. There are no jobs and things are very expensive now in Liberia.

From Linda, it is clear most Liberian refugees living in Ghana were in some form of contact with either friends, family or others in Liberia that could serve as source of information on Liberia. The information gathered from these social networks would assist them in knowing the precise resource needed to survive in Liberia. The information gathered was used in gauging their preparedness to return to Liberia (Cassarino, 2004).

Social Network in Ghana

Due to the civil war, over 750 000 Liberian were displaced internally and across neighboring countries as refugees (Omata, 2011). Resulting from the movement, some

Liberian had the entire families relocating to other West African countries including Ghana or to other parts of Liberia. Refugees in situation like that were least motivated to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise.

For Annette she has no friends and family in Liberia. Therefore she had not planned to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise has not crossed her mind.

I have nobody in Liberia, all my family relations are now living in Ghana, so if I return to Liberia it would be very difficult for me to get help.

Some of the Liberian refugees having lived in Ghana since 1990, have built a lot of social network in Ghana. Such one also knew how to survive in Ghana given the resources at their disposal, these resources could be tangible and intangible. Related to social network is social capital, which according to Bourdieu(1985) cited in Lesser(2000) refers to all resources both tangible and intangible gathered as a result of having a good network.

The dilemma that the former refugees had to go through before making a decision is in consonance with Koser's (1993) explanation of how refugees reach a decision about voluntary repatriation. That refugees reach a decision whether to repatriate or not to repatriate by comparing conditions in the host country with that of conditions in the country of origin and making a decision that will yield to his/her best interest. In the case of Ghana as a host country of refugees from Liberia the conditions in Ghana are good by Africa standard while in Liberia the economy in just the recent past used to be at the brink of collapse.

5.2.2 Issues on Security²⁵

Security issues are paramount in voluntary repatriation. In that the main reason for refugees fleeing to other West African countries was insecurity. Therefore before voluntary repatriation is carried out the conditions that forced the people to flee should have gone through fundamental changes. So that the fear of persecution would not be there. There should be basic social and political changes in the country which should be profound and enduring (Stein and Cuny, 1994)

²⁵ Whereas Ghana is ranked 50th by the GPI, (2012) Liberia is ranked distant 101 by the same index. Also the same index says there is high level of perceived criminality in Liberia

There are two fundamental ways in which security can tilt the voluntary migration decision. Security at national level and security at personal level.

National security

For the international community, Liberia is peaceful and there is stability enough. Hence the application of the cessation clause of their refugee status²⁶. However, some of the refugees who are not willing to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise do not think so.

This is Anita's idea about peace in Liberia;

As far as I am concern Liberia is not peaceful enough for me, If Liberia is peaceful why is UNMIL still there, Ghana is peaceful do you see any UNMIL here, well others who think Liberia is peaceful enough for them can return but for me it is not peaceful enough for me.

The comment from the respondent shows that individual differences to a large extent account for the choices made by respondent with regards to participation in the voluntary repatriation to Liberia. Whereas, UNHCR see Liberia as peaceful. The same cannot be said of those who chose planned not to participate in the voluntary repatriation program to Liberia. Her notion is that if Liberia was peaceful enough to convince her to voluntarily repatriate to Liberia, there should not be UNMIL. For her, the presence of UNMIL signal a peaceful conditions that cannot be guaranteed and therefore she is not willing to take the risk. Although, UNHCR has a different explanation for the presence of UNMIL in Liberia.

Personal security

For voluntary repatriation to take place. The human right conditions prevailing in the country of origin is vital to ensure that refugees return in Safety and in dignity (Stein & Cuny, 1994). Issues of refugee is inseparable from issues of human right, in that people flee their homes in order to prevent their human right from being abused. Personal insecurity may result from uncertainties about having access to basic needs such as good healthcare, job, accommodation, among others.

²⁶ UNHCR. (2012). Protracted refugee situation in Liberia and Angola to finally end. <http://www.unhcr.org/4fed81049.html> Retrieved 16/04.2013

This is reiterated by Ken;

I am not going to Liberia because I don't have a living place in Liberia, but in the camp I have this room and for now I don't pay rent or anything for it.

Also George recalls that every time he hears news from Liberia it is always not good news.

All that I hear is this person who use to live in the camp and left for Liberia is seriously sick or passed away.

There is the notion of insecurity brought about by inadequate jobs opportunities in Liberia. This has ended up with jobless youths who are prone to be involved in vices. According to Koser and Gent (2006), refugees have “staged” decision making the first is reactive and the second is proactive. The reactive stage is very important and basic, for instance if one sense there is no peace or security enough in the country of origin. This segment of the decision making process is therefore in response to situation in the host country. The proactive stage looks at secondary issues such the economy, and the incentives to return offered them to do so.

As Doe emphasized; *I am not sure Liberia can provide me with the security I need; In terms of job and protection. How can people be happy if they can't find job? If the young guys can't get job then they are likely to commit crime so for me this is no time to return to liberia.it is possible for you to step out and get attacked by these young men who don't have jobs.*

For Doe returning to Liberia has got nothing to do with being patriotic or not. He emphasized on his security that cannot be assured by the state, because there are too many young men without jobs. So even if you have job you are also not totally safe either. Returning to Liberia will meant that he was willing to compromise on his personal security which he was not willing to do.

5.2.3 Socio – Economic considerations

The success of a return to the country of origin is dependent on the resources one is able to mobilize, while living in the host country and preparedness of the refugee to return to the country of origin (Cassarino, 2004). Resource mobilization include both

tangible and intangible resource as well as social capital. And preparedness refers to the willingness and readiness of the refugee to return to the country of origin. It also includes the information that he has been able to gather about the country of origin (Cassarino, 2004; Van Hear, 2004). For return to be a success the resource mobilized and the preparedness of the refugee should be very high (Cassarino, 2004).

Some of the challenges that hindered refugees from participating in the voluntary repatriation program to Liberia include the following;

Accommodation problems in Liberia

Most of the respondent felt they would likely face problem with accommodation, since they don't have anybody in Liberia to support them. Property rights continues to be one of the intriguing factors that hinders refugees from participating in voluntary repatriation. On 26th August 1998, UN sub - commission on prevention of discrimination and protection of minority adopted resolution 98/26 called *housing and properties restitution in the context of return of refugees and internally displaced persons*. This required that in making the peace agreement the right of refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their home in safety and security should be assured²⁷. And therefore where refugees sense this need has not been taken care of they become hesitant to participate in voluntary repatriation

I know too many people who left for Liberia and have since returned to Ghana, and what they say is always the same. Liberia no jobs, everything is expensive and life is difficult.

Accommodation for a single room unit in Monrovia may cost about \$20 a month which is pretty expensive. Given the resources refugees have at their disposal (Omata, 2011: 7).

Unfavorable economic opportunities in Ghana

The structural approach to return migration posit that the individuals decision to return to his country of origin is a factor of the social, economic and political environment that he finds himself in (Bakewell, 1996). The structural approach to return migration is based on the expectations of the potential returnee given the resources he has been able to gather and the reality of the economic and social conditions prevailing in the country

²⁷ Economic and social council E/CN. 4/sub.2/Res/1998.26/26 August 1998. Housing and Property Restitution in the context of return of refugees and internally displaced persons – Sub- Commission Resolution 1998/26

of origin. Based on these expectation of potential returnees, Cerase (1974) classified returnees into four different categories of people.

Among these classifications, there is a group that would return to their country of origin only when they have achieved their target for staying abroad. So, where the prevailing environment in the host country does not allow refugees to achieve their aims for staying abroad, then they are likely to defer returning to their country of origin (Cerese, 1974).

I am a trained driver but no Ghanaian car owner will trust me enough to give me his car to work with.

In Ghana nobody finds job for you, you have to find job on your own job and even a lot of Ghanaians can't find job.

The economic situation in Ghana makes it difficult for foreigners, especially those from other West African countries to be gainfully employed. The economic situation in Ghana has not favored the Liberian refugees in Ghana (Omata, 2012). The government and the citizens have negative perception of refugees. Refugees are associated with insecurity, crime, and violence and also are seen as treat to national cohesion and employment (loescher & Milner,2005)

As Michael stated ; *I had training program in electrical which was organized by UNHCR, but after the training program I could not put it to use so I ended up doing menial jobs for people to help feed my family.*

A combination of unfavorable economic situation, unreliable social network in Ghana, diminishing hospitality from the host communities has ended up making living in Ghana a bit of a challenge for the Liberian refugees living in Buduburam camp (Hardgrove, 2009; Dick, 2002a) .Which has ended up hindering their ability to gather resources and prepare for voluntary repatriation to Liberia. Despite some economic opportunities as well as opportunities for self-advancement that may be prevalent in Ghana that may not necessarily be so in Liberia. Carrying the identity as a refugee in a host country has its own set back. Refugees are labeled as “vulnerable victims” or “cunning crooks” (Horst, 2006). Refugee status has been criminalized with agencies and government finding way to minimize people of having the status whereas refugees also finds means to have the status, this sometimes creates animosity towards the refugees making life in their host count a bit more difficult(Zetter, 2007).

Economic resource unpreparedness of refugee for repatriation

Critical consciousness from the angle of Freire (1974) shows that one can integrate into the local community by adapting to the dictates of the local community, while having the critical capacity to make choices, such a person becomes subject rather than a passive object. Also critical transitive consciousness is characterized by in-depth interpretation of problems: rejecting passiveness, advocating dialogue, open mindedness, and soundness of argument. Change in economic circumstance may lead to one becoming critically aware. Most informants were influenced by the inadequate economic resource they had at their disposal in reaching decision not to repatriate.

Mark who is a construction worker made this comment:

There is the expectation in Liberia that if you are returning from Ghana, you are well educated and well off therefore you are likely to get unnecessary attention which makes you a bit insecure. But here I am, I have nothing so how can I go back? If I go to Liberia right now people will look at me and say he was in Ghana but he could not do anything with his life. So I want to get job and save some money so that if I return I would open my own business. I don't want to return and be an object of ridicule.

Identity is expressed through the relationship one has with the world. Such relationship can be broken into knowledge one has about himself. Secondly, the element of self-action which regards motivation one has in terms of what s/he can achieve, Then, there is the third component which is about how others recognize you, and allows you to make the claims you make about yourself. This acceptance is important if one is to achieve one's goal. These concepts allow one to recognize his/her attributes and others that have similar attributes leading to group action (Chryssochoou, 2003).

The expectation people in Liberia have about refugees returning from Ghana is that they should be well educated and be affluent. Therefore refugees especially the youth who

are expected to be in that category, but are not able to do so. Find it difficult to voluntarily repatriate to Liberia for fear they would become object of ridicule.

Michael said

I had training in electrical from UNHCR but after the training I could not put it to use. So I had to turn to doing menial jobs for people, to support my wife and three children, but the good thing, there was a white man here who placed my children on people with special needs so we still receive food ration and other support for the children and that has help us a lot. But I am hoping things will get better.

Although Michael had got no reliable source of income, staying in Ghana meant part of the burden of taking care of his children had been taken off and therefore thought he was better off staying in Ghana rather than returning to Liberia.

In the case of voluntary repatriation to Liberia. Although, the demographic constituent of the camp is homogenous in that almost all the residents are Liberians. Some have chosen not to voluntarily repatriate to Liberia since they think it is not in their best interest irrespective of the decision made by others. They considered what they would get in Ghana as against what awaits them in Liberia, before reaching a decision. Which agrees with Kosers (1993) theory on voluntary repatriation. The identities each refugee has of himself was important in reaching the decision. Further a combination of inadequate economic opportunities, discrimination, low level of education had made it difficult for the refugees to achieve their goals (Salducci, 2006; Omata, 2011; Agblorti, 1997).

5.2.4 Opportunities for self-advancement

Bascom (1994) proposed that different sections of refugees are motivated by different factors towards their participation in refugee repatriation. And his model was based on De Jong and Fawcett's value expectancy model. The value expectancy model involves rating set of values or goals which are deemed to be of importance to the migrant after that one measure expectations of achieving these goals in specific locations, then using the formula $V_i E_i$ to obtain a place - specific attraction score which is then used in predicting migrant intention or likely behavior (De Jong et al, 1983). Koser (1993) tries to explain voluntary repatriation as the product of refugees comparing the conditions in the host country with that of the conditions in the country of origin and making a

decision that will be in their best interest. And out of Cerase (1974) classifications of groups that return to their country of origin. The return of innovation category; refers to group that usually return to their country of origin with the vision of implementing all the skills and using all the means they have at their disposal to make an impact in their country of origin.

Based on these theories one can easily capture behavior of Liberian refugees with respect to their unwillingness to participation in voluntary repatriation.

Opportunity for better education

Among the youths, prime reason for staying on is to have the opportunity to access better education. Ghana can boast of numerous private and public universities, polytechnics and other tertiary institution that the former refugees plan to take advantage off. Refugees that opt for local integration would be treated like Ghanaians, when they attend schools and universities in Ghana. They would therefore not be required to pay foreign students fees but rather local students fees which is highly subsidized (GRB, 2012)²⁸.

Weah mentioned that;

My aim is to have a business diploma from the polytechnic and try and do business across West Africa, so that I don't necessarily have to be in Liberia to be successful. Right now, if I return to Liberia what am I going to do?

Rose made this comment about her future.

Although we were [referring to twin sister Roselyn] born in Ghana, we are Liberians. I hope to complete my degree and then find a job so I can save some money and after some time go back to Liberia.

From Rose and Weah's comments, although there is call for Liberian abroad to return home to help rebuild Liberia. And also, there is nowhere like home. These words are easily heard at the camp to encourage people to return, but most refugees are not agreeing to it. This is because they have experienced a new life in Ghana and have enough information about the realities in Liberia. Therefore they have a standard to compare to Liberia and make a choice. Moreover, they are not under pressure to leave

²⁸ Interview with program coordinator of GRB

Ghana. It is easy for former Liberian refugees to compare conditions in Ghana and conditions in Liberia and put their personal interest ahead of the collective interest. Helping rebuild Liberia will not answer their immediate need of being able to develop themselves and have a relatively better life.

Using Bascom(1994) explanation of voluntary repatriation. It is easy to see that the respondents value education highly, and that the probability of having better education is higher in Ghana than it is in Liberia and they are therefore ready to defy the call to return to Liberia in order to pursue better education in Ghana. Bascom proposed that different refugees have different target and values which are of importance to them. His model was based on De Jong and Fawcett's value expectancy model .The value expectancy model involves rating set of values or goals which are deemed to be of importance to the migrant, after that one measure expectations of achieving these goals in specific locations, then using the formula $\sum V_i.E_i$ to obtain a place - specific attraction score which is then used in predicting migrant intention or likely behavior (De Jong et al, 1983).The study of Bascom demonstrates that different demographic group respond to voluntary refugee repatriation differently and shows that the individual agency factor should not be discounted in making refugee repatriation decision

No surprises, we have life in Ghana

Livelihood according Chambers and Conway (1992) refers to capabilities, assets and activities required to make a living. The activities that refugees in the camp undertake to make a living varies, some are involved in food vending, hair dressing/hair plaiting, trading, dress making, baking. Most of the informants that I interviewed were employed in the informal sector. This may be due to the level of education. Most of the women in the study have had some level of training with the UNHCR organized training program in the Camp. The level of education naturally affected their options in getting formally employed, which also affected their human capital development and their earnings.

For instance Annette who had lived in the camp since 1999 and a baker had this to say ;

I am comfortable with life in Ghana, since 1999 that I came to Ghana with my children, I have had no problem with anybody in Ghana, I don't go troubling anybody so nobody has troubled me.

Anita who is bent on providing a better future for her children has not had it smooth sailing in Ghana.

Life in Ghana is not easy, when you go to the market because you are Liberian you buy things at a higher price, when you go to the hospital you pay more for your medicine, my daughter has been treated badly in school. For example, her teacher accused her of being a bad influence on the Ghanaian students and she was also accused of being lazy and not being willing to study. But I have decided to stay in Ghana and ignore all these problems because of what I went through in Liberia before coming to Ghana. Also now, I don't have anybody in Liberia.

Although Linda know it's not being easy in Ghana she was still thankful and willing to stay.

Life is not easy but at least, by God's grace it is better than others. The money I earn from plaiting hair is enough to support me.

Despite the challenges of living in Ghana, through hard work, some refugees have been able to set up businesses, some are in tertiary institution and some refugees even own houses in Ghana. So for such refugees, who were doing quite well in Ghana, going back to Liberia would be a setback. And it would also mean they were going to start all over again, amidst the uncertainties in Liberia. Whereas in Ghana, they will not have any surprises, hence their decision to stay on and not get involved with the voluntary repatriation to Liberia.

.
Annette comment;

Since I came to live in the camp, I have never been supported by UNHCR apart from sanitary pads that they sometimes share to all women. I have been supporting my children through my own effort. I did not join their free training program because by the time they started their program, I had already paid to have the program elsewhere.

These respondent showed that their ultimate goal is to be able to provide for their children and other dependents and to a large extent they have been able to do this without assistance of UNHCR and therefore are optimistic of continuing to do so in Ghana. From these three responses one can see that although life is not easy for the refugee in attempting to live in Ghana, there is a sense of appreciativeness for what they get. Now, all the people living in the camp, explicitly understand that there would be

nothing like third country settlement to North America or Western Europe (GRB, 2012)²⁹. The only option they have is to live in Ghana or return to Liberia. And given the information they have about Liberia and their own personal circumstance. They are prepared to stay on in Ghana. What beats imagination according to Omata (2012) although the economic circumstance in Ghana has not been favorable towards the refugees they are not willing to repatriate.

Making it easy to achieve future goals

Refugees once they settle in the host country, behave just like economic migrant (Kunz, 1973; Riddle & Buckley, 1998)). If they think conditions are better in the host country compared to their country of origin they would not voluntarily repatriate to the country of origin (koser, 1993). All parents wanted to fulfill their duties as family heads by being in a position to ensure the wellbeing of their dependent, students wanted to have the opportunity to be well educated, refugees like economic migrants wanted to be where they can achieve what they value highly (Bascom, 1994). However, the information that they have about life in Liberia seems to be the turn off factor. The economic situation in Liberia would make it difficult for them to fulfill their role as a family head, therefore returning to Liberia has become tricky issue. Meanwhile, if they chose to stay in Ghana. Achieving their future goals would become less difficult. As Cerase (1974) noted, that when people move abroad they would return to their country of origin, if they achieve their goal or if they consider their stay as failure. Therefore the refugees who want to stay are optimistic that they can achieve their targets in Ghana.

Also Weah who is enrolled in the polytechnic and owns a grocery shop had this comment;

The government and politician in Liberia are not doing enough to empower the private sector. For example, there is electricity only in small part of Monrovia. And I am from Buchanna, Grand Bassa County. So I think that if I return to Liberia right now. It will slow my progress in life. I wish to established myself in Ghana, so that latter I can transfer some to Liberia. I hope by the time I decide to return to Liberia the necessary structures would have been put in place for the private sector to thrive.

²⁹ Interview with program coordinator of GRB

Anita stated;

Before the war I lived with my husband and children and we were supportive of each other but now things are quite different, I am single parent I need to support my children alone and I don't have anybody in Liberia to support me that is why I have decided to stay in Ghana.

As Anita stated making sure that her children have good education is her top priority. And staying in Ghana will make it easier for her to achieve that target than returning to Liberia.

John stated;

When I left Liberia, first, I went to Cote D'Ivoire, then to Mali but because I could not speak French I decided to travel to Ghana. So I came to Ghana for better opportunities.

The informants had a more positive outlook on being successful in Ghana than in Liberia, hence their decision to stay on. The new economics of labor migration does not see return migration as an act of desperation but rather a strategy to ensure that one achieve all his aims while living abroad before returning home and this may include taking advantage of wage differentials between his country of origin and the host country or due to slow growth of the economy of the country of origin (stark, 1996).

5.2.5 Painful memories

Longing for what they left behind

Prior to the civil war, Liberians had managed to live a normal life just like any other sub-Saharan African country. Although, there were cleavages among the tribes they managed to accommodate each other (Ellis, 1999). Most people interviewed, who were matured enough to remember life in Liberia before the war, saw their identities as resulting from the years in Liberia before sojourning in Ghana. Some of the informants were married and were living with their husband and children and life was normal (Boas, 2005; Ellis, 1999). All the informants recounted that life before the war was not like living in paradise, but at least life was normal they lived with their families who were providing them with all that the family needed and they also worked to support the family.

As the following informants recounts

Doe had this to say;

Life was very good for me because my family is directly related to Samuel Doe, I had respectable position in the government.

According to Anita by Liberia standard she was in the middle class.

Before the war my husband worked at foreign affairs as well as the church. I also sold used clothing. We had our honeymoon in Johannesburg, South Africa. Life was really good for me.

Although, the media has created a pessimistic and negative reportage of Liberia as a country ravaged by war, with economy in shambles, most former Liberian refugees had good memories of Liberia before the war and the 'lost' family life. For most of the informants, who were not willing to participate in the voluntary repatriation program to Liberia, there was a longing for what they had lost and therefore could not reconcile with the fact that they were returning to Liberia with nothing. And if they return, they are going to start a totally new life. This agrees with Markovitz (1995: 144-145) assertion that 'refugees long to be reunited with their home territory – their house, their kitchen, their garden even their gritty street- for it is this place that grounds their identification that activates their culture and gives substantive meaning to their lives'.

Psychological trauma associated with war violence

Although some of the refugees had overcome the wanton killings and other barbaric acts they witnessed during the civil war, there were other informants who had picturesque images of the events so much that they did not wish to return to Liberia. They felt they had moved on and wished not to return to any place associated with the events. As it is illustrated by these comments.

Doe says:

Everyone in the camp is in a different circumstance, for me what I passed through in Liberia before making it to Ghana is totally different from the others and therefore I cannot just follow along and go to Liberia. There are some who are going to Liberia because they have people in Liberia who will help them once they get there. But for me I have no one there so I can't go, I prefer to stay here.

Annette made this comment

During the war my husband was taken away and they were after me so I escaped to Cote d'Ivoire, but in Cote d'Ivoire I met one of the people who came for my husband, so I decided to come to Ghana. I know they are still there, so I can't go back.

The situation that led to some Liberian refugee fleeing Liberia varies there are some of the refugees who were left traumatized by the war and were therefore not willing to return to Liberia.

5.2.6 The case of highly integrated refugees

Traditionally, integration is measured based on the level of participation of refugees in the local economy, how well one is able to master the local language, and also the residential pattern of refugees in the host community (Peach, 2006). There is a growing body of literature that postulate that spatial location of the minority, in this instance the Liberian refugees relative to the host community define the level of integration, the notion is that if the refugees do not interact with host because they live apart it limit interaction (ibid). However this argument has been criticized on the grounds that, it does not examine the minority experience and understanding of integration (Erhkamp, 2006 ; Phillips et al, 2007). Nagel and Staeheli(2008) argues that integration has got to do more with the understanding minorities have about their membership in the place they work, live, and raise families.

For Roselyn integrating meant;

Initially when I started schooling it was very difficult for me because although the official language in Ghana is English, sometimes some of the teachers preferred to speak Twi³⁰ when they are teaching and if I say I don't understand, they always respond that they can't help me. So I forced myself to learn Twi since then things have become a bit easier for me.

After schooling in Ghana and learning the local language which is most popular language in Ghana. Roselyn felt integrated although she was living at the camp. This to a large extent confirms the notion that you don't strictly need to reside with the majority to be integrated into the community that integration has got to do with understanding one has in relation to being a member of the community Staeheli (2008).

³⁰ Twi is the language of the Akan ethnic Group. The Akans constitute about 49% of population of Ghana. Twi is widely spoken by non-Akans as well.

Esther is a Liberian married to a Ghanaian

Although I was born in Liberia, I am married to a Ghanaian and I have one child with him, we were living together for a while before we got separated because of issues with the in – laws. So I decided to move back to the camp, but because of my son we are still in touch regularly.

In Africa refugees self-integrate themselves in the local economy without any assistance from the authorities. For instance Angola refugees integrated into the rural villages in Zambia without any assistance from the authorities (Bakewell, 2000). Some of the informants plan not to go back to their country of origin. No doubt sometimes people do change their mind as the conditions in the country of origin get better. A chief in the local village is reported to have said that no one should be called a refugee (ibid).

Siafa came to Ghana very young.

I came to Ghana when I was one year old, so I know little about Liberia, I am told before the war it was peaceful and good that is all I know. I have never been to Liberia. But may be one day I would go there for a visit and return.

With Siafa all she knows as home is Ghana. That is where she has built her life therefore returning to Liberia permanently is not very important to her. This calls to question the question of return to home, although Siafa sees herself as a Liberian. Liberia does not appear to be home for her.

Home can mean more than just the physical structure, according to Black the concept of home can be linked to identity, memory, territory and place (2002). Home can be made ,re-made , it can constantly be reinterpreted or renegotiated just like identity (ibid). Also as Follilove (1996) see home , it can mean the accumulation of relationships, networks and memories over time. But UNHCR, sees home in relationship to voluntary repatriation as simply as the place of origin before the war (Office of the High Representative, 1996). Therefore for some respondent going back to Liberia, they would not get what they lost and were therefore reluctant to go back also those who did not feel attached to Liberia were also reluctant to go back. The level of integration of some Liberian refugees into the local economy means they were better off being in Ghana than returning to Liberia.

5.2.7 Demotivating voluntary repatriation package

The repatriation exercise involved screening and counseling sections in the UNHCR office at the camp. After this section prospective returnees were given date and time of departure to Liberia. At the point of departure each adult was given \$350 and \$150 for a minor as transitional stipend. The exercise was scheduled to last from July till the end of September (UNHCR, Ghana, 2012)³¹.

Some of the challenges that cropped up during the exercise included the complains about insufficient travel grant, inadequate baggage allowance of 30kg per person, and also some refugees who initially had ID number forfeited the ID when they missed out on verification exercise carried out in their absence. But according to UNHCR, Ghana (2012) officials, in organizing the voluntary repatriation exercise, arrangements were not made to transport the bulk assets of refugees because in the past voluntary repatriation exercise where UNHCR chartered a ship to carry such assets patronage of the exercise was very low and the organization ended up incurring unnecessary expenses (ibid, 2012).

Unrealistic transit allowance

As Weah said in an interview,

I am not thinking about returning to Liberia but I don't think the money being given is enough and also the luggage that one is allowed to travel with is not enough only 30kg. We are talking about people who have been living here for over twenty years and you allow only 30kg.

Mark had this to say

As I speak there are people who wanted to go back to Liberia but could not go because they do not have the means of transport, but there are some of them who were registered refugees but missed out on one of the registration updating exercise and therefore had their name cancelled from the list so cannot now be repatriated.

Mark also said;

Because UNHCR did not make arrangement to transport the properties of the repatriate to Liberia, some had to sell their properties very cheap because they did not have the

³¹ Interview with UNHCR Ghana Protection Associate.

means to transport it to Liberia or had to pay expensive price to privately organized transport arrangement in order for their properties to be conveyed to Liberia.

The amount of money given to refugees was not so much for most of the informants considering that the economic situation, and other factors worked against refugees from making enough money.

No consideration of individual circumstance

Doe also mentions

i heard about the repatriation package but for me it is not motivation enough, I have lived in Ghana for more than 20 years, and the program allows one to carry only 30kg or one luggage along if one decide to participate in the program. I think it is not right. Anyway, for me, its not even about the luggage. My problem is how do I start life if I get there. From what I hear life is not easy there.

The policy adopted by UNHCR not to transport the bulk assets of the returnees did not serve as incentive for the refugees since some of them owned properties that could have been used to make a living in Liberia but because of the size were forced to sell them very cheap. Which did not serve as incentive for others.

Issues of refugees that missed out on verification exercise

Annette predicament

I live in the camp with my four children who came to Ghana in 2001 with their uncle but because all my children were in Ghana I decided to join them from Liberia in 2004 but unfortunately when I arrived I was told the registration exercise for refugees is over. But because all my children had ID numbers when I spoke to the UNHCR officers during the recent registration exercise, they asked me to wait till the registration is over.

Esther narrated his ordeal

When the verification exercise was going on, my son was with his father at Tema but before I could get him the verification exercise had come to an end. So he is no more recognized as a refugee.

The refugee verification exercise in the absence of some former refugees. Those who were not able to confirm their presence during the verification exercise lost their status as refugees and were therefore not qualified to participate in the voluntary repatriation

exercise. Although some of the informants had genuine reason for missing it did not make any difference to UNHCR.

Wild expectation from local integration

The Ghana Refugee Board represents the government of Ghana in matters relating to refugees in Ghana and have oversight responsibility over the Buduburam Refugee Camp. In Relation to the voluntary repatriation exercise GRB collaborated with the UNHCR as the main organizers to make the exercise take place as scheduled. The refugee board is responsible for assisting refugees with matters that has got to do with their stay in Ghana.

I heard they will build or rent houses and find job for those who chose local integration just like they have done in other repatriation programs in other parts of Africa.

The delay in giving out information about the content of the local integration program did not do any favors to the participation in the voluntary repatriation program. People adopted a “wait and see” attitude. They did not want to rue not opting for local integration. At least they knew the content of the voluntary repatriation program which they described as not motivating enough.

The problems that engulfed the voluntary repatriation exercise affirmed the notion that UNHCR which has the primary mandate to protect refugees seems to have it's focus shifted to rather encouraging repatriation at the earliest possible time and this has been encouraged even in times when the human right conditions in the country of origin is not good enough to encourage and promote repatriation (Takahashi, 1997).

5.2.8 Putting personal interest ahead of collective interest

Whereas refugees just don't look at just returning to their country of origin, but how they are going to face the daily realities of economic life in a failed state that is in the process of rebuilding. UNHCR policies seems to be directed toward getting refugees into their country of origin, for a government that is grappling with inadequacy of resource to assist them (Omata, 2012). For instance, during the Liberian civil, little sign of peace in Liberia led to UNHCR advocating for repatriation to Liberia only for the

war to resurface in Liberia, forcing Liberians to flee again³². Also, In 2008, when UNHCR was encouraging Liberian refugees to return to their country of origin. A policy of doling out \$100 for each adult and \$50 for each minor that returned to Liberia was kicked against by the refugees leading to demonstration, arrest and deportation of some of the refugees. And just after the incident, voluntary repatriation exercise was carried out leading to massive response from the refugees (Esuman- Johnson, 2011).

Most international relations literature on refugees sees UNHCR as doing the bidding of it's sponsors since it relies on donor nations to support its activities, but according to Loescher (2001) that notion is rather simplistic but asserts that UNHCR considers state interest but is largely independent in its activities.

Siafa made this comment ;

Now I am in secondary school, I am hoping after secondary school I would be lucky to get a job to assist my mother pay my fees at the university, so I can make some money to enable me return to Liberia.

John's view on returning to Liberia:

For me if I go back to Liberia there is nobody to assist me, I have nobody there. How long can I depend on friends to take me in? I need to make money before I return.

From the perspective of the informants, voluntary repatriation should not lead to a loss in their standard of living. Therefore where prospective repatriate sense that voluntary repatriating will lead to hardship then they were likely to use their agency and critical consciousness in reaching a decision that would be in their best interest. Irrespective of UNHCR promoting voluntary repatriation to Liberia. Refugees having mastery of their environment will put their interest first. In this vein, policies made that does seek to understand or input the refugees realistic needs and aspiration has the potential of not being a success among the refugees. Therefore for the refugees to respond to the voluntary repatriation, the resources they have at their disposal as well as the reality of conditions in the country of origin should be equal or favorable (Cerase, 1974).

³²Resulting from the 1993 peace accord, as the war seemed to be improving, 7000 refugees left Buduburam camp for Liberia leaving 13 000 behind, only for the war to escalate again in September 1994 as a result of fighting between guerilla splinter groups (Nnoma, 1997).

5.2.9 Critical consciousness and agency of refugee at work³³

Kabeer (2001) looks at critical consciousness as the ability of one not accepting socially defined status quo but rather being critical about it, and making a decision that will be in his best interest by exploring all options available to him/her. From Kabeer's perspective being critically conscious has got to do with one's ability to wrestle power from the structures. So that one will not be under duress to conform to a norm, but rather one is able to apply his/her agency to put his personal interest first by exploring all alternatives at his disposal. Also from the perspective of Pitner and Sakamoto (2005) critical consciousness has got to do with examining our motives continually as well as examining the opposing motives as well and making a decision that will yield to our benefit.

The media and academic literature usually depict refugees as "vulnerable victims" or "cunning crooks" and this has the unintended consequence of branding all individuals as having same attributes although that is never the case (Horst, 2006). But refugees are not passive and tend to act in a manner that will yield maximum benefit for them. And in so doing, one will be in a position to define his/her goal and act on it. Liberian refugees after years of living in Ghana and acquiring mastery of their environment know what they want. Agency of the refugee is usually associated with the decision making of the refugee. Agency can take various forms it can be through bargaining and negotiation, deception and manipulation, subversion and resistance, reflection and analysis (Kabeer, 1999). Agency can be positive or negative, in the positive sense, it refers to the ability for one to define what he wants and working towards it despite opposition. In the negative sense it refers to the ability of an entity to override the agency of another (ibid).

Siafa moved to Ghana when she was only a year old.

Yes they are saying Liberia is peaceful and that people should come back home, but how can I go back home with nothing when I have built my life here {Ghana} at least I have to stay and make something before I go back home.

Siafa does not see peace in Liberia as sufficient condition for her to voluntarily repatriation to Liberia. For her, to voluntarily repatriate to Liberia she need to be prepared resource wise. As Cassarino (2004) put it, the probability of success in

³³ Liberia was ranked as the 2nd most miserable country in the world by the world factbook. (CIA, 2013). In 2013, Liberia had Unemployment of 85%,. <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/the-25-most-miserable-places-in-the-world-192748535.html?page=all>, retrieved 25.05.2013

repatriation is based on the resources the potential returnee had been able to acquire while in the host country. And his readiness and willingness to return. And by resource, he refers to both tangible and intangible resource which include; social capital and social network needed by one in order to successfully return to Liberia.

The field returns showed that the former Liberian refugees living in the camp were not willing to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise because returning to Liberia at that material time was not in their best interest.

George also adds:

Those returning to Liberia knows why they are returning. Some of these people have their people in the government and have assured them of jobs that is why they are happy to return. For me my situation is different I don't have anybody who will assist me if I get there. Since I came to Ghana I have learnt masonry and carpentry I am hoping to save some money, so that when I finally decide to return to Liberia I can open a block factory.

George sees those returning to Liberia as seeking their personal interest in that they may have social network in Liberia that may be more useful to them in terms of assisting in livelihood than they have in Ghana. And this agrees with one out of the five categorization of reasons why people would return to their country of origin by Cerase (1974). For Cerase among the many reasons why people would return to their country of origin is, when they see their stay abroad as a failure in that they have not been able to achieve their proposed target for staying abroad. Then they would prefer to return to their country of origin.

Further, it is also in line with Koser (1993) thought that people would only make a return to their country of origin when they compare conditions in the host country with that of conditions in the country of origin. Then decide whether to voluntarily repatriate to their country of origin or not. Such individual are able to gather information provided them by international agencies, the various governments, family and friends and others in his social network. Such information becomes very vital in making decision to voluntarily repatriate or not. In that, one can have a good idea about the actual situation in the country of origin before making a decision (Koser, 1997). So, once one has decided to voluntarily repatriate, then it assumed that it would be in his personal interest. Since all former refugees have the option to locally integrate in Ghana.

Refugees are assumed to have better information about their country of origin than the host country and the expatriates and therefore see their choice as rational decision. So

for voluntary repatriation to be encouraged. It is necessary for profound and enduring social and political changes to be made in the country of origin and such changes relayed to the refugees in order for them to make rational decision of participating in the voluntary repatriation (Stein and Cuny, 1994). According to Stein and Cuny (1994), refugees would make rational choices among unsatisfactory alternatives and will go for an option that gives them security and some element of control over their lives. Refugees therefore have reason and purpose for their choice which is directed towards achieving a specific goal. Therefore those who think it will not be in their personal interest to return chose to stay on in Ghana and ignore the voluntary repatriation program.

5.3 Summary

The chapter focused on presenting and analyzing the returns from the field research conducted at Buduburam refugee camp. The voluntary repatriation program carried out by UNHCR seems to have as its main standard to ascertain the need for voluntary repatriation as the existence of peace in Liberia. The people relished the livelihood they had prior to the war and therefore returning to peaceful Liberia without the associated economic conditions makes a whole lot of difference to the refugees. Whereas, the former refugees living in the camp seems to look beyond the peace in Liberia and rather concentrate on the economic conditions pertaining in Liberia. UNHCR uses peaceful conditions in Liberia as the main standard for sanctioning voluntary repatriation (Omata, 2012).

Secondly, the whole process of addressing protracted refugee situation seems to be handled in a top – down process by UNHCR and its partner organizations. Refugees, who the policies are meant for tend to have little input into the process. Therefore the repatriation process ends up not addressing the concerns of the refugees that have a major stake in the process of voluntary repatriation. The informants to the study demonstrated that although there is relative peace in Liberia, the economic situation is not attracting enough. For example joblessness rate is high, lack of availability of utilities, difficulty in securing decent accommodation, uncertainty about life in general are some of the drawbacks that a prospective repatriate must contemplate with. Further, the respondent showed that some policies that were implemented during the voluntary repatriation were massive disincentive for one contemplating voluntary repatriation. For example the 30kg baggage allowance per person served as huge disincentive. Also the

transitional grant was considered insufficient given the current cost of accommodation in Liberia.

So, Liberian refugees having lived in Ghana for a long time and acquiring mastery over their environment, navigated around all the unfavorable conditions surrounding the voluntary repatriation exercise. The informants were unwilling to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise. In order to do so, the informants resorted to means such as agency which refers to the ability of the refugee to define his goal and act on it, for instance although refugees were seriously encouraged to repatriate to Liberia they did not readily agreed to do so. The respondent examined their personal circumstance critically and using their agency made a decision that they felt would be in their best interest. Some of the refugees wanted to ensure that, they would be able to secure better education for their children and others were born in Ghana, so Ghana feels like home for them. Hence the need to amass enough economic resources so that at the right time they can return to Liberia. The informants are willing to return, but they think the time is not right since they have not achieved their various aims (Cerese, 1974; Cassarino, 2004).

6. Summary and concluding remarks

The study attempts to highlight the reasons why former Liberian refugees living in Buduburam refugee camp failed to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. It is about the views of a group of refugees on a repatriation exercise. It interviewed fifteen former refugees at Buduburam refugee camp for information.

The study argues that, Liberian refugees in reaching a decision not to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. Consider multiple of factors bothering on their personal circumstance in terms of resource at their disposal, the content of the voluntary repatriation package, circumstance in Ghana, the circumstance prevailing in Liberia, where it would be easier to achieve their goals in Life. And finally made a decision to show mastery of their environment by maneuvering around constraining structures to their best interest.

In order to highlight what goes into refugee decision making about voluntary repatriation. Voluntary repatriation decision making is seen from the perspective of individual (micro) decision making and structural (macro) decision making. There is also a third perspective that involves the interplay of micro and macro factors or structuration level of analysis. The individualist(micro) level of decision making involves an individual considering his/her options and making choices that would potentially yield beneficial outcomes. This means that the individual draw upon personal resources such as social network, and knowledge of immediate surroundings to make decisions. Further, structural (macro) level decision making is about policies and issues that refugees have no control over. Therefore given the constraining structural conditions imposed on refugee by UNHCR, Government of Ghana and Liberia. Refugees consider their options and go ahead to make decisions vis-à-vis on-going voluntary repatriation programs

6.1 Findings

The field returns show that peace isn't enough, although majority of the informant have heard through their friends, and other contacts that Liberia is relatively peaceful, returning to Liberia for the informants was not simply based on peaceful conditions. Some of the factors that highlight their choice not to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia included;

Socio-economic considerations

According to the informants before the outbreak of the war, Liberia was peaceful and living conditions were good too. They therefore wanted to stay in Ghana until sufficient resources have been amassed for a decent life in Liberia. However, living in Ghana for a long time has had its own consequences. The economic conditions in Ghana in recent times have not favored the Liberians refugees. After staying in Ghana for a long time, it appeared the refugees had overstayed their welcome leading to host nation fatigue. So, the initial hospitalities that were shown to the Liberian refugees by the Ghanaian community were no more. Also, the labour laws of Ghana, are very discriminatory against foreigners especially those from other West African countries. Further, from 2004, UNHCR started withdrawing all humanitarian assistance to the refugees. Due to these factors living in Ghana had become a challenge. And this had affected their ability to make money and save some resources. Hence, the unwillingness of refugees to participate in the voluntary repatriation program. Most of the informant see having enough resources as necessary in order to return to live independently in Liberia and not be a burden on family and friends.

Social network

Also related to the environment prevailing in Ghana that did not allow refugees to gather enough resources, was the fact that refugees may need support in order to survive the initial stages of their stay in Liberia. Therefore in the case where one did not have enough social network in Liberia, that is to say; friends, family relations, reliable and influential contacts in Liberia. Then one may find it challenging to survive the initial stages of their stay which was a turn off factor. There were some of the refugees that repatriated earlier to Liberia but had to return to Ghana because they were not able to cope with the prevailing conditions in Liberia which served as lessons for the others.

There were some categories of refugees that due to the war did not have enough family relations, friends and other social contacts in Liberia making voluntary repatriation unattractive. On the other hand, there were some refugees who due to the war found themselves in a situation where all their close relations and friends have relocated to Ghana. Such refugees were not interested at all in the voluntary repatriation exercise. The social network one kept was influential in the voluntary repatriation decision making process. There were different categories of former refugees whose social network was very pivotal in making the decision to return or not to return. The first categories were people who saw themselves as refugees and Liberians although they were born in Ghana. Such people built their lives here and therefore thought it more prudent to stay on. There was another group of refugees who were passive in the decision making and therefore made their decision based on the decision of the family. Further, there were categories of refugees who had their spouse as Ghanaians, such ones too as a result of their children or their spouse were not willing to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise.

Opportunities for self-advancement

Before refugees makes a decision to join in a voluntary repatriation exercise. They compare conditions prevailing in Liberia against that which prevails in Ghana (Koser, 1993). Therefore making the choice between Ghana and Liberia in terms of where one was likely to have relatively better standard of living was very easy for most of the former refugees living in Ghana. For instance, some refugees preferred to stay in Ghana so that they would have access to better education and other opportunities which will equip them with enough resources for them to return to Liberia. Although, most of the informants agreed that living in Ghana had not been easy. They also conceded that they thought they were better off in Ghana than they would be if they return to Liberia. Further, after living in Ghana for a long time. Some of the refugees have acquired immovable interest and would rather continue staying in Ghana to ensure progress in their various endeavors. Instead of returning to Liberia to start all over again.

Painful memories

Additionally, the memories of Liberia before the war served as a disincentive for people contemplating voluntary repatriation to Liberia. Some of the refugee informants recounted their relatively good life prior to the war. And therefore going to Liberia to

start all over again had become unimaginable nightmare for some. Some also experienced psychological trauma resulting from the war. Some informants narrated the wanton killings and torture they witnessed some of which they experienced themselves. And therefore did not wish to return to those scenes. So, whereas the respondent saw return from the point of securing what they lost or something comparable. The reality was if they returned to Liberia, they may end up returning to a new area that they had no connection to

Security issues.

Although UNHCR sees Liberia as peaceful and stable the same cannot be said about the refugees that chose not to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. Some informants perceived the presence of UNMIL as a peaceful condition that cannot be trusted and were therefore not willing to return to Liberia under such circumstance. Also related to security issues is the issues of jobs, and other social services such as healthcare. Greater part of Liberia lacked basic amenities such as electricity and good flowing water. The unreliable nature of these social services makes people unwilling to return to Liberia. And there is also perceived high crime rate resulting from joblessness of the youths, which was also a disincentive to voluntary repatriation.

Integrated refugees

Some Liberian refugees after living in Ghana for a very long time felt totally integrated into the local community they found themselves and were therefore unwilling to voluntarily repatriate to Liberia. Some refugees have mastered the local language and some owned buildings in Ghana. Others felt optimistic about their future and were happy to stay and continue working hard. Further, individual differences and the identities Liberian refugee carry may explain why some refugees were unwilling to participate in the voluntary repatriation exercise. The identities and individual differences may have colossal influence in the decision making process. Whereas some respondent felt discriminated against by Ghanaians others did not experience any discrimination problems at all and were therefore happy to continue staying in Ghana. Some were more involved in ensuring that their children will have better education in Ghana.

Demotivating voluntary repatriation package

The UNHCR policies on voluntary repatriation included transitional allowance of \$300 for adult and \$200 for minors and a baggage allowance of 30kg per person were not motivational enough for the refugees³⁴. Further, UNHCR not making special arrangement to convey the belonging of the refugees did not encourage refugees to return to Liberia. Those who participated were forced to sell some of their properties very cheap or pay exorbitant fee for privately arranged transport to Liberia. Although, UNHCR, organized vocational training program for the refugees a lot of them could not put the skills they acquired to use and were therefore not convinced about the effect of the training on their livelihood. This further increased the feeling that they were not prepared for the voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia. Further the withdrawal of the humanitarian assistance from the refugees led to refugees adapting to independent survival in Ghana. Therefore as it got to voluntary repatriation time, they felt they did not need to return to Liberia since they could make it on their own in Ghana. Some refugees that missed out on the UNHCR verification exercise also had their status terminated which also served as disincentive to participation in the voluntary repatriation exercise.

Also there were no ready information on local integration which was the main alternative to voluntary repatriation to Liberia. The consequence was that some refugees who were not moved by the content of the voluntary repatriation Package and therefore decided to locally integrate. Most refugees were aware local integrating meant paying the same tuition fees as Ghana if one decided to attend school in Ghana. There were wild speculations about the local integration policy. Some believed, UNHCR would build houses for them as they had done in some other repatriation programs in some other countries, others believed they would be given money to rent houses and others were convinced, they would be assisted in securing employment. In the end, for them not to miss out on these opportunities some chose to abstain from the voluntary repatriation exercise. Although, most of the informants had a good idea about realities in Liberia. They felt the government was not doing much to improve the situation. There is high concentration of development in Monrovia to the detriment of other counties. Therefore those who were from the other counties and wished to return to those counties

³⁴ <http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/news/general-news/11509-ghana-refugee-board-encourages-more-liberian-refugees-to-repatriate> retrieved 03/02.2013. Ghana News Agency.

found it challenging. Hence the conviction that returning to Liberia would be retrogression and therefore decided not to participate in the UNHCR sanctioned voluntary repatriation exercise to Liberia.

Critical consciousness and agency at work

Moreover, being critical conscious meant that Liberian refugees living in the camp didn't just accept any decision of UNHCR, GRB, and to some extent the Liberian government. They critically examined the issue at stake from their perspective and explore all the choices at their disposal before reaching a decision. Some of the issues included whether Liberia was peaceful enough for them as individual but not as the international community was propagating. Whether their personal security can be assured in Liberia. Others also considered the location where they have most of their network situated, whether in Ghana or Liberia. Also the issue of logistics and then the uncertainty about life in Liberia, were some of the issues that refugees had to make careful deliberation and make a decision that would favor them.

6.2 Contributions to refugee issues

Repatriation as a durable solution to a protracted refugee problem has not being able to live up to its billing. The main standard for advocating for voluntary repatriation by the international community was peace in Liberia, which was ushered in by the peace agreement signed in Accra in 2003. With this agreement in place UNHCR started organizing voluntary repatriation from 2004 onwards, but the response was not encouraging (Essuman-Johnson, 2011). And from the field returns it was evident that refugees looked beyond peace, but rather economic resources needed for resettlement in Liberia. Therefore for future repatriation to be successful there is the need for the international community to concentrate effort on finding exactly what refugees need to survive if they are to return home, and how to meet these needs.

If voluntary repatriation is organized with the motive that it would send people back to Liberia so that they would help with the peace building and national development, then there is the need for returnees to be equipped with the necessary resources so that when they return they can stay and contribute their quota to the nation building. Otherwise, we would have a situation where a repatriated refugee would be back in the host country because he/she could not cope with realities of the country of origin. And the dire consequences would be that, potential host nations would be unwilling to accept

refugees who have genuine need of assistance for fear they would never return to their country of origin.

However, Because there maybe be some refugees who genuinely cannot return to their country of origin. Effort should be made to keep refugee issues away from the media in order for them not to suffer negative consequences such as ridicule and discrimination for not returning to their country origin and rather aggravate their plight of vulnerability. The study reechoes Chimni (2000) call for the planning for voluntary repatriation to begin way in advance giving hindsight of the individual concerns of refugees and also for reintegration to be seen as integral part of voluntary repatriation. So that once refugees return to their country of origin they would be helped to fit into their post conflict society seamlessly.

Literature

Adepoju, A.(1982). The Dimension of Refugee Problem in Africa. *Africa Affairs*, (82) 322.

Adepoju, A. Alistair, B. Mariah, L. (2007). Promoting Integration Through Mobility free movement and the ECOWAS Protocol. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, (150) UNHCR Geneva. <http://www.unhcr.org/476650ae2.html> retrieved 12/01/2013

Agblorti, S. (2011). Refugee Integration in Ghana: The Host Community's perspective. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, (57), UNHCR Geneva. <http://www.unhcr.org/4d6f5f3f9.html> retrieved 16/01/2013

Akokpari, J. (1998). The State, Refugees and Migration in Sub – Saharan Africa. *International Migration*,(36) 2 , pp 211-234

Alcoff, L. (1994.) Cultural Feminism versus Post – Structuralism, The identity Crisis in Feminist Theory. In Dirks,N. Eley, G. & S. Ortner,S. (Eds) *Culture, Power, History, A reader in contemporary social theory* (96 – 122) Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press.

Ali, T. & Mathews, R. (2004). The Long and Difficult Road to Peace. In Ali,T. & Mathews,R.(eds) *Durable Peace Challenges for Peace Building in Africa*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Arango, J. (2000), Explaining Migration: A Critical Review”, *International Social Science Journal* (52) 165, pp 283 – 296.

Arendell,T. (1997) Researcher – Researched Relationship : A Woman Interviewing Men. *Qualitative Sociology*, (20).3.

Baker, J. and Zetter, R. (1995). Refugee and Labour Movement in Sub Saharan Africa A Review, Shelter Provision and Settlement Policies: A State of The Art Review. *Studies on Emergencies and Disaster Relief*, Report No. 2,

Bakewell, O. (1996). Refugee Repatriation in Africa: Towards A Theoretical Framework?

Occasional Paper 04, Center For Development Studies, University of Bath.

Bakewell, O. (2000). Repatriation and Self - Settled Refugees. *Journal of Refugee Studies*,(13)4

Bascom, J. (1998). Dynamics of Refugee Repatriation: the Case of Eritreans in Eastern Sudan. In Gould W.T.S and Findlay A.M (eds) *Population migration and the changing world order*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Becker, G. (1993). *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis with Special Reference to Education*. Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Bhatia, M. and Muggah, R. (2008). "The Politics of Demobilization in Afghanistan. In Muggah, R. (ed.) *Security and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Dealing with Fighters in the Aftermath of War*. London: Routledge

Bialczyk, A. (2008). Voluntary Repatriation and The Case of Afghanistan: A Critical Examination. *University of Oxford, Refugee Studies Centre*, working paper no.46.

Black, R. (2002). Concept of Home and the Political Geography of Refugee Repatriation: Between Assumption and Contested Reality of Bosnia- Herzegovina. *Applied Geography* (22), issue 123 – 138

Black, R. & Gent, S. (2006). Sustainable Return in Post Conflict Contexts. *International Migration*, (44) 3, pp 15 – 33

Boateng, A. (2006). *Social Capital of Liberian Refugee Women in Ghana: A Mixed Methods Study*. Athens: University of Georgia.

Boyd, M. (1989). Family and Personal Network in International Migration: Recent Development and New Agendas. *International Migration Review*, (23)3, pp 638 - 670 .

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (1984). The debate about quantitative and qualitative research: A question of method or epistemology. *The British Journal of Sociology*, (35)1, pp 75-92.

Bøås, M. (2005). The Liberian civil war: New war/old war? *Global Society* (19) 1: 73-88

- Casarrino, J. (1996). Theorising Return Migration: The Conceptual Approach to Return Migration Revisited. *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, (6) 2, pp253 – 279.
- Cerese, F. (1974). Expectation and Reality: A Case Study of Return Migration From United States to Southern Italy. *International Migration Review*,(8)2 pp. 245 – 262
- Chetail, V. (2004). Voluntary Repatriation in Public International Law: Concepts and Contents. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, (23).3
- Chimni , B. (2002). Refugees, Return and Reconstruction of Post conflict Societies: A Critical Perspective.*International Peacekeeping*, (9)2, pp 163 – 180.
- Chimni, B. (2003). Post-Conflict Peace-Building and the Return of Refugees: Concepts, practices and Institutions. In Newman & Van Selm (eds) *Refugees and Forced Displacement: International Security, Human Vulnerability, and the State*.
- Chrysochoou, X. (2003). Studying Identity in Social Psychology: Some Thought on the Definition of Identity and its Relation to Action”, *Journal of language and politics*. (2)2, PP225 - 241.
- Codjoe, S. Quartey, P. Tagoe C. Reed, H. (2012). Perception of the Impact of Refugees on Host Communities : The Case of Liberian Refugees in Ghana, *International Migration & Integration*, 1-18.
- Collier, P. Elliot, V. Hegre, H. Hoeffler, A.Reynal-Querol, M.Sambanis,N.(2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and development Policy*. Washinton: World Bank and Oxford University Press.
- Collins, P. (1986). Learning from the outsider within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought. *Social Problem* (33)6, pp 14- 29.
- Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social Research: Theory, Methods and Techniques*. London: SAGE.
- Crisp, J. (1984). The Politics of Repatriation: Ethiopian Refugees in Djibouti 1977 – 1983. *African Political Economy*, (11)30, pp 73 – 82.
- Crisp, J. (2000). Africa’s Refugee : Patterns, Problems, and Policy Challenge. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 18:2, 157 – 178.
- Crisp, J. (1984). The Politics of Repatriation: Ethiopian Refugees in Djibouti, 1977 -83. *Review of African Political Economy*, (11)30
- Cutts, M. (2000). *The State of The World Refugees: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Da Vanzo, J. (1981). Microeconomic Approaches to Studying Migration Decision Making. In De Jong and Gardener (eds), *Migration decision making : Multidisciplinary approaches to micro level Studies in developed and developing countries*, New York: Pergamon Press.
- De Jong, F., Abad, G., Arnold, F., Carino, V., Fawcett, T., Gardner, W. (1983). International and Internal Migration Decision Making: A Value Expectancy based Analytical Framework of Intentions to move from a Rural Philippine Province. *International Migration Review* (17) 3.
- De Lauretis, T. (1986). Introduction In De Lauretis, T. (Ed) *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies*, (p 1-19) Bloomington: Indiana University Press
- Denzin, N. and Yvonna, L. (eds), (2005). Introduction: In *Qualitative Research*. SAGE.
- Denzin, N. (1988). Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientist. *Contemporary Sociologist*, (17)3-2, pp30-2.
- DiCicco – Bloom, B. and Crabtree, J. (2006). The Qualitative Research Interview. *Medical Education*, (40)4 ,PP 314 – 321.
- Dick, S. (2002a). Liberian in Ghana: Living without humanitarian assistance. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, (57), UNHCR Geneva.
- Dick, S. (2002b). Responding to a Protracted Refugee Situation: A Case Study of Liberian Refugee in Ghana. UNHCR Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit.
- Dwyer, S. and Buckle, J. (2009). The pace between: on being an insider and outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Method*, (8)1
- Ehrkamp, P. (2006). We Turks are no Germans: Assimilation discourse and dialectical construction of identity in Germany. *Environment and Planning*, A 38 , 1673 – 1692
- Ellis, F. (2000). *Rural Livelihood and Diversity in Developing countries*, Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Ellis, S. (1999). *The mask of anarchy: the destruction of Liberia and the religious dimension of an African civil war*. London: C. Hurst and Co.
- Essuman-Johnson, A. (2011). When Refugees Don't Go Home: The Situation of Liberian Refugees in Ghana. *Journal of Immigration and Refugee Studies*, (9)2 Taylor and Francis.

Essuman-Johnson, A. (1992). The Liberian refugee problem and Ghana response to it. *LECIA Bulletin*, (2) 1, pp34-40.

Faugier and Sargeant ,1997. Sampling hard to reach population. *Journal of Advance Nursing*,(26)4, pp 790 – 797.

Finlay, L.(2002). “outing”the researcher: The Provenance, Process and Practice of Reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research*, (12) 4 pp 531-545.

Freire, P. (1974). *Education For Critical Consciousness*, New York: Seabury Press.

Gardner, R. (1981). Macro level Influences on the Migration Decision Process. In Jong, G. De & Gardner, R *Migration Decision Making*. New York: Pergamon Press.

Giden Anthony, (1984). *The Constitution of Society*. California: University of California Press.

Glesne,C. and Peshkin, A.(1992). *Becoming a qualitative researcher: An introduction*. White Plains, New York, Longman.

Gmalch, G. (1980). Return Migration. *Annual Review of Anthropology*.(9), 135 – 59.

Gordenker , L. (1987). *Refugees in International Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press,

Haraway, D. (2003). Situated Knowledge In Lincoln, Y. and Denzin, N. (eds).*Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief*, Alter Mira Press, UK

Harrel-Bond, B.(1989). Repatriation: Under what condition is it the most desirable solution for refugee? An agenda for research. *African Studies Review*. (32) 41 -69.

Hardgrove, A. (2009). Liberian refugee families in Ghana: The implication of family demands and capabilities of return to Liberia *Journal of Refugee studies* (22) 4

Horst, C. (2006) *Transnational Nomads: How Somalis Cope With Refugee Life in the Dabaab Camp of Kenya*.*Studies in Forced Migration*. (19) Berghahn Books

Husmanns R, Mehran F, Verma V. (1990) *Surveys of Economically Active Population, Employment, Unemployment: An ILO Manual on Concepts and Method*. Geneva: International Labour Office

Hegre,H. Østby, G. and Raleigh, C.(2009). Poverty and civil war: A Disaggregate Study of Liberia, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, (53) 598.

- Jackson, J. (ed.) (1970). introduction In : *Profession and Professionalization*. Cambridge New York : University Press.
- Johnson, W. and Neumark, D.(1997). Age Discrimination, Job Separations and Employment Status of Older Workers: Evidence from Self Reports. *Journal of Human Resources* 32(4) 779 -811.
- Kabeer, N. (2005) Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
- Kabeer, N. (1999). Resource, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment, *Development and Change* (30) 3, pp 435 - 464
- Kabeer, N. (2001). Discussing women empowerment: Theory and Practice. *Sida Studies* no. 3
- Kanuha, V. (2000). Being native and going native: Conducting Social Work Research as an Insider. *Social Work*, 45(5) 439 - 447
- Koser, K. (1993). Repatriation and Information: A theoretical model. In Black, R. and Robinson,V.(eds). *Geography and refugees: Patterns and Processes of Change*.London: Belhaven Press.
- Koser, K. (1997). Information and Voluntary Repatriation: The Case of Mozambican Refugees in Malawi, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, (10) 1.
- Kunz, E. (1973). The Refugee in Flight: The Kinetic Model and Forms of Displacement, *International Migration Review*. (7)2, pp 125-146.
- Kunz, E. (1981). The Refugee in Flight: The Kinetic Model and Forms of Displacement, *International Migration Review*. (7)2, pp 125-146.
- Kvale, S. (1996) *An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Carlifornia: SAGE Publications.
- Lamba,N.(2008). The employment experience of Canadian refugees: Measuring the impact of human and social capital on quality of employment. *Canadian Review of Sociology*, (40)1.
- Landgren, K.(1998). The future of refugee protection: four challenges. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol.11, no.4
- Lee, R. (1993). *Doing research on a sensitive topic*. London, SAGE.

- Lesser, E. (2000). *Knowledge and Social Capital: Foundation and Application*. Boston: Butterworth – Heineman.
- Loescher, G. (1993). *Beyond charity: International cooperation and global refugee crisis*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Loescher, G. (2001). The UNHCR and world politics: State Interest vs. International autonomy. *International Migration Review*, (35) 1, pp 33 – 56.
- Loescher, G. & Milner, J. (2005). The long road home: Protracted refugee situation in Africa. *Survival : Global politics and strategy*, (47) 2
- Malhotra, A. & Schuler, S. (2006). Women Empowerment as Variable in International Development In Narayan D.(ed) *Measuring Empowerment: Cross Disciplinary Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Marshall, M. (1996). Sampling for Qualitative Research. *Family Practice*. (13)6
- Massey, D. Arango, J. Hugo, G. Kouaouci, A.(1993) Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal. *Population and Development Review*. (19) 3, pp 431 – 466
- McGowan, P.(2006). Coup and Conflict in West Africa 1955-2004. *Armed Forces & Society*, (32) 1, pp 5 – 23.
- Meshcherkina, E. (2000) New Russian men: Masculinity regained? In Ashwin, S. (ed.) *Gender, state, and society In Soviet and post-Soviet Russia*. London/New York: Routledge
- Miller, J. and Glassner, B. (2011). The “Inside” and the “Outside”. In David Silverman(eds), *Qualitative Research: issues of theories*. SAGE.
- Milner, J.(2008). Refugees and Regional Dynamics of Peacebuilding: *Refugee Survey Quarterly*. (28) 1, pp 13 – 30.
- Muggeridge, H. and Dona, G. (2006). Back home? Refugees experiences of their first visit back to their country of origin. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, (19) 4

Nilson, D. & Kovacs, M.(2005.) Breaking The Cycle of Violence: Promises and Pitfalls of The Liberia Peace Process. *Civil Wars*, (4)7, pp 396 – 414.

Nmoma, V. (1997). The civil War and the refugee crisis in Liberia. *Journal of Conflict Studies*,(17)1

Ogata,S. (2005). *The Turbulent Decade: Confronting the Refugee Crises of the 1990s*. New York : W.W Norton & Company.

Omata, N. (2012). Repatriation and Integration of Liberian Refugees from Ghana: The Importance of Personal Network in the country of origin.*Journal of Refugee Studies*,

Omata, N.(2011) Repatriation is not for everyone: The life and livelihood of former refugees in Liberia. *New Issues in Refugee Research*, (213), UNHCR Geneva.

Oakley, A. (2003) Interviewing Women A contradiction in Terms, in (eds) Lincoln, Y. and Denzin, N.: *Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief*, Alter Mira Press, UK.

Oakley,1998,1999

Peach, C.(2006) Islam, Ethnicity and South Asian religion in the London 2001 census.*Transactions of Institute of British Geographers*, new series 31, 353 – 370

Pitner, R. and Sakamoto, I. (2005). The Role of Critical Consciousness in Multicultural Practices: How Its Strength Becomes Its Limitation. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, (75) 4,pp 684 -694.

Reinharz S (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Richmond, A.(1988). *Sociological theories on international migration: The case of refugees*. *Current Sociology*, (36)7

Riddle, L. and Buckley, C. (1998) *Forced migration and destination choice: Armenian forced settlers and Refugees in the Russian Federation* , *International Migration* 36(2).

Salducci, G.(2008). Towards the local integration of Liberian and Sierra Leonean Refugees in West Africa through enhancing self reliance and promoting regional integration. Retrieved April, 2013

<http://www.unhcr.org/49e479cc0.pdf>

Scoones,I. (1998). *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A framework for Analysis*. Institute of Development Studies, Working paper (72), Brighton.

Seale,C.(1999). *The quality of qualitative research*. California: SAGE

silverman,D.(2001). *Doing Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE

Singh, N. and Gilman, J. (1999). Making Livelihood More Sustainable. *International Social Science Journal*, (51) 162, 539 – 545.

Skjelsbæk,I. and Smith, D.(1997). *Gender, Peace and Conflict*. Britain: Lightning Source Ltd.

Stanley, L. and Wise, S.(1979). Feminist Research, Feminist Consciousness and Experience of Sexism. *Womens Studies International Quarterly*,(2) pp 359 – 374, Pergamon Press.

Stark, O.(1996). On the microeconomics of return migration. *University of Vienna, center for international and interdisciplinary studies*, Occasional papers no.1.

Strauss(1987)

Stein, B. and Cuny, F. (1994). “Refugee repatriation during conflict: protection and post return assistance”, *Development in Practice* vol.4 no.3, pp 173 – 187

Takashi, S. (1997). The UNHCR Handbook on Voluntary Repatriation: Emphasis Return over Protection. *International Journal of Refugee Law*, (9)4 Oxford University Press.

UNHCR Handbook on Voluntary Repatriation

<http://www.unhcr.org/publ/PUBL/3bfe68d32.pdf> retrieved 1/10/2012

Van Hear, N. (2004). “I went as far as my money would take me” conflict, forced migration and class. *Centre On Migration, Policy and Society*, Working Paper No. 6. University of Oxford.

Vested-Hansen, J.(1997). Analysis for the requirement for voluntary repatriation, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, vol.9 no.4 ,oxford university press

Warner, D.(1994). Voluntary Repatriation and Meaning of Return to Home, A Critique of Liberal Mathematics, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, pp 160 – 174.

Weiner, M. (1996). Bad Neighbors, Bad Neighborhood: An Inquiry Into The Causes of Refugee Flows. *International Security*. (21) No. 1 ,5-42, MIT Press.

Zieck, M. (2004). Voluntary Repatriation: Paradigm, Pitfalls and Progress. *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 23(3), pp 33 – 54.

Zetter, R.(2007). More Label, Fewer Refugees: remaking the refugee label in an era of globalization. *Journal of Refugee Studies*,(20)2,

